



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Commissioners

Linda H. Newton *Chair*
Corinne Calise Russo, *1st Vice Chair*
Carol Gibbons, Ph.D., *2nd Vice Chair*
Joanne M. Hill, *Treasurer*
Jan Torres, *Secretary*

FULL COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, November 6, 2006, 5:15 PM

One Capitol Hill
2nd Floor, Conference Room B
Providence, RI 02908

Jane M. Anthony
Denise A. Barge
Carrie Bridges, MPH
Representative Joanne Giannini

MINUTES

Catherine Graziano, Ph.D.
Victoria Johnson
Jacqueline B. Laguerre
Helene Martin, RNC, CAGS, NCC
Lela Morgan, M.A.

Present: Denise Barge, Carol Gibbons, Catherine Graziano, Joanne Hill, Victoria Johnson, Helene Martin, Linda Newton, Sarah Rockett, Corinne Calise Russo, Neena Sinha Savage, Jan Torres, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Beverly Turner, Sherrylyn Cotter for Tracy Williams.

Excused Absent: Jane M. Anthony, Carrie Bridges, Rep. Joanne Giannini, Jacqueline Laguerre.

Unexcused Absent: Lela Morgan, Rep. Carol Mumford, Rep. Eileen Naughton.

Present, Non-Voting: Shanna Wells

Representative Carol A. Mumford
Representative Eileen S. Naughton

Call to Order

Chair Linda Newton called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.
Neena Savage, Esquire
Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Consent Agenda

Joanne Hill made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Catherine Graziano seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

Beverly Turner
Tracy E. Williams

Chair's Report

Chair Linda Newton met with House Majority Leader, Gordon Fox, regarding a legislative grant of \$5,000. The grant would be added to the Freda Goldman Education Award, to bring the amount raised this year to \$10,000, making the RICW eligible to receive the full \$10,000 match grant from the RI Foundation. While he did not give Chair Linda Newton a definite yes, he did seem positively disposed to the idea.

Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., *Director*

Chair Newton informed the Commissioners that she has contacted the Governor's Office to inform him that she is now Chair of RICW, and to schedule a meeting to discuss his vision for the Commission. **Please submit any agenda items you think should be discussed with the Governor.**

Chair Newton informed the Commissioners that we have been in discussion with the Budget Office regarding the \$2,000 Grants and Awards line item. The Budget Office will develop a new account code for this line item that more accurately reflects the expenditure, without appearing in our general budget requests.

Chair Newton suggested the RICW re-format the Annual Report, for use as a promotional tool.

Director's Report

Emerging Women in Business: On September 21st, I attended a planning meeting for the next Emerging Women in Business Conference, which will occur sometime in June 2007. I will chair the Logistics Committee, which is responsible for organizing the flow of the event and all venue requirements.

Center for Women & Enterprise Advisory Committee: On September 27th, I attended a meeting of the Center for Women & Enterprise Advisory Committee. They had a very successful fund raising event in August, though donations were down a bit from the previous year.

Vital Women Radio Broadcast: On September 28th, Women of the Year Honorees Linda Bailey and Kimberly Cipolla and I participated in taping Donna Mac's *Vital Women* Radio Program, as advertising for the 2006 Women of the Year Event. The show aired on Sunday, November 1st.

Women Ending Hunger: I attended my first meeting of the Women Ending Hunger group, based out of the RI Community Food Bank. Food bank Director, Bernie Beaudreau will be leaving the Food Bank soon to take a position in Chicago. No announcement about his replacement is yet forthcoming. The Food Stamp Outreach Committee is asking for volunteers to be trained in Food Stamp Outreach, then to volunteer some time in food pantries to advise customers about the Food Stamp Program. The Information/Education Committee is working with Channel 36 to develop some spots to educate people about shopping and cooking nutritious foods on a budget. Currently this group does not have a legislative committee, though, in his speech, Bernie Beaudreau stated that changes in legislation are necessary to reduce the number of hungry families in RI.

DELTA Project: The RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) invited RICW to participate as a member of the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancements Through Leadership and Alliances Project (DELTA) State Steering Committee. Through a collaborative agreement funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the RICADV and the DELTA State Steering Committee will create a report on intimate partner violence in our state and develop a strategic prevention plan designed to assist communities throughout RI in preventing intimate partner violence before it occurs. The first meeting was held September 29th.

Permanent Legislative Committee on Childcare: The Permanent Legislative Committee on Childcare held a planning retreat on Saturday, September 30th. The purpose of the retreat was to develop a list of legislative priorities for next session, to review the resolution that created the Commission and revise and update it, and to develop some process and structure guidelines for the more efficient working of the Commission. I facilitated the Process and Structure work group. The overall group response was that the retreat was successful. On October 16th the Committee met at their regularly scheduled time to fine-tune the recommendations from the retreat. Once the recommendations are approved, I will provide you with that information.

Civil Rights Roundtable Congressional Candidates Forum: On October 11th, the Civil Rights Roundtable hosted a U.S. Congressional Candidates Forum at East Providence City Hall. I was the chair of the organizing committee for this event. In attendance were candidates, Lincoln Chafee, Patrick Kennedy, Rod Driver, James Langevin and Jonathan Scott. Sheldon Whitehouse was unable to attend but sent his wife, Sandra, to represent him with his prepared statements. Please see attached questions and audience scorecard results.

Women in Politics Event: On October 17th, The RICW and the Rhode Island Women in Higher Education co-sponsored a "Women in Politics" networking event and panel discussion. I attend the event. In attendance for the panel discussion was Senator Elizabeth Roberts, Representative Carol Mumford, and gubernatorial staffer Deb Smith. Issues discussed included: barriers to running or holding office, pipelines and networks for candidate grooming and issues of interest to women.

Big Sisters of Rhode Island: Chair Linda Newton asked me to follow up with Priscilla Young, Director of the Big Sisters of Rhode Island, who expressed interest in a collaborative project. I met with Priscilla and Karen Gager, the Program Director of Big Sisters on October 24th. I explained the current activities of the

RICW sub-committees, and the potential for the “Women in Non-Traditional Trades” project that is currently in development by the RICW Education Committee.

We discussed the possibility of Big Sisters and RICW collaborating on a Non-Traditional Trades Expo for girls to occur sometime in 2008. The goal would be to have professional women in the trades (both college track and career & technical track) present information via workshops and expo booths. Additionally, health and wellness information could be offered. Big Sisters, as a non-profit, would act as the fiscal agent. Funding would be sought from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Women’s Fund and others, to be determined.

Conversation with the Women’s Fund of Rhode Island: On October 24th, I attended A Conversation with the Women’s Fund. The topic was “The Direction and Goals Of Young Feminists- - A Movement as They See It,” Facilitated by Gail Gohee, Director of the Sarah Doyle Women’s Center, Brown University.

By-Laws

The By-Laws Sub-Committee (Carol Gibbons and Jan Torres) completed a first draft of edits on the By-Laws. A detailed review and additional edits were made in this full Commission Meeting. The By-Laws Committee was charged with creating a second draft based on this discussion, for further review. During the discussion, questions were raised about the Director’s role and responsibilities and how this information should appear in the by-laws. The Commissioners requested more information regarding the Director’s job description and any employee evaluative processes that may exist. The final changes will be ratified at the January 8th meeting.

Annual Report and Fiscal Integrity Assessment (FIA)

A detailed review of these reports was tabled in the interest of time. Chair Linda Newton asked all Commissioners to review these materials, and send any comments, or edits to Director Wells.

Committee Reports

Outreach/WOY: Commission Chair Linda Newton announced the appointment of Denise Barge and Marilyn Coccozza Trillo as Co-Chairs of the Outreach Committee. Ms. Trillo reported on the 2006 Women of the Year Event, and the Outreach Committee’s recommendations for future events, which are:

Selection Process:

- Continue opening the selection process to non-commissioners
- No more than 7 people should be on the selection committee
- Push recipient selection from June back to May, so sponsor request letters can go out in June

Sponsors:

- Start sponsor solicitation process sooner
- Send sponsor letters out in June, follow up with phone calls in July

Event Host and Venue:

- Confirm host as early as possible, then secure venue
- Send Host event materials two weeks prior to the event
- Event should be held on the first Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday of October
- Move the event to the Ballroom at the Airport Radisson

Finances:

- Complete net proceed deposit to RIF as reversal
- Request Authorized Red Balance
- Work with Budget Office to develop better mechanism for deposit of funds

Invitations:

Include lines on reverse side of reply card for names of attendees

Other

The Committee discussed potential new projects:

- A “table top” at the State House in Spring 2007
- Doing something for Women’s History Month in March
- Create a new Op Ed on “The Invisible Majority”
- Invite Mrs. Carcieri to collaborate on a project
- Reformat and add pictures to the Annual Report and distribute throughout the community

The 2006 Women of the Year Event was completed successfully. Two hundred two (202) people attended the sit-down dinner portion of the event with at least another 30 attending the reception only. A total of \$5,730.50 was raised in net proceeds and sponsorship donations.

Education Committee: Chair Sarah Rockett informed the Commissioners that the Mentoring Program between DCYF students and RI Women in Higher Education is still struggling to get started. The problem is that they cannot find a way around the confidentiality issues of DCYF releasing the names of the students.

Carol Gibbons then discussed the new pending project of the Education Committee “Women In Non-Traditional Trades” (WINTT). Carol, Sarah Rockett, Shanna Wells, and RICW volunteer Joyce Dolbec, met with Marsha Feld and Gayla Gazzaro of the URI Urban Field Study Department, to discuss a research project on WINTT. If/when a project design is agreed upon, RICW and the Urban Field Center would seek grant funding for the project.

The project could potentially cover two different areas: adult women in the trades, and girls in Career and Technical Education. We’d like to find out how much recruitment and retention is going on in both groups.

Health Committee: Tabled until next meeting.

Adjournment

Corinne Calise Russo made a motion to adjourn. Carol Gibbons seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 11, 2006, 5:00 pm, ONE CAPITOL HILL 2ND FLOOR, CONFERENCE ROOM B, PROVIDENCE, RI.

Approved on December 11, 2006

Jan Torres, Secretary