



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Full Commission Meeting
Monday, November 10, 2008, 5:00 PM
One Capitol Hill
2nd Floor, Conference Room C
Providence, RI 02908

Commissioners

Linda H. Newton, *Chair*

Corinne Calise Russo, *1st Vice Chair*

Carol Gibbons, Ph.D., *2nd Vice Chair*

Joanne M. Hill, *Treasurer*

Beverly Turner, *Secretary*

Carrie Bridges, MPH

Nancy Carriuolo, Ph.D.

Representative Joanne Giannini

Catherine Graziano, Ph.D.

Dawn L. Huntley

Victoria Johnson

Jacqueline B. Laguerre

Carol Malysz

Helene Martin, RNC, CAGS, NCC

Lela Morgan, M.A.

Representative Carol A. Mumford

Representative Eileen S. Naughton

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.

Neena Savage, Esquire

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Camille Vollaro, M.A.

Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., *Director*

MINUTES

Present: Carrie Bridges, , Carol Gibbons, Joanne Hill, Lorraine Hynes, Victoria Johnson, Helene Martin, Linda Newton, Sarah Rockett, Marilyn Coccozza Trillo.

Excused, Absent: Nancy Carriuolo, Catherine Graziano, Dawn Huntley, Carol Malysz, Corinne Calise Russo, Neena Savage.

Unexcused Absent: Rep. Joanne Giannini, Rep. Eileen Naughton, Beverly Turner.

Call to Order

Chair Linda Newton called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

Consent Agenda

Carol Gibbons made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Joanne Hill seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Report

Chair Linda Newton welcomed new Department of Administration appointed Commissioner, Lorraine Hynes. Ms. Hynes currently works for the Purchasing Department, and previously worked on policy statements at the Department of Business Regulations. She volunteered to sit on the RICW's Legislative and Legal Rights Committee.

Linda informed the Commissioners that Dr. Loida Bonney had been appointed by the governor, but Dr. Bonney moved out of state. Carol Malysz's was re-appointed by the governor, and we await his approval of Donna Huntley-Newby. Lela Morgan is no longer on the Commission. Linda will contact Neena Savage to see if she wishes to stay on the Commission. We still have two empty gubernatorial slots and three legislative commission seats to fill.

Linda represented the Commission at Commissioner Nancy Carriuolo's inauguration as president of Rhode Island College.

Commissioner Corinne Calise Russo was honored at St. Rita's Health Center.

Director's Report

See attached written report.

The Commissioners asked questions about V-Day/Peace Providence and its structure, such as:

- Is it for profit or non-profit?
- How is the money collected?
- How is their board structured?

Shanna said she would seek the answers to these questions and report back to the Commissioners. The Commissioners discussed strategies for increasing the efficacy of the fund drive for the RI Community Food Bank. Suggestions were:

- Article in the *Providence American*
- Talk shows

- Getting involved with the Mayor of Providence's Food Drive
- List in the Knowledge Exchange Newsletter and the Providence Journal

The Commissioners questioned Shanna about "Mrs. Claus in Menopause," the one-woman musical comedy in which she is performing in Westerly. Shanna said that the show's producer, Kathleen Dahill, is shopping the show to organizations as a fundraising event. The Westerly shows will benefit the Westerly Armory Restoration Project. Kathleen receives a flat rate payment per performance for bringing in the show. The booking organization in this case, the Westerly Restoration Project, provides the venue for performance and advertising. All monies made at the door benefit the booking organization. Shanna described the show as a wellness piece which encourages women to take time for themselves, set limits with family, not take the holidays so seriously, and to see the post-menopausal years as a new life adventure.

Chair Linda Newton suggested booking the show as a fundraiser for the Food Bank and performing it in the Food Bank's space. All the Commissioners agreed, and Shanna was instructed to contact the Food Bank and Kathleen Dahill about the viability of making it happen.

Committee Reports

Women of the Year: Chair Marilyn Trillo reported the following:

The event was a success this year.

- 172 attendees
- \$5,923.11 total increase to the Goldman Award

The committee discussed issues of concern about the event:

- There was still a sizable delay between the clearing of the main course and the delivery of dessert and coffee
- Two appetizers is unnecessary. See if we can exclude the fruit and get one more upscale salad.
- One of the honorees spoke for too long. We need to really enforce the five minute time limit.
- Past recipients in attendance should be introduced.

The committee made some suggestion for changing the event next year:

- Increasing the number of recipients to 5 or 6 so as to increase the event attendance
- Group nominations in categories and select one recipient from represented categories
- Categories would include: Business, Health and Human Services, Education, Religion, Public/Social Service, Arts and Humanities' Trailblazers, Fine Arts, Advocacy and Volunteerism, Survivor, Organization or Group.
- Previous year nominations who were not selected will be reconsidered.
- Create a large program booklet that includes ads and more information about the honorees.
- The nomination letter should no longer be 2-5 pages. It should not exceed 1 page.

Date for next year's event will be either Tuesday, October 6th or Thursday, October 8th, depending on availability of the venue and Host Karen Adams.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Chair Linda Newton asked Carrie Bridges to provide the RICW with the Department of Health's priorities for Women's Health.

Joanne Hill informed the commissioners that the Department of Corrections (DOC) had once again submitted a Capital request for a new Women's Facility, but the Capital Development Oversight Committee removed it from the state plan. Joanne suggested having Warden Carole Dwyer speak to the commissioners about the issues at Women's Division and how the RICW can help. Shanna was instructed to ask the Warden to attend RICW's next meeting.

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo made a motion to adjourn. Joanne Hill seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 8, 2008, 5:00 PM, One Capitol Hill, 2nd Floor, Conference Room C, Providence.

Approved on December 8, 2008.

Beverly Turner, Secretary



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Website: There were 828 hits on the RICW website in October 2008, up from 642 in September 2008.

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Providence American Article: Attached please find an article entitled, "Shanna Wells An Advocate for Women," by Peter Wells, Editor of the *Providence American*.

Food Bank Fund Drive Update: To date the Food Bank has received \$100 associated with our fund raising drive. A draft of our second Op/Ed piece will be completed by the end of this week. It is entitled, "Hunger Takes No Holiday," and is about how much it costs a family of four to create a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner and what percentage of their monthly food bill is consumed by the cost of this meal.

Human Trafficking: On October 25th, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Human Trafficking (RICAHT) held a press conference, rally and March in downtown Providence. I acted as M.C. for the press conference. Press coverage was received by Channels 6 and 10, the Providence Journal, Pawtucket Times, Woonsocket Call, Newport Mercury, and the Jewish Voice and Herald. A further search of the internet showed that the AP, Newsweek and the World News had picked up the story, so we received national coverage. The next steps are to continue to push for passage of the federal Wilburforce Bill, and to find support for legislation from local legislators. Attached please find a thank you letter from RICAHT, and the various printed articles.

Women of the Year: The event was a success, with over 170 people in attendance. A full report will be given by Committee Chair, Marilyn Trillo.

Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., *Director*

Student Mentorship: I am mentoring a La Salle student on a project slated for completion in April 2009. The student is the daughter of a Department of Administration employee. The project is related to the work I've been doing with the RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence on the state's Intimate Partner Violence Primary Prevention Plan. The student will interview a youth violence prevention program in Newport and video tape the interviews. The video will be presented to school administrations, in hopes the program will be replicated in schools through out the state.

Girls/Women in Non-Traditional Trades: The planning committee for the Girl's Forum met on October 30th. Many new organizations have joined with us this year: The Laborer's Union and Training Academy, URI Transportation Center, The Met School, National Construction Career Days, New England Institute of Technology and Local Operating Engineers. The group will meet again on December 2nd. The group set the goal of reaching 200 girls with 10 different work stations. Rather than each girl attending every station, they choose which interest them most. Please see attached article from the Providence Journal entitled, "More Women Seek Trade Careers."

V Day Until the Violence Stops: Providence: In February 2009, the second Until the Violence Stops: Providence festival will be held. The week-long series of theatrical events, photo exhibits, poetry slams, art displays, self-defense classes and fashion shows are designed to raise awareness and funds for organizations in RI that are working to end violence against women and girls in RI. One of the exhibits includes photos taken of groups and individuals around the state making the “peace” symbol, with them answering the question, “What can I do to make Providence the safest place on earth for women and girls? (See attached hand out for more information). I wonder if this is something the Commissioners would like to participate in? Last year, I participated in the poetry slam. This year, I will be performing in the production of “The Vagina Monologues.” Because of my acting experience and interest in this project I volunteered on my own. However, I am happy to be identified as the Director of the RICW, should the Commission choose to consider this an Outreach activity.

National Women’s Law Center Platform for Progress: Attached please find the Plat form for Progress put out by the National Women’s Law Center. Please note that those some of the titles in the hand out printed funny, the data is readable. I thought the RICW might want to consider supporting some of the planks in the platform.

Dianne Ford email: Attached please find an email from Dianne Ford. She is one of the Goldman recipients this year.

Annual Meeting Schedule: Attached please find the 2009 Annual Meeting Schedule for the RICW. Typically, we have no meeting in July. Would you prefer to have no meeting in August instead?

Mrs. Claus in Menopause: Attached find the flyer for the one-woman musical comedy in which I am performing. The show empowers women to take care of their health, to set limits with others and to not take themselves and the holidays too seriously!