



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

MINUTES

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
JANUARY 4, 2016
6:30 PM
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ROOM 117

Attendance: Betty Bernal, Maribeth Calabro, Janet Coit, Carol Anne Costa, Lisa Dagostino, Adriana Dawson, Senator Hanna Gallo, Senator Gayle Goldin, Stephanie Gonzalez, Representative Joy Hearn, Linda Mahoney, Lisa Middleton, Vimala Phongsavanh, Tejal Tarro, Kathleen Wilson, Barbara Wong.

Excused Absence: Ann Assumpico, Seema Dixit, Elizabeth Francis.

Unexcused Absence: Representative Doreen Costa, Representative Maureen Messier, Senator Elaine Morgan.

Present Non-Voting: Renee Aloisio

Call to Order

Chair Tejal Tarro called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm and noted that a quorum has been achieved.

Chair's Update

Tejal Tarro informed the group that four (4) resignations have occurred and welcomed two (2) new additions to the Commission: Linda Mahoney and Carol Ann Costa. She advised that three (3) open seats are left, and requested that recommendations be forwarded to her if they have any ideas or suggestions for new members.

Rhode Island Commission on Women Bylaws

Commissioners in attendance discussed the draft Bylaws. On a motion by Tejal Tarro, seconded by Betty Bernal, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the Bylaws as drafted.

Approval of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary

On a motion by Stephanie Gonzalez, seconded by Vimala Phongsavanh, Tejal Tarro was unanimously affirmed as the Chair of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. It is noted that Tejal Tarro was appointed by the Governor as the Chair of the Rhode Island Commission on

Women. On a motion by Tejal Tarro, seconded by Stephanie Gonzalez, Betty Bernal was unanimously affirmed as the Vice Chair of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. On a motion by Betty Bernal, seconded by Tejal Tarro, Vimala Phongsavanh was unanimously affirmed as the Treasurer of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. On a motion by Janet Coit, seconded by Tejal Tarro, Lisa Middleton was unanimously affirmed as the Secretary of the Rhode Island Commission on Women.

501c3 Status and Funding Approach

Tejal Tarro advised that approximately \$10,000 remains from the previous Commission, and a long-term approach is needed to address this funding. She explained that the Commission may have a restricted escrow account through the Department of Administration (DOA) which may only be utilized by the Commission, however this is a short-term solution. She informed the group that the 501c3 concept requires further research, and suggested that the Commission establish an escrow account through DOA now and hold on 501c3 status. On a motion by Kate Wilson, seconded by Carol Anne Costa, the Commission unanimously voted to create a restricted escrow account through DOA. On an amended motion by Kate Wilson, seconded by Maribeth Calabro, the Commission unanimously voted to hold 501c3 status in abeyance pending further investigation.

Update on Office Space

Tejal Tarro informed the group that the Commission is exploring the option of reclaiming work space on the second floor of DOA to use for interns as well as for access to office equipment. In addition, the Commission has boxes in storage that are generating a cost for the Commission.

Update of Status of Interns

Tejal Tarro informed the group that the Commission has access to one (1) intern, who she will be meeting with this week. Additionally, two (2) more interns have been requested. Senator Gallo has reached out to Rhode Island College, Adriana Dawson offered to reach out to Roger Williams University, and Lisa D'Agostino offered to forward additional resources to Tejal.

2016 Meetings

Tejal Tarro reviewed the 2016 meetings list with the Commission. 6:30 pm on the first Monday of every month is the most agreeable meeting time for the members, however a couple of holidays occur on those days which require moving some meetings. On a motion by Maribeth Calabro, seconded by Senator Gallo, the Commission unanimously voted to move the September 2016 meeting to the second Monday of the month as well as to move the October meeting to the third Monday of the month (October 17th).

Review of Economic Equity (Pay Equity) Deck

Tejal Tarro informed the group that she met with the Governor's Office last week on this topic, and reminded the Commissioners that there are challenges beyond the concept of equal pay for equal work. Collaboration with a number of organizations must occur, and the mission must include improving the lives of Rhode Island families and fostering economic growth. Commissioners reviewed and discussed a draft Economic Pay Equity Program slideshow, and the Tejal Tarro informed the group that the Commission will help drive change.

Assignment of Subcommittees and Q1 Goals

Tejal Tarro informed the group that Stephanie Gonzalez will serve as chair of the Process subcommittee, which will develop a framework for pay equity. The Commission discussed some potential conflicts with the Department of Labor & Training housing the pay equity certification review process and discussed alternative entities to oversee and house the program. In addition, Commissioners discussed and drafted a potential resolution pertaining to the need for additional funding and resources in order to effectuate the pay equity strategy.