

Rhode Island Department of Health

Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

In attendance: Rosa Anderson, Cheryl LeClair, Edward D'Arezzo, Janice Fontes, Mira DeBarros, and Carrie Bridges

Call for Additional Agenda Items

There were no additional agenda items.

Approval of Minutes

Cheryl stated that she is still working on the May 21, 2008 minutes.

Update on Recruitment Activities

Ed was appointed to the EEO Committee as the representative of the Bio-Terrorism Team for a 2-year appointment. Mira, Rilwan, and Cheryl were appointed for another 2-year term. Cheryl stated that she would make these changes to the EEO membership list. Cheryl noted that the EEO Committee received applications from three folks interested in becoming an at-large member of the Committee. These individuals are Tammie Smith (CFHE), Phanida Kamsomphou (CFHE), and Christina Mathews (CFHE). The Committee approved two-year

memberships for these folks. Cheryl stated that she would notify the new at-large members of their acceptance and provide them with the schedule of remaining meetings for the year.

Refinement of Draft Work Plan

Today's discussion focused on the Committee's plans to inform the Department's Affirmative Action plan, for any contribution from the EEO is due to Ed by 6/30/08. Ed noted that setting a hiring goal for folks with disabilities is difficult, because we are limited in the questions that we can ask. He also noted that Program Managers have an opportunity to cast the net wider and longer if they are not satisfied with the diversity of candidates for posted positions. Carrie wondered if it would be appropriate to have someone from personnel sit in on hiring interviews to ensure diversity. Ed noted that we did do so in the past and that it is a budgetary issue. Carrie wondered if it would be appropriate to have a representative of the EEO Committee sit in. Ed said that it might be possible and encouraged the Committee to submit a proposal to the Department's Executive Committee for consideration. He encouraged the Committee to think about whether its role should be as an auditor or as an active participant in the hiring process.

Ed noted that the Department has a unique culture. We need to build upon these talents. If we want to maintain our identity as a Department we will have to continue to address management level

issues. We cannot just push everything off to OHHS. Rosa noted that URI sends the states' "white card" (titled the Affirmative Action File) out to applicants and the applicant sends it back in to URI. Ed said that OHHS could do something like this. Carrie noted that folks want to know how the information is being used. Mira noted that for many people, sharing personal information is scary. Ed noted that on the state's "white card", folks are allowed to select only one "racial" category. Carrie noted that this practice might not comply with federal requirements and that the Committee might want to point that out to the state EEO Office at some point. Rosa noted that the information goes on employee's "green sheet" (titled CS3 Form). She noted, however, that disability status is not included on this form. The group closed the meeting by assuring Ed that the EEO Committee was committed to meeting his deadline for informing the Affirmative Action Plan this year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30 am.

Schedule of Remaining 2008 Meetings

Wednesday, July 16, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302

Wednesday, August 20, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302

Wednesday, September 17, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302

Wednesday, October 15, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302

Wednesday, November 19, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 302

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 9:30 am – 10:30 am Room 306*

***Please note the room change for the 12/17/08 meeting.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Bridges

Cheryl LeClair