

# **Mental Health Advocate Search Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**January 30, 2012**

**3:05 pm – 3:55 pm**

**Department of Administration**

**Executive Dining Room, Ground Floor**

### **Members present:**

**Antonelli, Richard**

**Bandusky, Raymond**

**Curran, James**

**Feldman, Charles**

**Friedman, Fredric**

**Gross, Chaz**

**McNulty, Jim**

**Pierre, Claude-Anthony**

**Rollins, Bruce**

**Sullivan, James**

**Turano, John**

**The Open Session of the Mental Health Advocate Search Committee was called to order at 3:05 pm, Stephen Hourahan, Senior Advisor to Governor Chafee, pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Open Meeting Law, so called, and other applicable provisions of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as amended. A quorum was established.**

**Stephen Hourahan welcomed the Committee and thanked them on behalf of the Governor for volunteering their time to participate as a member of the Search Committee. Stephen stated that there were a total of 27 applications, however, only 19 applicants were qualified according to the statute, which requires the appointee shall be a member of the Rhode Island Bar who has been practicing law for at least five years. Mr. Hourahan stated that the committee is charged with interviewing and forwarding a minimum of three candidates to the Governor for his consideration and that a total of five candidates would be acceptable. He also informed the committee that this particular appointment requires the Advice and Consent of the State Senate, therefore, the Governor would like to receive the Search Committee's recommendations in a timely manner in order for him to interview the candidates and to submit a candidate to the Senate for approval before they adjourn in June.**

**Mr. Hourahan informed the committee that they are required to elect a Chair and a Vice Chair from amongst the committee to carry out the charges of the Search Committee. Mr. Hourahan stated that he was**

**not going to have a role in this search committee, but that he wanted to again thank the committee for their willingness to serve. Mr. Hourahan introduced Christine DiFilippo as the Search Committee's facilitator who will assist the committee in carrying out the Search.**

**Ms. DiFilippo called the committee to nominate a Chairman and Vice Chairman.**

**Charles Feldman nominated Richard Antonelli as Chairman, seconded by John Turano. The Committee unanimously voted Richard Antonelli as Chairman of the Search Committee. Richard Antonelli accepted the nomination.**

**Chairman Antonelli then called the committee to nominate a Vice Chair of the committee.**

**Tony Pierre nominated James McNulty as Vice Chair, seconded by Charles Feldman. The Committee unanimously voted James McNulty as Vice Chairman of the committee.**

**Chairman Antonelli stated that the timeline and the mission was clear according to Stephen Hourahan's statements, and that he would like to discuss the interview process.**

**Christine DiFilippo informed the Committee that the binders that were distributed to them at the beginning of the meeting contained 19**

applications. Christine explained that the previous committee had taken a week to review the applications and returned to elevate 6 out of the 8 applicants for an interview process. The Committee rated the candidates 1 through 5, with 5 being the highest score.

Chairman Antonelli stated that the process of reviewing 19 applications may take longer than one week and also inquired about the rating process.

Dr. Friedman questioned the open meeting law and the ability for the committee to have frank discussions regarding the candidates. Christine informed the committee that in the case of public attending a meeting, the committee may go into Executive Session for the purpose of having detailed discussions regarding the candidates.

Mr. Feldman informed the Committee that he sits on a board of directors with one of the applicants who have applied. He questioned whether it would be necessary for him to recuse himself from any conversations or voting. Mr. Turano stated that Mr. Feldman should recuse himself for that particular candidate so that there is no question about objectivity.

Mr. Bandusky stated that it should be understood by the Committee that there shouldn't be any contact between committee members and candidates. Committee members agreed.

**Mr. Rollins stated that he served on an interview panel for the Director of the Department of Children Youth and Families which required the committee members to sign a code of conduct agreement. This would allow the Search Committee to perform effectively its duties and be held accountable pursuant to the agreement and to protect against the improper disclosure or dissemination of confidential information to anyone outside of the Search Committee.**

**The Search Committee unanimously agreed to sign a similar code of conduct agreement. Ms. DiFilippo stated that she would touch base with that department to obtain a copy of that agreement and have the Legal Counsel in the Governor's Office revise it to pertain to the Mental Health Advocate Search Committee.**

**Chairman Antonelli opened discussion regarding the interview questions. Christine DiFilippo informed the Committee that the interview questions used from the previous search committee were in the binder for their review.**

**Dr. Sullivan commented that the previous search committee created a subcommittee to determine questions for the interview process. He stated that the subcommittee spent quite a bit of time and effort giving thoughtful consideration regarding the diversity and scope of**

**questions.**

**Dr. Sullivan stated it is important for the Mental Health Advocate to not only have excellent legal skills, but to also have people skills, who are compassionate with good advocacy skills in order to support the needs of people who cannot support the needs of themselves.**

**Dr. Friedman inquired as to whether any of these candidates had applied in the previous search. Christine DiFilippo stated that there were three individuals who have reapplied. Dr. Friedman suggested that a few of the questions be changed.**

**Vice Chairman McNulty suggested that a subcommittee be formed to review and revise the interview questions as well as determine a Likert scale for scoring the candidate's legal experience and knowledge of mental illness, etc. The Committee unanimously agreed to create a subcommittee consisting of the following members: James McNulty, James Sullivan, John Turano, Ray Bandusky, and Dr. Fredric Friedman. It was also agreed that once the subcommittee created the Likert scale it would be e-mailed to the committee members so they may use it to evaluate the candidates before the next meeting.**

**It was determined that the time and date for the next Search Committee meeting would be held on Monday, March 5th at 2:30 p.m.**

**Having no further business, Chairman Antonelli made a motion to adjourn, Vice Chairman McNulty moved to adjourn and was seconded by John Turano, the meeting was unanimously approved to adjourn.**

**The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.**