

Minutes



Executive Committee

Monday April 17, 2006 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Governor's Commission on Disabilities

John O. Pastore Center (Formerly the Howard Center)

41 Cherry Dale Court

Cranston, RI 02920

(voice) 401-462-0100 (tty) 462-0101 (fax) 462-0106

(e-mail) disabilities@gcd.ri.gov

(website) www.disabilities.ri.gov

Secretary:

Bob Cooper

Attendees:

Paul Choquette (Chair); John McDonald (Vice Chair); Rosemary Carmody; Regina Connor; Judi Drew; Binyamin Efreom; Vicki Ferrara; Ronald McMinn; & Bill Nieranowski

Excused:

Timothy Flynn; Scott Greco; & Paul Grenon

Minutes

4:00 PM

Call to Order

Paul Choquette, Chair

Discussion: Call to order at 4:00 PM.

MOTION: To accept the minutes of the previous meeting, as mailed RMcM/RCa passed, BE abstained

4:05 PM

Recommendations for Appointment to the Commission Paul Choquette

➤ Interviewed a potential nominees for appointment to the Commission; Sanford Lupovitz of Cranston is a founding member of the RI Business Leadership Network and owner of RI Bureau of Investigation, Inc. He sees a need for more communication with the BLN and the Commission. Another potential nominees Andy Argenbright of East Providence is a member of the Disability Business Enterprise Committee and the owner of Andy Argenbright, CPA.

4:15 PM

Advice and Consent to the Appointment of Chairs of the Disability Parking and Employment Committees Paul Choquette

The chairs of the Disability Parking and Employment Committees have indicated they do not wish to be reappointed when their term of office expires May 1, 2006. The Commission's Chair will be appointing new chairpersons who will need the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.

MOTION: To give advise and consent to the appointment of:

- Ronald McMinn to be chairperson of the Disability Parking Committee; and
- Patricia Ryherd to be chairperson of the Employment Committee BE/RCa passed RmC abstained

4:30 PM Request from the Legislation Committee for the support from the Commission for H 7629 Sub A Relating to Human Services Bob Cooper, Executive Secretary

Discussion: The Executive Secretary submitted a potential draft substitute to Rhodes to Independence, based on their presentation to the Legislation Committee. Below is that draft with **Rhodes to Independence modifications (in red)**. The Executive Secretary revisions to the Rhodes language **are in green**.

AN ACT RELATING TO RHODE ISLAND HOUSING AND MORTGAGE FINANCE CORPORATION

SECTION 1. Proposition to be submitted to the people. –

SECTION 2. Ballot labels and applicability of general election laws.

SECTION 3. Approval of projects by people.

SECTION 4. Legislative Findings-(a) The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

- (1) All Rhode Islanders, regardless of age or disability, what to live independently in the community or housing arrangement of their choice;
- (2) The lack of available, affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities and the elderly prevent many Rhode Islanders from obtaining this goal;
- (3) The use of home modifications provides people with disabilities and elders the opportunity to live and remain in the living environment of their choice;
- (4) Accessibility features can assist an individual in completing daily living tasks as well as enhance opportunities for work, community or social events, and supportive services;
- (5) Without necessary home modifications, many people feel isolated from the community and some are left with no choice but to move into a nursing home or institutional setting;
- (6) A one time cost of \$5,000 for a home modification saves the state \$44,896 annually in Medicaid expenses related to nursing home care;
- (7) The 40 individuals in Rhode Island, currently on a waiting list for home modifications, could cost the state in Medicaid expenses \$1,795,840 if they entered a nursing care facility;
- (8) Currently, in Rhode Island, there is limited funding for home modifications and the funding that is available is difficult to identify and obtain;
- (9) The current home modification delivery system is fragmented and uncoordinated with major gaps in services, funding, eligibility criteria and geographic locations;
- (10) The implementation of a home modification revolving loan fund will provide loans for accessibility modifications to the residences, whether rentals or purchased homes, of people with disabilities and the elderly so they can remain active members of our society.

SECTION 5. Chapter 42-55 of the General Laws entitled “Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation” is hereby amended by adding the following section:

42-55-31. Access independence Home Modifications revolving fund for People with Disabilities and the Elderly.

(a) There is created, as a separate fund within the treasury, the ~~access independence home modifications~~ revolving fund for people with disabilities and the elderly. The fund shall consist of any home modifications for people with disabilities and the elderly general obligation bonds and temporary notes approved by the people, any sums that the state may from time to time appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts, bequests, or otherwise from any public or private source, which money is

1 intended to for the purpose of making home modifications to the primary residence of persons who have a
2 disability, are over the age of 65, or are the caregiver of a family member with a disability or is over the
3 age of 65, ~~or the purpose of improved accessibility and/or~~ to allow such persons to live more
4 independently in the community.

5 (b) The treasurer shall contract with the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation for
6 the administration and disbursement of funding. The Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance
7 corporation shall adopt rules and regulations in conjunction with the governor's commission on
8 disabilities consistent with the purposes of this section and the Administrative Procedures Act, chapter 35
9 of this title, which provide for the orderly and equitable disbursement and repayment of funds.

10 (c) All funds placed in the ~~access independence home modifications~~ revolving fund ~~for people with~~
11 ~~disabilities and the elderly~~ shall be made available to make loans to individuals and ~~non-profit~~
12 ~~organizations landlords~~ for the purpose of making modifications to the primary residence of persons who
13 have a disability, are over the age of 65, or are the caregiver of a family member with a disability or is
14 over the age of 65 to allow such persons to live more independently in the community.

15 (d) Loans made available under the provisions of this section may be made directly, or in cooperation
16 with other public and private lenders, or any agency, department, or bureau of the federal government or
17 the state.

18 (1)The loan guarantees pursuant to this section shall be available on the basis of a sliding scale
19 relative to the homeowner's income and assets to the cost of the home modifications.

20 (2) Interest subsidies shall be means tested and may be zero interest loans pursuant to income
21 standards developed by the director of the Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance
22 corporation.

23 (3) Repayment of any loan pursuant to this chapter may be delayed until the sale of the principal
24 residence by the homeowner.

25 (e) The proceeds from the repayment of any loans made for that purpose shall be deposited in and
26 returned to the ~~access independence home modifications~~ revolving fund ~~for people with disabilities and~~
27 ~~the elderly~~ to constitute a continuing revolving fund for the purposes provided in this section.

28 (f) Nothing contained herein shall be construed as giving rise to enforceable legal rights on entitlement to
29 any services.

30 (g) The director of Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance corporation shall submit annually reports
31 to the general assembly detailing the status of the access independence program.

32 (h) ~~As used in this chapter section the term:~~

33 (1) "home modification" shall mean an adaptation to the living environment for ease of use,
34 safety, security and/or to allow such persons to live more independently in the community; and

35 (2) "person who have a disability" shall mean a person who has a physical or mental impairment
36 which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities including but not
37 limited to walking, talking, hearing, seeing, breathing, learning, performing manual tasks, and
38 caring for oneself.

39 **SECTION 6. ~~Independent Evaluation of Home Modification Revolving Loan Fund Program-An~~**
40 **independent evaluation of the effectiveness and administration of this program will take place no later**
41 **than one year after the fund becomes operational. The Rhodes to Independence will perform the**
42 **evaluation and a full report with findings will be presented to the House Finance Committee for review no**
43 **later than eighteen months after the fund becomes operational. Funding for this evaluation is authorized**
44 **not to exceed \$100,000.**

45 **SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon passage.**

MOTION: To support concept of Draft **H 7629 Sub A Relating Rhode Island Housing And Mortgage Finance Corporation**, and direct staff to assist in the drafting of the final version. Rca/RMcM passed, Nay-BE, Abstained-BN

4:40 PM Planning the Orientation and Retreat Session Paul Choquette

Discussion: The chairperson in consultation with the Executive Secretary proposed the following agenda for the orientation session(s)

1st day: Orientation To Responsibilities

▪ DOA Lawyer to discuss Commissioners responsibilities (as employers, etc.)	½ hr
▪ Ethics Commission Trainer	½ hr
▪ BREAK & Power Point Commission History	½ hr
▪ Open Meetings Law / Public Records Law	¼ hr
▪ Functions of the Commission meetings	¼ hr
▪ Functions of Committees, commissioners, staff , fellows & volunteers	¼ - ½ hr
Time for Questions and Answers (spread throughout the session)	
	3 ½ hrs

2nd day: Interactions of Commissioners, Committee Members, Staff & Volunteers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The responsibilities of: <i>Staff, Committee chairs, liaisons, Cable TV producer, & a mediator each example of a project or task that they (or their committee) are currently working on or have recently completed</i> 	
▪ Commission staff, 7 @ 5 minutes	½ hr
▪ Committees, 11 @ 5 minutes	1 hr
▪ Liaisons 15 @ 2 minutes	½ hr
BREAK	¼ hr
▪ Cable TV (including sample video)	12 minutes
▪ Mediators	3 minutes
Time for questions and answers (spread throughout the sessions)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exercise (for everyone) <i>Think of how your personal involvement with the GCD and/or the tasks your committee undertakes allows the GCD to achieve the following:</i> ➤ <i>Advocates on behalf of People with Disabilities;</i> ➤ <i>Expand economic opportunities for businesses owned by or employing people with disabilities;</i> ➤ <i>Increase the general awareness of the rights and concerns of individuals with disabilities and their families; and</i> ➤ <i>Ensures that people with disabilities have access to their government</i> 	1 hr
	3 ½ hrs

Discussion: Members discussed the need to include up to an hour each day for questions, answers, and interactions.

MOTION: To appoint a subcommittee (PC, JD, VF, BN, & RCa) to revise the orientation agenda and report back to the Executive Committee. JMacD/RMcM passed unanimously

Discussion: The Retreat should include a look at the statutory responsibilities and

determine what can be realistically accomplished.

A pre-survey of goals to be accomplished and post-survey on what has been accomplished. BN will word on a sample pre & post survey.

MOTION: To invite to the orientation only commissioners and staff. BE/RCo passed unanimously

Members reviewed the survey questionnaire, revision of section 5, and add a comments item to each section. Have surveys returned to Commission in care of Judith Drew. Returns will be by May 15th

5:15 PM Status of Grants / FY 06 Expenditures

Bob Cooper

Discussion: As of April 1st the grant balances are:

Account/Grant	Expended	Encumbered	Total	Balance
Disability Business Enterprise	\$68,974	\$11,322	\$91,066	\$8,934
Promoting Work	\$58,557	\$9,824	\$68,381	\$9,619

Discussion: There enough HRIC Grant Funds remaining so both Chris' could spend 60% of their time on HRIC related activities with a small balance available to cover expenses.

	Hours	Days	Personnel	Other
Disability Business Enterprise	294	42 days	\$8,552	\$382
Promoting Work	288	41 days	\$9,004	\$615

Account/Grant	Expended	Encumbered	Total	Balance
ADA Technical Assistance	\$18,109	\$14,900	\$33,009	\$25,262

Discussion: If during the 4th quarter Harvey spends 10%; Chris Rancourt 40% & Chris Botts 10% on ADA activities, just about \$23,200 could be carried over into FY 07.

	Hours	Days	Personnel	Other
ADA Technical Assistance	252	36	\$ 9,779	\$1,485

Account/Grant	Expended	Encumbered	Total	Balance
HAVA Election Assistance	\$4,990	\$78,018	\$12,903	\$80,051

Discussion: With Al's retirement Nick has been spending 3 days a week (60%) on polling place surveys and Harvey is staffing the Election Assistance Committee as it finalizes mini-grants to the cities and town, spending about ½ day per week. The requests and awards for polling place renovation mini-grants come to about \$25,100. This will leave a balance that can be carried forward to continue voter registration & education beyond the 2006 election cycle.

	Hours	Days	Personnel	Other
HAVA Election Assistance	294	42	\$16,235	\$63,770

Account/Grant	Expended	Encumbered	Total	Balance
General Operating	\$442,247	(\$25,649)	\$416,598	\$121,723

Discussion: The projected surplus about \$1,400.

	Hours	Days	Personnel	Other
			\$115,955	\$5,768
Account/Grant	Expended	Encumbered	Total	Balance
Mary Brennan Fellowship	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
<p>Discussion: Only two of the fellowships have been filled. A third fellowship was awarded by the student has not begun yet. Due to scheduling difficulties it would appear that the student will not be able to complete 240 hours prior to June 30th.</p>				
<p>MOTION: To adopt the 4th quarter expenditure/resource allocation proposal as revised to include averaging 8 hours per week for public relations JMacD/BN Passed unanimously</p>				
5:25 PM Announcements & Scheduling Meetings			Paul Choquette	
<p>Discussion: The Orientation Subcommittee will meet on May 2nd @ 12:30 – 2 PM.</p>				
Adjournment at:		5:58 PM		