

**RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**MEETING OF THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**

**April 25, 2007**

The Science & Technology Advisory Council (“STAC”) met on Wednesday, April 25, 2007 in Public Session in Senate Hearing Room 313 at the RI State House, Providence, Rhode Island pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.

The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Dr. Joseph Amaral, Dr. Clyde Briant (Co-Chair), Dr. David Hibbitt, Mr. Saul Kaplan, Dr. Thomas Rockett, Dr. Jeffrey Seemann (Co-Chair), Mr. Donald Stanford.

Members absent were: Mr. Paul Choquette, Ms. Kimball Hall, Dr. Margaret Leinen,, Mr. Daniel Martin, Dr. Richard Nadolink and Mr. Thomas Ryan.

Also present were Governor Carcieri, Lt. Governor Roberts, Senator William Walaska, Representative Gordon Fox, members of the Governor’s and RIEDC’s staff and Attorney Robert I. Stolzman. Drs. Briant and Seemann presided over the meeting.

**Welcome**

Dr. Seemann called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and announced the meeting would begin as an information session until a quorum of the Council was present. He introduced Governor Carcieri who thanked the General Assembly for all their support of STAC and thanked STAC for its dedication to providing policy recommendations to state leaders to insure that Rhode Island achieves an innovation economy. The Governor expressed that he was pleased by all the success STAC has achieved to date and presented guest speaker Robert Atkinson with a citation for the work he had done in the area of economic development and innovation.

Dr. Seemann next recognized Senator Walaska who stated how critical it was for state leadership to work collaboratively to insure the future vitality of our economy. He stated it was essential for policy makers to better understand the importance of technological innovation and presented Robert Atkinson with a citation from the General Assembly acknowledging his contributions in this area.

Dr. Seemann then recognized Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts who also expressed how important collaboration is and how we must continue to work to bring higher education and the business community together for research and development projects.

At 2:25 p.m. a quorum was reached and the meeting moved into public session.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Pursuant to the minutes of the January 2007 meeting, Legal Counsel Robert Stolzman confirmed the indemnification language in the Council by-laws has been corrected to appropriately reference the Council as a not-for-profit organization. The Council then voted on a motion by Mr. Kaplan and seconded by Dr. Amaral to accept the minutes with minor changes to the section on the URI Commission as read by Dr. Briant.

### **URI Commission**

Governor Carcieri introduced Hon. Robert G. Flanders, Jr. as the Chair of the URI Commission for Research and Innovation. The Commission was created to propose specific actions to strengthen the position of the University of Rhode Island as a nationally competitive public research university and a key institution in Rhode Island's effort to strengthen its innovation economy. The Governor reaffirmed the importance of URI as a key driver of Rhode Island's innovation economy and stated he was pleased to have someone such as Robert Flanders who has such extensive professional experience and a long history of service to our state accept the position as chair of this Commission. Judge Flanders stated he was honored to take on such an important task.

### **Innovation Tax Credit**

Dr. Briant updated the Council on the progress of implementing the tax credit. In the time since the January meeting, legal counsel has worked with the EDC to draft rules and regulations for the tax credit which are now currently in the public notice and comment period. A public hearing was held April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Comments may be submitted until May 16<sup>th</sup> after which the regulations will be finalized.

### **Research Alliance**

Dr. Briant stated initial written progress reports are due next month from the 2007 Collaborative Grant awardees. Regarding education initiatives, Dr. Briant reported that on April 12, STAC hosted a one-day forum entitled "Expanding Rhode Island's Research and Development Capacity through Collaboration." Nearly 100 participants attended the event including members of Rhode Island's academic and commercial research community, and business and community leaders interested in supporting collaborative research in Rhode Island.

Speakers included nationally and locally-renowned scientists and researchers from institutions such as the National Science Foundation, Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Harvard, Johns Hopkins and our own universities. Presenters discussed the national landscape for collaboration as well as their personal insights on how collaboration was making a difference in their work.

### **Legislative Initiatives**

Dr. Seemann reported that STAC's 2007 legislative recommendations were included in the budget package sent by the Governor to the General Assembly and remain under consideration. Those recommendations include continued support for the RI Research Alliance and STAC as well as support the RI-WINs request for a state credit enhancement for \$28 million of private sector debt to finance state wide rollout of the our proof-of-concept business model and a \$600,000 budget request to launch and operate the Rhode Island IT and Digital Media Center.

### **Other Initiatives**

Dr. Seemann also reported that the Council joined the Business Innovation Factory, the Tech Collective, the New England Institute of Technology and the RI Department of Education, to sponsor an effort to make RI the first state to offer inventor Dean Kamen's FIRST VEX robotics to each high school. Thirty-one high schools across the state - - the largest first year participation rate for any state – participated in the program.

### **2007 New Economy State Index**

Donald Stanford introduced guest speaker, Robert Atkinson who presented findings from “The 2007 State New Economy Index”, a study he authored and produced in cooperation with the Ewing Marion Kaufmann Foundation. The Index is a state-by-state analysis of how state economies are transforming from an old industrial economic model based on “smokestack chasing” to an innovation economy dedicated to the creation and retention of high value-added, high-wage jobs. The Index lists Rhode Island as one of the top five states making the greatest strides in transforming to a knowledge-based economy and outlines a public policy framework of “best practices” that states can use as a guide to support innovation and entrepreneurship.

### **New Business**

There was no new business.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business in Public Session, upon a motion duly made by Dr. Amaral and seconded by Dr. Stanford, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m. The next meeting for STAC will be held October 4, 2007.

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Christine M.B. Smith  
Secretary