

**Draft for discussion purposes**

**1696 Historical Commission Meeting**

**Minutes of July 27, 2015**

**The members of the 1696 Historical Commission met on July 27, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 203 of the Rhode Island State House.**

**Commission members present:**

**Secretary of State Nellie M. Gorbea, Chairperson**

**Keith Stokes, Mayforth Group**

**Julia Jordan-Zachery, Providence College**

**Valerie Tutson, RI Black Storytellers**

**Theresa Moore, T-Time Productions**

**Joanna Doherty, RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission**

**Rochelle Lee**

**Geralyn Ducady, Haffenreffer Museum, Brown University**

**Elyssa Tardif, RI Historical Society**

**Marcia Ranglin-Vassell**

**Commission members absent:**

**Mary Ann Snider, RI Department of Education, Vice Chairperson**

**Barrymore Bogues (out of the country for the month of July)**

**Joyce Stevos, RI Black Heritage Society**

**Mary Gwann**

**Paul Gaines, Retired Educator**

**Staff present:**

**Ken Carlson, Reference Archivist**

**Tom Evans, State Librarian**

**Jason Martiesian, Director of Legislative Affairs**

**Guests:**

**There were no guests in attendance.**

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

**Secretary Gorbea called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. The members in attendance introduced themselves.**

**II. Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made by and seconded by to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2015 commission meeting. The minutes were approved by a vote of 10-0.**

**III. Subcommittee Report**

**Rhode Island African American History Curriculum Guide Draft:**

**There was discussion of the Curriculum Guide outline that was revised by the subcommittee. The guide will serve as a template to direct the commission's work going forward around the design of a curriculum. The commission discussed if fourteen is the appropriate number of units. It was agreed that this could be determined at a later date based on input from the Department of Education and other**

**organizations focused on curriculum design and teaching. After discussion several changes were made to the curriculum guide. In addition, Secretary Gorbea will contact the Rhode Island Indian Council to determine the correct reference with regard to persons “native” to the country.**

**A motion was made by Rochelle Lee and seconded by Theresa Moore to approve the Curriculum Guide based on the revisions made by the commission. The motion was approved by a vote of 10-0.**

#### **Curriculum Consultant:**

**The commission discussed the possibility of retaining a curriculum guide to assist in designing the curriculum and advancing the commission’s work. Theresa Moore and Keith Stokes had discussions with the Choices Program at Brown University. Choices expressed interest in speaking further and that it does fit with the work of their organization. Keith Stokes will speak with Choices to determine availability to talk further with them in late August. It is important that the Department of Education be in attendance for this meeting.**

**Secretary Gorbea, Valerie Tutson and Rochelle Lee will speak with the Rhode Island Foundation regarding the potential for the Foundation to support the commission’s work.**

**In addition, Theresa Moore will speak with Linda Newton from the**

**Black Philanthropy Fund and Valerie Tutson will talk with Judge Walter Stone from the Black Philanthropy Fund regarding their interest in supporting the commission's work.**

**The Rhode Island Historical Society is able to handle the funding of the curriculum consultant on behalf of the commission should that decision be made. Elyssa Tardif mentioned a possible memorandum of understanding with the Rhode Island Historical Society with regard to the work being done.**

#### **IV. Commission Work Plan – Next Steps**

**There was discussion of the commission holding a public meeting to hear from persons across the state and that this also might be an opportunity to learn about what is already taking place around African American history. Julia Jordan-Zachery agreed to lead the work on the public meeting with assistance from Theresa Moore, Valerie Tutson and Marcia Ranglin-Vassell. Dr. Jordan-Zachery will contact the Secretary's office to determine her availability.**

**The commission also discussed the importance of ensuring that the work that they do is acted upon and incorporated in the education curriculum. The Department of Education hosts an Innovation Summit that might be a good opportunity to get feedback from teachers. Also, it was mentioned how important it is to prepare teachers, administrators and students for this curriculum. The commission must get the word out to the schools.**

**There was discussion around the lack of program and teachings in the schools during Black History Month. There is an opportunity to get more visibility and education around black and African American history in the schools.**

**A report is due to the General Assembly and the Governor by August 1, 2015. A report will be sent to the committee for their review this week.**

**The next meeting of the commission is scheduled for Thursday, September 10 at 4 p.m.**

#### **V. Public Comment**

**There was no public comment.**

#### **VI. Adjourn**

**The meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m.**

#### **Hand-outs:**

**Rhode Island African American History Curriculum Guide Outline**