

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, Rhode Island 02908

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 25, 2007

Time: 6:00 PM

Minutes recorded by: Karen Fifer Ferry

Minutes Approved on: May 8, 2007

Interpreters: Carol Fay, Jon Henry, Christine West

Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairperson Marc Gursky at 6:00PM in the RI School for the Deaf Conference Room.

II. Roll Call of Board of Trustees

In Attendance: Carol Dorros, Karen Fifer Ferry, Marc Gursky, Tracy Karasinski, Jennifer Milone, Travis Zellner (not yet official)

Excused: Neil Leahey, Kathleen Ellis

III. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. March 13, 2007

- i. Hold for now. One board member still reviewing.

IV. Public Comment

- a. Chairperson Gursky acknowledged school musical as amazing. Trustees Fifer-Ferry and Dorros echoed his sentiments.
- b. Interim Director John Plante said Old Rochester High School has asked RISD to perform there in May.

V. Reports

a. Interim Director

- i. Interim Director John Plante highlighted items from his Interim Director's report.
 1. John Carty and his daughter will be doing a modified "Close Up" with a group of junior students.
 2. Moosup gave \$1,000 for next year's "Close Up".
 3. Annual May Breakfast will be May 18th, not May 4th.
 4. RI School of Design project painted outside Middle School. They are interested in continuing the collaboration.
 5. RI Department of Health inspector visited RISD yesterday. Violations were cited:
 - a. Cafeteria hot water
 - b. Food preparation area
 - c. Upper Elementary Bathrooms
 - d. Cost to correct (including new water heater) estimated at \$13,000; work starts tomorrow. Department of Health was given corrective action plan. John Plante asked to report back to Board of Trustees next month.

VI. Reports

a. Sub-Committees

- i. Policy
 1. Committee has not met.
- ii. Budget and Finance
 1. Trustee Fifer Ferry reports that committee met to discuss upcoming budget, carpeting, ramps and other items. Last Friday, RIDE Budget Office contacted the school to inform them that there is a \$230,000 discrepancy in the latest reports. This will leave the school no funds for carpeting or dividers before June 30th. The Committee recommends contacting the State with the Board as to making contingency funds available. John added that the State has approved the front door security expense.

iii. Personnel

1. Committee met yesterday to discuss job description of Assistant Director, Curriculum and Instruction. Committee proposes that the Board accept the job description.
2. Chairperson Gursky reviewed the changes that were made to the previously existing job description. The committee wants it clearly understood that this person does not automatically become Director or Interim Director upon John's retirement without a separate decision by the Board.
3. Bruce Bucci pointed out that the Director position has ASL qualification requirement but Assistant Director does not and asked about the rationale.
 - a. Chairperson Gursky responded that the committee did not discuss ASL proficiency with regard to this position.
 - b. Travis Zellner suggested adding ASL and Deaf Culture awareness as qualifications.
4. The Director has responsibility to do teacher evaluations. Assistant Director may create evaluation tools.
5. Trustee Dorros discussed the difference between ASL proficiency and other sign language proficiency. Travis suggested the job description be tabled until the next Personnel Committee meeting on May 15th. Many suggested the requirements be ASL and other modes as befits the students at RISD. Bruce added that the communication gaps could be further closed by knowledge of Deaf Culture.
6. Chairperson Gursky asked whether the ASL-PI certification would also be required of faculty. Would we be excluding very qualified internal candidates?
 - a. He suggested we add to Required Qualifications language that incorporates:
 - i. **Familiarity with and understanding of Deaf Culture:** Agreed by consensus.
 - ii. **ASL and communication skills proficiency preferably evidenced by ASL-**

PI or SCPI: Agreed by consensus.

iii. **Change of title to:** Assistant Director,
Academic Programs

iv. CTBNL

1. Travis will chair this committee.

v. Board Development

1. Travis and Mary have been interviewed. Board of Regents meets tomorrow.

2. CDHH is looking for Deaf and Hard of Hearing members.

vi. Academic Standards and Curriculum

1. Committee has not met.

b. Coordinators

i. Transition

1. Last quarterly internships are being applied for at Stop & Shop.

2. Cheryl has started teaching Yoga to students and staff.

3. MaxMan Superhero will be at assembly tomorrow to educate and congratulate students regarding recycling.

ii. Elementary

1. Third and Fourth graders will go to State Ballet on May 10th with discussion of different jobs associated with the ballet (\$2.50/student).

2. On May 24th they will be attending Woonsocket Stadium Theater performance of Harry, the Dirty Dog (free tickets).

3. Just completed 11th Grade assessment; additional assessment will take place in May.

4. Elementary and Middle School teachers are looking at action plans and working with departments.

5. IEP meetings are used to review assessment with parents.

c. Sub-Committees

i. Building Committee

1. Trustee Dorros reported that committee met with architects (RGB) and the Department of Administration on April 17th. Contract between RGB and the State is not yet signed;

should be completed by this Friday, April 27th. Work will then proceed: site survey of Davies, selection of site by June 4th.

2. Effect of Lincoln's disapproval of courthouse at CCRI not yet determined.
3. Freezing of additional monies for building will not affect our project because our monies were approved in prior year.

ii. Director Search Committee

1. Trustee Milone reported committee will be meeting next week to decide on interview questions. Deadline for applications has passed; one additional email received after deadline.
2. **Due to delayed postings, the Board will continue to accept applications:** Accepted by consensus
3. Message should be rebroadcast and posted on sites, including:
 - a. Deaf Professional Network
 - b. Deaf Digest

VII. New Business

- a. Approval of Teaching Assistant Contracts
 - i. John Plante recommends approval of teaching assistant contracts.
 - ii. Changes to contract; new contract is for 3-year term:
 - 1. 35 hours/week changed to 37.5 hours/week
 - 2. Will be required to contribute to health benefits; used model of Council 94 because of similar salary ranges
 - 3. Opportunity to earn additional stipends if and only if earning of associate's or bachelor's degree
 - 4. Requirement of teacher assistant duty in lunchroom with provision for overtime.
 - iii. **Motion** made by Trustee Dorros to authorize Chairperson Gursky to sign teacher assistant contracts. Seconded by Trustee Fifer-Ferry. Approved unanimously.
- b. Discussion of Boy Scouts
 - i. Continued discussion of lack of non-discrimination policy
 - 1. PTO would need to hold charter; BOT could not.
 - ii. Discussion of issues:
 - 1. Anti-discrimination
 - 2. Same opportunities for girls
 - 3. Camp Rooster – start up again; previously grant funded. Issue of money not issue of staff time. Also would require background checks.
 - iii. **The Board agreed to not proceed with Boy Scouts at this time and to encourage administration and staff to research alternatives that offer equal opportunities and are non-discriminatory. Suggestion was made to involve PTO in exploration:** Approved by consensus.
- c. Safety Issues Update
 - i. John reported that front doors need to be custom made, expected in 2 weeks. A video and intercom system will be put in. People will need to state their business and be buzzed in. Ashley will call Jon Henry when needed.
 - ii. Roof leakage required moving of one classroom. John will let Chairperson Gursky know when next internal meeting of Safety Committee will be.

d. Executive Session

- i. No update on Dr. Redding litigation. No need for executive session.

VIII. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. March 13, 2007

- i. **Motion** to approve the minutes of March 13, 2007 as written.
Approved by consensus.

IX. Old Business

a. School Improvement Update

- i. Bruce Bucci reported that he and Debbie Topol attended a meeting at Rhode Island College. RISD is on task and on target. Final action plan is completed and being bound.
- ii. The School Improvement Team continues to meet regarding social and emotional issues, literacy issues, etc. May 1st meeting will have updates.

X. Adjournment

- a. Motion made by Trustee Fifer Ferry to adjourn meeting at 9:15PM.
Seconded by Trustee Milone. Approved unanimously.