

**Rhode Island Rehabilitation Association
Board Meeting August 11, 2010**

Present: Regina Connor, Linda Hughes, Susan Silva, Joe Murphy, Paul Autote, Sheila Moffat, Susan Shapiro, Roberta Greene-Whittemore and Rosemary Lavigne via speakerphone.

Called to order: 9:09 am

Minutes: accepted as corrected; Roberta Greene-Whittemore had agreed to assist on the membership committee, not co-chair due to her professional position within ORS.

Treasurer's report:

Joseph Murphy reported that the checking account has \$4,071.07, which included an NRA rebate \$177.90. There is \$11,000 in the CD. The treasurer's report was accepted.

President's Report

Regina Connor reported on CRCC changes, including a 10% reduction in the price of their on-line courses, which would assist people in keeping up with the CRC requirements. She also indicated they were offering liability insurance.

Committee Reports

Fund Raising :

Linda reported that the major fundraising would be money obtained from the programs, especially the upcoming program on vision and hearing impairment. The raffle which was conducted from March until June earned less than \$150, so a raffle is not very profitable for RIRA.

One of the responsibilities of the future president-elect will be the chairperson of the Fund Raising committee.

Program Committee:

- Linda reported that the initial training date discussed with Paige Berry from the Helen Keller National Center was no longer available because Paige was requested to attend an agency meeting on that date. She provided alternate dates which were discussed. October 27, October 25 and October 26 were chosen as alternate dates. Linda will confirm one of these dates with Paige. She mentioned that the training is provided for free but RIRA may have to pay for a hotel room for Paige. Roberta Greene-Whittemore had previously reserved Save the Bay for this program, but with the numbers estimated to be 75-100, she questioned whether Save the Bay would have adequate space. Alternate sites such as the Warwick Public Library, the Shriner's Hall and the Radisson Hotel were discussed and details will be obtained on these sites for the board's review.
- Roberta suggested the topic of auto-immune diseases such as Lupus, MS and Fibromyalgia.

- An educational program on diabetes was suggested again and the board was requested to look around for who might be a good speaker on this topic.
- Linda agreed to be the chairperson of the Program Committee.

Membership

- Michael Lombardi has resigned from RIRA and a new chairperson will be needed for this committee. Roberta has agreed to assist with this committee once a chairperson has been appointed.
- Regina requested that the secretary send a copy of the minutes out via e-mail to all RIRA members. She gave Linda the list so this could be done.
- New board members are needed. There was some discussion as to the importance of the organization to professionals as a means of networking, advocacy and education. Potential members ask what they can get out of the organization. The importance of networking and making connections to others in the field will need to be addressed.
- Paul Autote suggested a networking activity be provided for potential new members and the membership as a whole. Regina suggested a tea for Marie Youngkin's new book.
- Paul, Sheila Moffat and Karen Dougherty met to coordinate a website for RIRA, which has been set up by Sharon DiPinto through ORS, the address of which is www.ors.ri.gov/rira.html. A print-out of the home page was provided to all board members. They are looking for suggestions on what else to include in this website. The board meeting minutes, a message from the president and a list of advantages to joining RIRA was discussed. Currently, the by-laws are available. Regina thanked this committee for setting this up. It was discussed whether the site would remain connected to ORS or set up independently. Ultimately, it would be preferable to have it independent so RIRA could work on advocacy issues apart from the State agency. Susan Shapiro indicated she would talk with her son who might be able to help set up a free website.
- Karen and Sheila are also working on folders of information on RIRA to hand out.
- Paul suggested outreach to agencies in the field that might join with an agency membership.

Community Involvement: It was discussed that scholarships could be provided for members of the National Federation of the Blind or the Governor's Advisory Committee to attend the upcoming training from the Helen Keller National Center.

Old Business:

- Susan Shapiro gave board members a copy of the by-laws and some changes were discussed
 - ✓ Elimination of the public relations and newsletter committees
 - ✓ Committee chairpersons need to be RIRA members, but they may appoint committee members who are not members, (although they should be encouraged to join.)
- Monica Dzialo's name was submitted for NRA's Johnson Leadership Award.
- The president-elect position is still vacant.

New business: It was requested that RIRA again become a sponsor of the Tech Access Conference to be held November 30th. It would be an opportunity to hand out flyers or brochures. The board voted to sponsor up to \$300 for this.

Informational: The Youth Leadership Forum will be holding a spaghetti dinner on September 30th from 5:30-8:30. There will be prizes and an auction. Susan Shapiro has tickets.

Next meeting: Wednesday, September 15th, 9:00 am, in the 5th floor conference room at ORS.

Adjourned: 10:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Hughes