



RIEEA Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 21, 2017
Gulf Stream Bar & Grille

Coffee & Conversation: RIEEA's possible involvement in the March for Science

- RI Families in Nature will print postcards for kids to fill out telling the President why taking care of the Earth is important to them
- Postcards will show collaboration between RI Families in Nature, RIEEA, and South County Art Supply
- RI Families in Nature will set them up at a two-day event at SCAS as well as at Party for the Planet at the RWP Zoo
- Expensive to mail them all to DC; Suggested we could ask Senator Whitehouse to "deliver" them
- People felt the postcard and the March were not too "political" for RIEEA to be involved; Feel it is more about the importance of science and a civics learning opportunity

In attendance: Sam Polon, Emily George, Lauren Parmelee, Reada Evans, Molly Allard (and Baby Sam!), Kim Sullivan, April Alix, Jeanine Silversmith, Jim Murphy, Elisabeth Bux

Business Meeting

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

- Shared hard copy which showed a change Rachel made to the NEEEA Update; will email
 - Technically a quorum of 7 present (according to by-laws) but not a majority; tabled to April meeting
- Treasurer's Report (Bridget)
- Bridget not present; tabled to April meeting

Membership Update (Jeanine)

- Currently 39 individual members (same number as 2016)
- Currently 38 organizational members (anticipate more throughout the year to match 2016's number - 48)

New Member Introductions – no new members present

RI K-12 Environmental Literacy Assessment Project (RI-ELA) (Jeanine)

Initiative Committee Updates:

- Will vote to approve Committee Chairs at April meeting according to by-laws
- Jeanine and Committee Chairs had a conference call 3/14 to map out first steps
- All Committees will be hosting their first meetings in the first week of April to draft relationship maps and RFPs for marketing (I-1 & I-2) and evaluator (I-3) expert contractors
- Chairs will be able to present updates and more information at the next Roundtable Potluck May 4th
- Practice (I-3):
 - PLT
 - ✓ Sam, TeeJay (DEM), Jeanine, April, and Lauren will be attending the regional PLT trainings recently funded through MPI grants on Marketing and Fundraising
 - ✓ National PLT leader retiring. AFF Board voted to get rid of program. Deciding who will take over. Changes coming.
 - ✓ Discussed the original intention to get PLT up and running again in RI and then pass it off to another member organization given the new direction of RIEEA's work and priorities. Jeanine and Sam will open up the conversation with TeeJay to identify if DEM might be interested. RIC also willing to help them.

- GWRI EPA project
 - ✓ Only one applicant this round: The Greene School. They were approved to implement a composting program.
 - ✓ We anticipate more applicants in subsequent rounds given the timing and known interest from some member organizations.
- Operations (Chair, Elisabeth)
 - Executive Committee had a conference call 3/13 to discuss Operations Committee structure and tasks
 - Agreed the Executive Committee would get the Operations Committee up and running and then invite other board members to join. Lauren and Reada will be part of this committee moving forward. Email the Executive Committee if you're interested.
 - Identified administrative tasks that needed to start moving forward:
 - ✓ Bridget is working with Jeanine to purchase computer, printer, etc. within the budget (with possibility of Jeanine's fundraising efforts being able to increase this budget)
 - ✓ Elisabeth is looking into quotes for Directors & Officers insurance
 - ✓ Rachel and Jeanine have a call scheduled with Tango to find out more about the business, what membership entails, and if it could be a good fit for RIEEA
 - ✓ Elisabeth is looking into quotes for bookkeepers who could perform quarterly reconciliations and end of year tasks
 - Discussed staffing and need for developing staff handbook and contracts. Executive Committee will contact the Board in the next week or so about the next steps in the Operations Manager hiring process. Currently on track for hiring by April.
 - Committee will need to review and update by-laws to accommodate new organizational structure and staffing (as well as probably changing a quorum from 7 to 9 now that there are 17 Board members!)

Other Project Updates:

- Diversity conversation (Sam)
 - Proposing a separate committee that can focus on ensuring diversity in all other committee goals and activities. These committee members will work with the other committees directly, possibly having one member sitting on each of the other committees or vice versa?
 - This committee will host preliminary community meetings
 - Could take the lead on designing the theme of the next annual meeting
 - This work currently not funded like the other initiatives. Will need to think about this in the next steps of our fundraising strategy.
- Suggested the Board meets during the Summer this year as busy schedules allow:
 - July 11th at 5pm at Flatbread at the start of the fundraiser
 - August 8th at 9am on the deck of the Gulf Stream Bar & Grille
- Elisabeth will work on drafting a press release announcing both RIF and Pisces funding for this project; Jeanine, Lauren, and Audubon's PR person can edit
- Agreed RIEEA should participate in the ee360 Affiliate Leadership Clinic June 5-9 in West Virginia. Response needed by 3/24. Jeanine will throw back out to the Board via email to confirm the team of 4-6 people to attend (at least 3 of which need to also attend the October NAAEE Conference in Puerto Rico!) and will submit our application.

Other Items

Status of NEEA funding

- This supports funding to EPA and NOAA and is at risk of being cut
- Sarah from NAAEE shared information and a letter of support being circulated asking to maintain this funding and showcasing the benefits of EE
- Shareen is working with Reed and Whitehouse's offices to ask them to sign on to this letter
- Bridget is working through Save the Bay to reach out to Langevin and Cicilline's offices. (New update after the meeting: Cicilline and Langevin are signing on!)

- If necessary, RIEEA will write a letter of support as well. Check in with your member organizations so we can swiftly include your organization's name on the letter if the time comes.

Federal agency memberships

- Discussed RIEEA's practice of offering honorary memberships to state agencies. DEM has had this in the past. RIDE would be another possible agency to consider.
- The practice could open up a can of worms.
- Have to determine if the agency is actively involved already and what the benefit or return on investment is for RIEEA.

Envirothon sponsorship

- RIEEA has sponsored in the past as budgets allowed. It wasn't allotted in our 2017 budget.
- Recent years RIEEA sponsored with \$100 at the Gold level. Could consider sponsoring in the "Under \$99" category too.
- Decided to leave it to I-3's discretion to use the PD funds for this if they want. \$578 was raised in the raffle this year for the PD fund. \$200 was already spent on pizza for the Environmental Leadership Summit at Brown.

NEEEA

- Elisabeth emailed our letter to the NEEEA Executive Committee:
 - Positive response from Coleen (VP) who was hopeful for other ways for state collaboration and asked what we would need NEEEA to look like in order to be involved again. Elisabeth responded affirming our desire for collaboration and asking for an opportunity to have a phone call with her and other leaders at VT SWEEP.
 - Cynthia's (President) response was kind and also expressing disappointment that there was no opportunity for conversation before this letter. Elisabeth will respond explaining the long-term relationship RIEEA and NEEEA has had that has led to this decision.
- Update on recent NEEEA meetings (Sam):
 - Cynthia has stepped down off the Board
 - Outside bookkeeper is being hired
 - Next meeting on April 12th is an open "call to action." Sam and Rachel would appreciate as many RIEEA Board members as possible to attend with them.
 - RIEEA Board is also ready and willing to make phone calls to NEEEA Board Members if that would be helpful to Sam and Rachel in any way to reiterate that their actions are part of a collective response.
- Plan for statement and state outreach (Lauren)
 - After the April meeting RIEEA will prepare a statement to share with our membership and anyone else who inquires about our relationship with NEEEA
 - Will also make a plan for individual state outreach to reiterate our desire to collaborate and share our new strategic plan

Announcements

June 16th Closing Event for Nature Play Grant Program at the Zoo!

Next Board Meeting

April 11th 9:30-11:30am at The Greene School (Coffee & Conversations at 9:00am)