

**RIEEA Board Meeting  
Minutes  
Tuesday, April 14, 2015**

**Board Members Present:** Rupa Data, Rachel Holbert, Shareen Knowlton, Samantha Polon, Denise Poyer, Nicole Souza, Kristen Swanberg, Wendy Fachon, Molly Allard, Paul Dolan, Jim Murphy

April Alix and Andrea Stein attended Coffee and Conversation.

**Other Participants:** Jeanine Silversmith (RIEEA Coordinator), Lauren Parmelee, Heather Hamilton (SMILE), Wanda Angel (STB), Laurita Moscatelli (New Dawn Center), Dianne Mailloux (Blackstone Valley Explorer), Sue Korte (What Grows on RI)

**Site:** Acopia Harvest, Broad Street, Central Falls

**Coffee and Conversation:** April gave a presentation on using RIEEA's Pinterest page

**Welcome/Introductions**

**Treasurer's Report:** Approximately \$4500. Still have outstanding checks from the Flower Show to come

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** March 2015 minutes approved.

**Flower Show Wrap-up:** We are still waiting for a few reimbursement checks and the final number of attendees. We may have gone about \$200 over budget but mostly due to expenses such as the magnets and t-shirts. These are articles that will be used for many other events. Otherwise it looks like we broke even.

**Membership Report:** Two new individual and one organization membership.

**Website & Social Media update: (Chair – April Alix)** Rupa is stepping down as chair and April will take her place.

We are up to 300 likes on Facebook.

We were informed that there is an opportunity for RIEEA to develop a cloud based app, which would cost initially \$1000 and then \$99 per month. Website committee will investigate and report back to the board.

**Professional Development Committee update: (Chair – Andrea Stein)**

- Two new scholarships given out. Fund is currently at \$495, so 4 or 5 more scholarships are available for this year.
- Guideline for Excellence Workshop – We received an RFP to apply for a grant that would enable RIEEA to put on workshop with instructors from NEEAA. This would be a good opportunity to provide a professional development event focused on EE standards. The PD committee will explore our options and send out the application for the May 1 deadline.

- GEMS-Net training workshops for NGSS and new kits – Denise and Jeanine discussed meeting with Westerly School dept. and Kelly Shea, Teacher in Residence for GEMS-Net, explained how all the kits have been redesigned to have K through 8 meet the NGSS. All teachers must attend workshops to learn to use the new kits. Kelly invited environmental educators to attend the workshops to get to know the kits better.
- Kristen suggested we look at ways to position RIEEA for NGSS.

### **ELP: (Chair – Shareen Knowlton)**

- Environmental Literacy Assessment project – RIF
  - Initiative to fund a summit to take ELP to the next level. Would involve planning a strategy to create environmental literacy (EL) assessment tools.
    - Assessment of EL in classrooms
    - Correlation of EL and improvement on standardized tests.
    - Working with Johnny Frasier to do summit. Submitted the concept paper to RIF, who have given feedback.
    - Will likely happen; just hammering out details
- ELP/NGSS project – Pisces Foundation
  - Invited by Pisces Foundation to apply for a grant to advance ELP.
  - Meet with Peter McLaren. ELP needs to be updated especially with regards to NGSS. Reliable data needs to be added to support its use in education.
    - Consider working with a partner state who is at the same level in the ELP process as RI. Then go back to the Pisces Foundation and ask them to invite another state to take part in this project.
- Still exploring project suggested by Greene School to evaluate efficacy of having a school using ELP compared to one that does not. NAAEE – Judy Brown, has invited Shareen to Washington DC next month to meet with EL leaders and advocacy folks to see where things stand nationally with EL.
- Westerly Land Trust – has created a Westerly EE Council to explore how to get more EE into the Westerly School System. \$1,000 was written into their grant from the RIF for a RIEEA Representative to help this process. Jeanine will attend meetings and work with the WLT through the end of the grant (August).

### **Organizational**

- Goal setting for this year and beyond
- Broadening membership – Land Trusts, Farms
  - New clearing house: Northwest RI Supporters of Open Space (spin off of Friends of Gloucester Land Trust)
  - RI Land Trust Council
  - Two aspects of approaching land trust
    - Some want to have providers to do programs on their sites
    - Provide resources so that land trust can develop their own education programs
- Kristen proposes to form an organization committee to take a look at our strategic plan especially in regard to today's issues. They will then develop a 3 to 5 year plan for RIEEA, and bring it to the board for comment and approval.
  - Lauren, Jeanine, and Rachel have agreed to be on the committee.

- Kristen has been invited to do a presentation about RIEEA on May 1st at Community Boating Center. The Boating Center received a grant to do a program to connect boating organizations and look at options to provide STEM education programs
- RIEEA submitted presentation proposal to NAAEE around our unique approach to Environmental Literacy – looking at Green Ribbon Buildings and using Schools as a Tool. Conference is in San Diego.

**NEEEA Update:**

- Leadership Retreat, Friday, April 17 at Seacoast Science Center – Kristen, Jeanine, Sam, Emily George will be attending. This is a follow up from last year's retreat.
- Emily George/RWPZoo – is being approached by Kristen to become the NEEEA At-Large Representative
- NEEEA Conference November 8-10 at Waterville Valley in NH. They will have climate change experts doing workshops.

**Announcements:** Andrea Stein is winning the Project Wild Facilitator of the Year Award. In March Denise Poyer received the RI Blueways Alliance Stewardship Award at the Land and Water Summit and the Narragansett Chapter of Trout Unlimited Conservationist of the Year award.

W Alton Jones is evaluating their conference center and education center as separate entities. This may enable the EE center to continue.

Sue is redesigning her website, What Grows on RI, so that it has a better database to link environmental organizations and agencies or have at least some connection to the environment. [www.provgardener.com](http://www.provgardener.com).

Natural Awakenings is featuring walks provided by RIEEA organizations.

Envirothon on Friday, May 15 is looking for volunteers.

Radio station WMVY out of Martha's Vineyard is offering free spots to non-profits in the Newport area.

ASRI is offering a free bird walk every day in the month of May.

**Next meeting** – Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Road, Cranston