

Approved 5/9/17

RIEEA Board Meeting

April 11, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Shareen Knowlton, Joshua LaPlante, Jim Murphy, Kelly Shea, Andrea Stein, Rachel Holbert, Denise Poyer, Lauren Parmelee, Reada Evans, Bridget Prescott, Paul Dolan, Andrea Stein, Emily George, Samantha Polon

Other Participants: Jeanine Silversmith, Elisabeth Bux, Shari Bitsis (Greening the Sphere)

Location: The Greene School, West Greenwich, RI

Approval of February & March Meeting Minutes: Unanimously approved. No discussion

Treasurer's Report (Bridget)

- Currently have \$98, 129.06
- Includes \$23,000 from Pisces (\$18 service charge)
- Revenue- Raffle & Annual Meeting
 - Raffle brought in \$578 (for PD Scholarships)
- Expenses- Annual Meeting (\$1500), Project Manager, PO Box

Membership Update (Jeanine)

- 1 new individual member- Barbara Sullivan Watts (scientist that works with GEMS-Net)
- 41 Individual Members
- 39 Organizational Members

Operation Manager:

- Jeanine and Elisabeth were asked to leave the room
- Executive Committee put forth their recommendation for the Operations Manager position: Elisabeth Bux
- After discussion, board voted unanimously to approve the executive committee's recommendation to hire Elisabeth Bux as the **Operations** Manager.

RI K-12 Environmental Literacy Assessment Project (Jeanine)

- All initiatives held initial meetings with their teams last week.
- Overall, there were some new faces and even more people signed up, just couldn't make it.
- Jeanine & the chairs have not had a chance to meet after the initial meetings, but Jeanine's overall observation was that the meetings were successful, productive and there was a more clear understanding of the next steps
- Jeanine also mentioned that she was contacted by Nick Boke who is interested in our work. He attended 2 out of the 4 meetings, but is interested in staying involved with all of the initiatives and is writing an article for Eco RI on EE in RI.

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Initiative 1: EL Leadership & Partnerships (Bridget)

- Created a list of people to reach out to
- There was discussion around the role of the Marketing position
- They started to see where I1 & I2 overlapped (marketing materials created can be used by both)

There was general discussion by the board around the reasons why I1 & I2 should stay separate (seem to have same message)

- Some mentioned that I1 should focus on more advocacy and I2 should focus on the broader sector
- It was also mentioned that some cannot be involved in advocacy because of the agency they work for
- It was decided to keep them separate for now, but to be very mindful of how all the initiatives fit together and how they will inform each other; remembering they should not be operating in silos

Initiative 2: EL Supporting a Better RI (Molly/Elisabeth)

- Good turnout (around 10 people)
- Good mix of people
- Created a list of who to reach out to

Initiative 3: Striving for Excellence in EE Practice (Kelly)

- 15-20 people attended (scientists, higher ed, HS, Elementary, & EE all represented)
- Participants brought a diverse idea of what information should be gathered
- Working on getting RFP together for the survey designer
 - Need to make sure we have ownership of the data
 - Ethical Issues were also discussed (good insight was offered by Sara Sweetman)

Initiative 4: Monitoring the Status of K-12 EL (Rachel)

- Created a list of partners to reach out to
 - Will reach out to partners for ideas, advice, knowledge, etc.
- Rachel announced that she is stepping down as chair to dedicate her time and energy to the presidency role
 - Any board members interested in chairing this initiative should reach out to Rachel

Operations Committee (Rachel)

- The executive committee is working on filling the vacant VP position- stay tuned
- Transfer of signatory on RIF & Pisces to Rachel
- Rachel and Jeanine reported on TANGO
 - Free to join
 - Access to network of professional services & providers
 - Free professional development
 - Helps non-profits with organizational and operational needs
 - Elisabeth will get RIEEA signed-up
 - TANGO can also do a presentation for RIEEA members (possibility for an upcoming potluck)

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- Shareen mentioned the importance of not losing sight of our funding needs beyond the next 18 months especially regarding the marketing piece. We need to be mindful of how we will financially sustain growth
 - With the current grant we will be able have a marketing person create tools for us, but, we will need an ongoing presence beyond those tools
 - This will be part of the role of the operations manager (to seek additional funding), but we can all inform and assist in the process
 - Jim suggested it may be helpful to reach out to local colleges and universities to tap into their marketing students

Vote to Approve Committee Chairs- Bridget (I1), Molly (I2) and Kelly (I3) were approved unanimously by the board to chair the corresponding initiatives

- Rachel will serve as chair of I4 until a replacement is identified

Diversity Committee (Sam)

- Sam, April & Emily met to discuss diversity and its role within RIEEA
- They identified some guiding questions for each initiative
- Diversity should be incorporated throughout all initiatives
- Would be great to have at least one person on each initiative with an eye to diversity- reach out to Sam if you are interested in being that person
- Can we tap into the Diversity Centers at the local colleges and universities?
- May want to reach out to New England Grassroots Fund (already doing this work well)
- Should also tap into NAAEE; eePRO (Diversity Board)
- Also need to be mindful of the barriers that exist in our field
- May want to be mindful of the time of the meetings so that we are not excluding certain groups

PLT (Jeanine)

- March 30 -31 Jeanine, April ,Lauren, Sam & TeeJay attended a two day workshop covering topics of fundraising and marketing/promotion
- Planning to offer 2 workshops again this summer for teachers (looking for a sponsor, so that the workshops can be offered at no cost to teachers)
- TeeJay was approached about taking on the PLT program, but was not interested
- PLT is going through some major changes over the next few months
 - PLT is getting absorbed by another organization
 - Arbor Day Foundation and Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) are both being considered
- We are only obligated to remain state coordinator through the calendar year; we will “lay low” and wait to see what happens
 - Our MOU states that we just need to provide 30 day written notice if we decide to step down as state coordinators
 - We have no obligation to find a replacement

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NEEEA Updates (Rachel & Sam)

- Rachel, Sam, Shareen, Jeanine & Reada will attend the next NEEEA meeting (April 12th)
 - RIEEA would like to stay networked with other states, but does not have the capacity to stay involved as NEEEA rebuilds
 - May reassess down the line, but now our focus is on moving our initiatives forward
- Rachel had a positive conversation with Sarah Bodor from NAAEE who was supportive of RIEEA's decision to step away from NEEEA and asked RIEEA to let NAAEE know how they can better support us
- Board agreed that we need to form a cohesive statement about our decision that can be sent to members and partners (we can use the language that was used in the letter to NEEEA)

Other Items

Free Memberships for State Agencies

- As we move forward with initiatives, may want to consider them as partners instead (develop MOUs for exchange of services)
- Important to think about the benefit of a paying member vs. a non-paying partner
- For now we will keep certain individuals from state agencies on the member list to keep them in the loop

Earth Day Fundraiser

- Taking place on Monday & Tuesday at South County Art Supply
- Please spread the word!

March for Science

- March 22nd at the State House
- It was decided that RIEEA will not have a table; instead we will wear our t-shirts and pass out magnets to anyone interested

Announcements

- May 19th - Envirothon

Next Board Meeting:

Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at The Empowerment Factory at Hope Artist Village in Pawtucket (9:30-11:30)

Coffee and Conversations at 9:00 (Topic TBD)