

## **The President's Commission on People with Disabilities**

**Minutes: February 19, 2014, 2 pm**  
**Memorial Union 300, Student Senate Chambers**

- 1) In attendance: *Annette Bourbonniere, Leonard Gerber, Kerri Hicks, Joanne Lynch, Adam Moore, Joannah Portman-Daley, Pamela Rohland, Bridget Ruemmele, Christine Sullivan, Anita Jackson, Robert Ferrell, Athina Chartelain*
- 2) Introductions for new members (Robert Ferrell, replacing Darthula Mathews); Athina Chartelain is assigned as our agenda and minutes support person.
- 3) Old Business:
  - i) Naomi Thompson reflected on the President's response to the commission's name in terms of consistency with other commissions names and charges.
    - Naomi will talk to the president about attendance at a future meeting (already reflected in the charge of the commission)
    - In response to the discussion, a motion was made and seconded to change the name to "The President's Commission on People with Disabilities" adding the word "equitable" to the initial paragraph in **5.40.10 (The President's Commission on People with Disabilities** at the University of Rhode Island shall work to ensure an equitable, inclusive, universally designed, and welcoming community in terms of safety, wellbeing and education for students, faculty and staff who have disabilities.....)
      - The motion was approved
  - ii) Letters of appointment are in process per Department of Community, Equity and Diversity.
  - iii) **Future meetings for Spring semester - All are in Student Senate Chambers, Memorial Union from 2-3:30 on the following dates, (Athina Chartelain is assigned to us to help with minutes):**
    - Wednesday, [February 19](#)
    - Monday, [March 17](#)
    - Wednesday, [April 16](#)
    - Monday, [May 12](#)

## 4) New Business

- a) Minutes from Dec 9, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously
- b) Announcement about Voices Carry: Embody the Change, a Day Long Diversity and Inclusion Conference on Friday February 28, 2014 from 8 a.m – 4:30 pm – workshops are in and around the Memorial Union.
- c) Creating a brand → Robert Ferrell proposed creating a letterhead/emblem for the Commission
- d) The group worked to prioritize the proposed goals (see page 2)
- e) Specific actions and duties for commission members were discussed (i.e. create subcommittees for each priority)
- f) Subcommittees were informally grouped and will arrange to meet before March 17 for report out at that meeting.

**The group chose the following Commission Goals as top two priorities;** members present agreed to be part of either task force that will begin to address these priorities. We will reach out by e-mail to the other Commission Members who could not attend today in hope that they may have interest and availability to participate on a subcommittee.

Priority 1. Encourage a climate to celebrate differences and abilities among all people at URI, while affirming the many outstanding contributions of people with disabilities to the campus community; The sub committee might research other institutions ways of being inclusive (4-5 ppl)

Member Taskforce Priority 1	Email
Mary McDonald (suggested as a research resource - she is Library Faculty and a former disability resource mentor	<a href="mailto:marymac@uri.edu">marymac@uri.edu</a> (401)874-4635
Leonard Gerber** (Temporary facilitator)	<a href="mailto:legdoc@uri.edu">legdoc@uri.edu</a>
Annette Bourbonniere	<a href="mailto:abourbonniere@my.uri.edu">abourbonniere@my.uri.edu</a>
Anita Jackson	<a href="mailto:anitaj@uri.edu">anitaj@uri.edu</a>

Priority 2. Identify major topics of concern for people with disabilities:

- Discuss breaking into groups based on the type of disability
- OR environment type/functional need (e.g. technology, parking/curb cuts)
- Finding overlap between disabilities (e.g. PTSD & learning disability)
- Caregivers

Member Taskforce Priority 2	Email
Pamela Rohland	<a href="mailto:Rohland@mail.uri.edu">Rohland@mail.uri.edu</a>
Adam Moore ** (Temporary facilitator)	<a href="mailto:adam_moore@mail.uri.edu">adam moore@mail.uri.edu</a> <a href="mailto:adammmore@yahoo.com">adammmore@yahoo.com</a>
Christine Sullivan	<a href="mailto:Cmsullivan@mail.uri.edu">Cmsullivan@mail.uri.edu</a>
Bridget Ruemmele	<a href="mailto:bridgetr@uri.edu">bridgetr@uri.edu</a>
Kerri Hicks	<a href="mailto:kerri_hicks@uri.edu">kerri_hicks@uri.edu</a>
Joanne Lynch	<a href="mailto:jlynch@uri.edu">jlynch@uri.edu</a>

Next Steps:

1. We request that all members of the **PC on People with Disabilities** would make their voices heard by serving on one of the two task forces even if they are not available for one of the Commission meetings
2. Each task force will chose a permanent facilitator who can represent the group at the Commission meetings.

## The Following Goals were postponed for future discussion:

3. Propose policies, programs and training so that URI's ongoing dialogue of social justice and civil rights continues to include issues related to disability;
4. Collaborate with all areas of the university community to recommend accessibility, safety, and universal design of buildings, the curriculum, programs, and services;
5. Advise primary URI administrators on issues of disability;
6. Monitor the effectiveness of proposed/implemented policies and initiatives;
7. Communicate progress of these efforts to the administration and surrounding community; and
8. Submit to the senior leadership team and their designees, recommendations that would enhance inclusion and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.