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RIBA hosts three candidates for governor: Caprio, Chafee and Robitaille discuss small business issues

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In an unusual meeting format, the Rhode Island Builders Association's board of directors on June 1st welcomed three candidates for governor, each of whom were given a half hour to state their positions and answer questions.

Attending were a Democrat, current state treasurer Frank Caprio; an independent, U.S. senator Lincoln Chafee; and Republican John Robitaille. Another Democrat, attorney general Patrick Lynch, was unable to attend.

All three expressed their support for small business and workforce housing, saying they realize how important housing will be in bringing Rhode Island out of the recession.

Caprio said he is working on a broad plan to strengthen small business in Rhode Island. He also vowed to listen to all "good ideas," and he expressed sympathy when listeners said they were frustrated with overregulation.

Senator Chafee stressed his early connections with the construction industry while working his way through college. His economic plan, he explained, involves attracting more large companies to the state, strengthening small business and expanding already existing medical and educational institutions.

Robitaille also stressed small business and emphasized fiscal conservatism.

Committee reports

In other matters, Michael Artesani Jr. reported for the Remodelers Committee, stating that after his presentation on "What Customers Want" on June 24th at RIBA headquarters, the committee would take the summer off, offering programs again starting in late August.

Christine Lynch presented the health insurance committee report, reviewing the provisions and implications of the recently passed federal healthcare overhaul. She outlined possible alternatives for RIBA's health insurance plans as the federal system develops, but stressed that the latter will be subject to ongoing changes, revisions or possibly even repeal as time goes on.

Directors authorized the executive committee to oversee RIBA affairs until the board of directors meets again on September 7th.

Members will be invited to attend the September board meeting to learn more about RIBA governance and issues facing the industry. Watch your mail for an announcement on this meeting.

For State House matters of interest to the shelter industry, watch RIBA's legislative status report online at www.ribuilders.org/library/legislative-articles/ for updates or contact RIBA executive director Roger Warren at (401) 438-7400, or e-mail rwarren@ribuilders.org.

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