

Wright State University Retirees Association
Minutes of the Board of Directors

April 5, 2017

Board Members Present: Dan Abrahamowicz, Gary Barlow, Abe Bassett, Frieda Bennett, Peggy Bott, Mary Gromosiak, Mary Kenton, Sheryl Provens, Judy Rose, Jim Sayer, Donna Schlagheck, Ruth Schumacher, Carol Stevenson, Dick Williams, Gail Whitaker, and Paul Wolfe.

Absent: Marlene Bireley, Donna Curtin, and Gary Pacernick.

Guest: Joyce Howes

President Kenton called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

BARLOW MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2017, SECONDED BY SCHLAGHECK. APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

President—Mary Kenton

It's been another busy month

- Regrets from Marlene Bireley
- Luncheon Committee met again. Invitations are out. Still uncertain about whether Pres. and Mrs. Hopkins will attend. I'm working with the President's Office to get a firm answer. But everything else is in place. Gromosiak will cover some of the details.
- Executive Committee met on the 22. As a result of that meeting, I persuaded Carol Stevenson to chair the *ad hoc* committee on benefits. Bott & Schlagheck volunteered to join this ad hoc committee.
- Larry Prochaska agreed to come on the Board as Secretary. He's out of town this week, but will join us for the luncheon. Joyce Howes has agreed to run as President-Elect.
- Steve Berberich: meeting scheduled with for April 11 at 4pm to discuss the panel on pensions. Dick Williams has agreed to chair that group. Donna and I both plan to be involved. We need a couple of more volunteers to round out a working group.
- Scholarship Drive: I have been working with Amy Jones about our scholarship outreach effort this spring. We're going to have Rosa Tweed update the letter she wrote for 2015 to include the trip she took last summer that we helped to fund. We hope to restore our giving rates from 2016's 17% to the 19.6% we achieved in 2015.
- Interim President McCray met with Donna and myself this past Monday afternoon. We pleaded our case, offered our collective expertise, and, I think, got a pretty good idea of how he is proceeding. He is tasked with cutting \$30 million from the new budget. Donna will have more to say in her report.
- Student Assistant: Whitaker is finally starting to get some bites on our student employee opening, which she will detail. We have managed to keep afloat with only occasional help from Ri, but we need to get this job filled.

Past President—Richard Williams

There is nothing new to report on the 50th Anniversary Committee. The major events are to occur early in October.

Vice President—Donna Schlagheck

Schlagheck spoke briefly about the meeting with Interim President McCray. She and Kenton asked for a brief meeting to "plead our case." Schlagheck's email to McCray offered the substantial expertise of the retiree's organization, and McCray responded quickly to the offer. The meeting turned into a 40-minute session with a variety of topics discussed. Kenton's earlier letter to President Hopkins touting WSURA financial and service contributions was also presented to

McCray, who impressed the visitors with his experience and determination to help the University through these troubled times.

Secretary—Abe Bassett

At the previous meeting of the Executive Committee, a discussion of photos taken by the University photographer at last year's luncheon ensued. This discussion led to asking the board to approve the purchase of expenditure of images to be displayed at the upcoming luncheon.

MOTION BY BASSETT TO APPROVE UP TO \$150 FOR THE PURCHASE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES TO BE DISPLAYED AT FUTURE EVENTS INCLUDING THE MAY RETIREE LUNCHEON. SECONDED BY GROMOSIAK. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Treasurer—Gail Whitaker

- Treasurer's Reports for February and March were distributed, and have been posted online.
- Whitaker explained how an apparent shortfall in endowment funds was due to excess money being reinvested by University Foundation. The problem was corrected.
- One student has been interviewed for the assistant position with a second scheduled next week. However, there was some discussion of the possibility of find a retiree willing to work a few hours a week. The announced pay is \$9.50 per hour.
- Stevenson asked if a gift certificate could be designed for WSURA members to purchase an annual membership for a fellow retiree. This could be a recruiting tool and a gift that possibly would encourage continuing membership. The answer is no objection to such a good idea.
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Communications—Frieda Bennett

Bennett announced that the spring edition (No. 94) of *The Extension* has been published and is in the mail pipeline.

Bennett was able to produce the mark-up of the newsletter without assistance. Ri moved the final copy to the print shop via e-mail.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Activities—Mary Gromosiak

- No date has been set for the annual Retirees/Staff/Faculty picnic in June.
- A few reservations, mainly from board members, have been received to date for the annual luncheon.
- Gromosiak encouraged members to consider the Roses/Rooster/Book tour to Columbus. See details on the WSURA website. Kenton endorsed the trip citing the willingness of her husband to attend.

Bylaws and Elections—Judy Rose

The ballot for the next election is now completed and includes the following candidates:

- President Elect: *Joyce Howes*— [Asst. Dean, College of Science & Mathematics]
- Treasurer: *Sheryl Provens*—[Senior Accountant, WSU Foundation]
- Secretary: *Larry Prochaska*, [Prof & Vice Chair, Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology]

Members at Large: (Vote for three)

- *Abe Bassett*, Chair Emeritus, Department of Theatre Arts
- *Carol Stevenson*, University Bursar & Director of Treasury Services
- *Gail Whitaker*, Assistant Director, Career Services
- *Richard Williams*, Professor, Dept. of Finance & Asst. Dean, College of Business

Donna Schlagheck becomes President, & *Mary Kenton* becomes Past President.

Historical Preservation—Dan Abrahamowicz

Abrahamowicz's scheduled interview for this day had to be cancelled because of the absence of archivist Wydman. It will be rescheduled for the very near future.

Gary Barlow will soon be interviewing Donna Miles Curry

Sunshine—Peggy Bott

Only one retiree has passed in March: David R. Darr, Director of Financial Aid.

There is no obituary but his name has been posted in *In Memoriam*.

Membership—Marlene Bireley—absent

Report from the WSURA workshops offered this month by Gary Pacernick and Gary Barlow were extremely positive. Whitaker reported that eight persons enjoyed immensely the ikebana (flower arranging) class. They needed only to furnish scissors and a bucket; Barlow provided all other materials. Stevenson reported that Pacernick's very enjoyable poetry class produced haiku.

Unfortunately, Wagley who was to teach a class in writing life stories was cancelled due to his permanent departure to Louisville.

Scholarship Committee—Gary Pacernick – No report**Webmaster – Abe Bassett**

- Some reports to the Board, too long to be included with written minutes may be truncated, but reported fully as a news item on the website.
- More than 40 items were presented in the website news section in the past two months, due to the Presidential Search and the financial turmoil. An E-Newsletter was sent to over 650 retirees about March 28.
- Because of its strong appeal and excellence, the webmaster has added to Reflections, President Kenton's welcome to the spring edition of The Extension (#94), identifying her as "the perfect Liberal Arts student."
- The Extension editor Bennett's commentary was also added to Reflections, and Bassett commended her for her opinion piece and encouraged her to repeat such items for every edition.

LAISIONS**Alumni— Dick Williams**

There has been no recent meeting.

Athletics—Mary Kenton

- Athletics Council met March 31. Special guests discussed the training program and a collaborative arrangement with counseling services to provide student athletes with access to their own therapist.
- Bob Grant discussed the report in the press that Dr. McCray had mentioned eliminating the men's golf team. He said that suggestion did not come from him. It was generally agreed that golf was perhaps not the best sport to eliminate since that would exacerbate another problem that I had raised earlier in the Gender Equity Committee report—that is it would add to the disproportionate share of scholarship dollars that women athletes already receive.
- The Athletic Department already awards more scholarships to women athletes and disbanding golf, a male dominated sport, would disrupt the present near-equal ratio of male to female awardees, disturbing NCAA and Title 9 norms.

International—Ruth Schumacher

Schumacher reported on the International Studies Host Family program. The Host Family program is very flexible. Families may host once per semester or once per month. They may pair with other hosts, and/or host more than one scholar/student. Foreign students may be invited for a home or restaurant meal, asked to share a hobby, go shopping, and attend a museum or a cultural event. The idea is to incorporate a scholar/student into the typical life of a WSURA member. Transportation, help with academics, and similar functions are not host responsibilities. Host families do not house scholars/students. Questions can be addressed to ruth.schumacher@wright.edu or 937-672-3368. Board members are encouraged to contact other WSURA members who might be interested. Please encourage them to contact Ruth, even if they are just thinking about hosting in the future.

Friends of the Libraries—Gary Barlow

Barlow announced that the 39th annual FOTL annual luncheon takes place Wednesday, April 19. “Training the Caring Mind: Health Care Disaster Preparedness in the Virtual World,” is the featured topic. Also, advances in modern technology as applied to the field of nursing will be explored.

Following today’s board meeting, there will be a tour of the proposed University Archives building, led by Head Archivist Dawn Dewey. The building is the former Wright Patt Credit Union, headquartered on south campus’s Presidential Drive.

OCHER—Paul Wolfe, Dick Williams and Peggy Bott.

Wolfe has returned to Ohio from Florida but missed the March 21 meeting. Bott is joining the OCHER group to represent the viewpoint OPERS, the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.

Bott has filed an excellent and important report too long to be included with these minutes, but has been posted as a news story on the WSURA website.

The essence of her report is as follows:

OPERS funding is strong with assets of \$89.2 billion. \$11.5 billion is dedicated to Health Care. The biggest threat to the defined benefit pension plans is the assault from right wing think tanks, whose ideology is opposed to most public funding.

Williams reported on STRS situation. The most important action is that the assumed future rate of return has been decreased from 7.75% to 7.45%. At the forthcoming April 19 meeting the board will decide to reduce the Cost of Living Adjustment from 2% to 1% or even to eliminate it altogether.

Williams reported that the Ohio State University retirees have recently received an invitation to join “POP-5,” a new organization, purportedly formed to lobby on behalf of the five Ohio pension funds, include STRS and PERS. *OSURA members, knowing some of those connected with the organization, have failed to endorse POP-5 for a variety of reasons.* Any questions about this organization may be directed to the OSURA at osura@osu.edu.

Read the statement by the Ohio State University Retirees Association at <https://osura.alumni.osu.edu/2017/02/statement-on-pop-5/>

There is a strong sentiment among OCHER members that retiree groups should advise their members to not join POP-5 or send them dues.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

The NEXT REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING: Wednesday May 3, 10:00 a.m.
An EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is scheduled for Wednesday May 19 at 10:00 a.m.

Meetings take place in the WSURA offices:

210 University Foundation Building, 3070 Presidential Drive

Respectfully submitted,
Abe J Bassett, Secretary

First draft 4:30 p.m. Corrected at 10:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, 2017. Further corrections: April 6, April 15.