

Minutes of the October 10, 2023, UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board of Directors

Submitted by Kim Hachiya, Nov. 9, 2023

Approved as corrected by UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board of Directors, Nov. 9, 2023

The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board of Directors convened at 1:30 p.m. Oct. 10, 2023, at the Nebraska East Union.

Attendance: Larry Dlugosh, Jim Griesen, Kim Hachiya, Earl Hawkey, Julie Johnson, Linda Major, Nancy Mitchell, Alfred Stark, Don Weeks, Jane Zatechka,

Memory Moments: (Since September 14, 2023)

Dotti Callahan, Extension, Douglas County

Barbara DiBernard, Womens and Gender Studies

Lorraine Amack, Teachers College

Joe Kean, spouse of Rita Kean, Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion Design

(NOTE: I found Edie Schleiger, Student Affairs, listed in a draft but I am unsure her name was ever mentioned at a board or membership meeting.)

Linda said there is a new file from CA/HR that we need to try to reconcile with our lists. Once we complete this, we will list their names on our website. This list is of official retirees/emeriti.

The minutes of the September board meeting were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report:

Earl Hawkey noted our expenditures have exceeded deposits for the year, although that's not necessarily dire. He noted we have two accounts at the NU Foundation – the Wisherd Fund and the ERA fund. The latter throws off about \$1,000 annually and we reinvest it. We have checking and savings accounts at Wells Fargo (where he deposits dues) and these comprise our operating funds. Wisherd Funds underwrite the awards and while there are limitations, there are ways we could use them. Larry wondered about hiring students or others to help support the organization such as technology, Zoom, lists management, publications/newsletter. Earl doubted we could use foundation money for salaries because we do not have a cost center for reimbursement, although we may be able to give an honorarium. Julie thought an honorarium might guarantee some longevity and commitment. Nancy Mitchell suggested approaching Journalism/Jacht Agency for ideas.

Committee/Activities Report

Awards:

Linda reported for Pat, who said she will ask Marjorie Kostelnik to cochair the committee. We will ask the awards committee to revise language about where the awards honoraria go and make adjustments as we informally now send to the ERA Scholarship but that's not explicitly stated. We will need board action after the committee reviews to indicate any changes; we

also asked the committee to formalize the process and timelines by which recipients are notified.

Benefits:

Linda reported for Roshan Pajnigar that Roshan is trying to negotiate with HR so ERA members could have access to the EAP; their early response is no. She is working on securing parking and library access for retirees.

Bylaws/Policies:

Jim Griesen/Julie Johnson said they had nothing to report. They are willing to develop a policy statement on where awards money goes.

Campus Engagement:

Linda reported that Rita Kean wishes to step down from this position. Larry and Linda are working to find a replacement.

Digital Communications:

Alfred Stark reported that as of noon Oct. 10, 61 had registered for the next luncheon and 46 want to take the tour. He noted that we are getting good attendance at events. He is still recruiting people to help “broadcast/record” the meetings. He said that each room on campus presents different problems in terms of access, sound, etc. We did not resolve issues regarding whether to continue to “live stream” meetings in lieu of simply recording them to upload later. Al reported that he and Don Weeks are investigating a secure cloud-based way for us to share documents, archive materials, and membership management etc. Al said we need to find a method to set it up correctly and train folks to carry on in the future.

Julie wondered if the organization has grown so much and does so much more that it’s time to move toward having some paid staff rather than relying solely on volunteers. Sometimes organizations reach a tipping point in size that they founder due to lack of volunteers.

Larry said Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin have all convinced their HR departments of their importance to their universities and secured administrative support. Don said that UNL HR is right now fairly receptive to working with us. We talked about a revenue stream and noted some associations allow advertising in their newsletters, but that presents an issue in terms of sales, etc.

Educational Activities/OLLI/Tours:

Nancy Mitchell said Lyda Snodgrass, Linda Schwartzkopf and Vicki Highstreet have joined her committee. They will meet again November 7 and start to prioritize tours and other activities. Ideas for tours include: Louise Pound Hall, Makerspace, CB3 (Center for Brain, Biology and Behavior), new engineering, Go Big complex, Lied Backstage (could add OLLI folks), Backyard Farmer spring tour, Dairy Store, Emerging Media Arts, Sculpture Garden, Speed Museum, Pinnacle Bank Arena backstage, Morrill Hall.

Larry wondered about adding some in-person or Zoom forums with a chat on something like “The Future of Tenure in the US”, then let people talk about it. He is hoping to spur more engagement and active involvement, using the International Discussion Group as a template.

Linda suggested we remind the membership there’s a deadline for members to get the discount on OLLI membership. She noted that at the Sip and Learn in September, the feedback was good.

Membership:

Donald Weeks reported we have 52 new members; 15 are emeriti and the rest retirees. We are still learning how to integrate them onto our membership rolls smoothly. We now have approximately 550 members. This was enrollment after 1 quarter. We could have up to 200 new members annually. How do we manage that?

Larry said we need to be sure to engage our new members and figure out how to keep retirees from getting kicked off the university email boat quickly. We are lenient in keeping people on the rolls for a while even if they don’t pay dues.

Nancy said the key is to recruit them in, then engage them onto committees, etc.

Don noted that we need to find ways to encourage interactions at the luncheons beyond chatting with folks at the tables.

Ideas: more pop-up activities and coffee chats; maybe look at changing our bylaws on membership eligibility. Jim and Julie will chat.

Don asked if Central Administration retirees who were not faculty are eligible? Can we get their retirees names from the past several years.

Oral History: Doug Jose No report

Publications:

Linda reported for Alice Henneman. Alice is leaving the position; she will helm the Spring Newsletter; she has set up some things that streamline the newsletter. But we are looking for someone who might have other skill sets. Julie, former editor, said perhaps finding a paid person to do it might be a good path.

Larry noted that as we get to be a bigger group, volunteer duties become overwhelming. It’s a long-term look; he noted that organizations falter at a certain size if they lack the infrastructure.

Linda suggested looking at the membership lists and see what sort of skill sets folks might have and what they might want to do.

We suggested adding to the carousel of slides during lunch that shows membership opportunities. Linda will ask new members to stand and be recognized.

Scholarships:

Earl Hawkey reported the scholarship has been awarded for this academic year.

Social Events:

Linda wants to chat with Jane Zatechka and Jim Griesen about a coffee with new administrators. Question: Do we want to have the Holiday coffee again? Should we explore having it at a “retirement” community and see if they might welcome us? Jim and Jane said they would explore having a coffee chat at some retirement place on Thursday, Oct. 26.

Old Business/Announcements

2024 Nominations

- Pam Edwards, Vice-President/President-Elect
- Board of Directors Members at Large, Rita Kean and Gary Heusel
- Brainstorm candidates to serve as Publications Chair
- ERA Volunteer Job Responsibilities Template – revise and discuss (We did not get to this due to time)
- Other

New Business

- Chancellor’s Employee Recognition event Oct. 27 at NU Coliseum: Don said we will have a booth at this event.
- UNL Staff Mentoring Program – ERA member involvement. Linda announced the new EAP director, Celeste Byars, has a pilot mentoring program for new employees. Vicki Highstreet and Connie Boehm have volunteered to be staff mentors.
- ERA Board of Directors meeting, Thursday, November 9 to be held by Zoom

Upcoming Events:

2023 OLLI Fall Symposium - Saturday, October 14 - "Misinformation and Conspiracy Theories: Why People Believe them and How to Address Them," reservation required

ERA Board of Directors 2023 Fall Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday, October 10, 1:30 pm, location, East Union

Thursday, November 9, 1:30 pm, location TBA (Zoom)

Thursday, December 14, 11:30 am, location TBA - strategic planning meeting

2023 Membership Fall Meeting Dates and Speakers:

Tuesday, October 17 - location: Carolyn Pope-Edwards Hall

Sherry Jones, Dean of College of Education & Human Sciences

Topic: The Future of Public Education

Thursday, November 16 - location: East Union

Julia Torquati, Professor Child, Youth & Family Studies (Note since minutes were taken, the speaker has changed)

Topic: Early Childhood Development

Tuesday, December 12 - location: Cornhusker Hotel

Meet Chancellor Rodney Bennett

2023 ERA Executive Committee Fall Meeting Dates
Thursday, December 1, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm, Location TBA