

**The Association of the University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting, January 28, 2016
Alumni Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium**

1. Opening Remarks. The Board meeting was called to order by President Elect Neal Raber at 10 a.m. Others present were Bob Blankenship, Stu Terress, Bob Gandee, Dan Sheffer, Carl Lieberman, Linda Sugarman, Ed Lasher, Rita Klein, Hans Zbinden and Neal Raber. Absent with notice were Cathy Edwards, Loren Hoch, Laura Moss, Velma Pomrenke, Pam Rupert, Frank Thomas, Diane and Tom Vukovich. The minutes of the December 5, 2015 meeting were approved as written.

2. Treasurer Bob Blankenship reports a balance of \$7,754.71 as of December 31, 2015. This compares with a balance of \$8,307.68 for December 2014. It was moved to accept the report, subject to audit.

3. Committee Reports.

A. Programs. Neal Raber listed the following speakers for the following luncheons, February 10: Mr. Elliott Callahan, Chocolatier for the Fannie May and Harry London companies, speaking on the History of Chocolate. March 9: Dr. Michele Campbell, whose topic is TBA. April 13: Mandy Altimus Pond from the Massillon Public Library presents "Titanic and the End of the Edwardian Era." Ms. Pond is requesting a donation of perhaps \$50 to the library We will ask for a motion at the February Board meeting. on February 14 We will have our annual Brunch and Play at the Akron Woman's City Club. Our annual Road Trip takes place in late April We hold our annual Lobster and Suds Party on May 20.

B. Membership. Rita Klein reports that our active membership for January 2016 stands at 314 active members and 37 inactive members. Our Scholarship income from May to December was \$3,783.

C. Political Action. Bob Gandee reports that the OCHER group is aware of our "Situation at the University of Akron." His hand-out at today's meeting made us aware that OCHER is very much concerned at our situation. Specific moves forward were suggestions from Diane Vukovich, Judge Jane Bond and Elizabeth Cagan from Cleveland State University. Bob's hand-out also printed out additional views of dealing with our concerns. He asks for our thoughts that we might guide OCHER in its response to our great concern.

D. Benefits. No report.

E Faculty Senate Meeting December 3, 2015 Neal Raber

Chair Rich began by welcoming us to the meat locker. There was no heat in the meeting room and the temperature was unbearably cold! Senators were wearing their coats and gloves! In his opening remarks, Chair Rich actually lectured President Scarborough about the devastating effects of his actions in not hiring tenure track faculty. He commented, "First, we tend to think of the University as a sturdy institution, relatively immune to buffeting winds. I believe it is more fragile than we sometimes recognize It has sustained much damage in the last several months, the effects of which are likely to last much longer than it took to incur them . It is incumbent on all that care about the institution, administrators and faculty included, to take care not to inflict further damage, however well - intentioned their

actions may be. Second, in his State of the University address and in speeches in other venues, the President has said that The University of Akron is poised to be a *national University of international reach* and has spoken of his desire to make this a great University. At the same time he's argued that the economics of public higher education require the University to invest less in tenured track faculty positions and more in non-tenured positions. Let's be clear: A University does not become great by hiring fewer tenure track faculty and relying heavily on non-tenure track faculty and thereby moves away rather than towards greatness. The great universities of this country are great because they have great faculties, and great faculties are overwhelming tenure track."

He continued by going through the negatives of replacing tenure track faculty with non-tenure track ones. He concluded his comments by offering an alternative by saying, "Why can't the need for economical but still high quality undergraduate instruction be filled by tenure track faculty who are hired and choose to teach extensively, do enough research to stay current and engaged current and engaged by academic disciplines, taking special responsibility for ensuring high quality instruction and the advancement of teaching methods and technologies and contribute to the scholarship of teaching? Can there not be more than one tenure track model, each with different requirements and expectations concerning the balance between teaching and research responsibilities? I propose that the faculty and administration of this University begin to explore these possibilities together instead of continuing the unproductive, even destructive, misconceived conflict sometimes over whether the University can afford to hire more tenure track faculty."

Next, President Scarborough sat listening as Secretary Schulze mentioned in her Executive Committee report that appointments to the ad hoc committee to consider a vote of no confidence in the President had been made. Seven faculty senators to that committee had been nominated and four subsequently accepted the appointments . Three additional appointments were made and they all subsequently agreed to serve President Scarborough then addressed the Senate. He started by going through a list of updates as to what he has been involved with - in his words *retrospectively and prospectively*. He said that he was spending time preparing for searches for Provost, Engineering Deans, Director of Facilities, Director of Development, and General Counsel.

The first question concerned the Business Advisory Group and what their compensation was going to be. He responded, "They're not going to be paid by the University. They're all volunteers. There was an offer by Chuck Jones, CEO of First Energy, to pull together that advisory council. He came to us with the idea. It was a great idea. The people he had in mind are people we want to connect with in a strong way and leverage the opportunities, having the CEO of Goodyear, First Merit Bank, others, the hospitals in the room at the same time. It is a great opportunity for I think the University to create some new relationships with those that want to be supportive. I think the

base salary of Chuck Jones is 10 million a year. He's not looking for compensation. I don't think any of these people would be."

The next question was about the Center for Experiential Learning and how no one on the Assessment Committee had been asked for their input with regards to the search for the director. Senator Hausnecht was concerned in light of how quickly other directors had been hired. Senator Scarborough responded, "The only thing I know about the Assessment Director is the paperwork has been submitted. The decision was made to start the search process. As recently as this morning someone sent an email saying which account code this should be charged to. I'm assuming based on that email it is moving forward and should be more public very soon."

Next, Senator Minocchi asked about the report to the Recruitment Council that the data reflects a decline in applications of 3.4% and a decline in matriculated or confirmed students of 23.3%. President Scarborough responded, "What I was provided at 9:14 this morning shows that our applications this year are 3% down from 2014, 11% up from 2013 just to give it a historical perspective. Our admit offers are 4% down from last year this time, 23% up from this time two years ago. The trying to get a sense -- I heard this number or something approximating the number, a percentage that you alluded to just a moment ago. I heard that mentioned yesterday, and it turns out that number comes from the fact that if we go back to this time last year they weren't counting the applications that had not yet paid the \$45 application fee which is something in early January we essentially ignore from that point on. For example, in last year's freshman class, we enrolled and students came and registered for courses, there were 180 of those students that never paid their \$45 application fee. We began counting them in the data last year in January. This year they began counting those same students in the data in not early January but early December. With that piece of information, the number is not 19%, the number is 14%. If one then takes out of this year's data everyone who has not yet paid the application fee that we will and did take out on January 1, the number is like 18, 19% down. That's the confusion about when do you begin to ignore the application fee? Last year they did that January 1. This year for some reason they began to do it on December 1. I think they were trying to be transparent about saying there is a slight anomaly but then one has to judge, okay, how significant is that? If one takes that out of the equation we're down 3%, 4% still up significantly from where we were two years ago. That's not surprising. That's about the effect that I would expect to having gone through the budget cuts and some of the negative PR that's been the offshoot of that. I would expect us at this point in the process to be - that's why I didn't choose to do it in July to give us a benefit of a full recruiting cycle to kind of work through the ebb and flow of that beginning in fact, it already began. We're taking more extraordinary efforts to meet with high school counselors and to reassure them that by virtue of making these decisions our finances are much stronger than, say, a University that's not yet worked through some of the financial challenges that we know that the other universities have. Tomorrow I meet with another 100 high school counselors, two weeks ago it was another 100 counselors. All the way through this recruiting cycle we'll be out in greater numbers at all levels of the organization to kind of work back to where we would hope to be last year."

Senator Schulze then asked the President to clarify the documentation regarding

Dean Ransom's academic rank at the University of Toledo. He replied that in response to a records request by Chris Horn of the *Devil Strip*, we provided documentation with attachments that showed that her offer was with associate professor without tenure, which is what she noted on her CV, and in the University of Toledo's investigation when they did a record search, they found an email from the Provost's office indicating that what went to the board was in error and needed to be corrected. He said that he would be happy to provide that same set of materials to the Faculty Senate.

The next question came from Senator Stearns, who wanted to know why departments had been told that in order to reach their spend down accounts they have to go through our current budgets to zero, which he said seems like a poor management approach, especially if you have appropriate items to request or to plan for.

President Scarborough explained that one of the things that contributes to the budget not being real is the ability of anyone to carry forward unspent budgeted balances from the past or unbudgeted start - up moneys or accounts because it essentially works its way in people's mind that I don't really need to get the budget right because even if the budget is not right, I still have this account over here I can tap. It reinforced sort of bad budgeting practices and also created the reality that these balances that were, quote, "off budget" were growing so significant that when they're totaled they are a large percentage of the University's total cash balances. He said, "What should have been communicated is, yes, you have the balances, but unless they're in the University approved budget, it is best first for you to spend your budget amount. Then in fact if you still need access to these accounts then let's work with you on an exceptional basis. Yet, at the same time, live up to all of the promises. No t sweep any account. A lot of universities, they have done one day sweep accounts. We have tried not to do that. "

Finally, Senator Bouchard chimed in with a question. She asked about the upcoming visit of the HLC representatives over concern about his governance. From his answer, we learned that the Board had asked for a consultant from Associated Governing Boards to visit in order to determine best practices pertaining to shared governance before they approved the University Council bylaws. This had nothing to do with the HLC. However, at the next visit of the HLC for accreditation, shared governance and assessment would be a focused issue being a deficiency in the last visit.

Provost Sherman was not in attendance, and we have probably seen him at Faculty Senate for the last time, because he is now Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development and Chief Operating Officer of the Akron Research Foundation. The University has announced that it is easier to search for a new provost without a current individual in that position. Rex Ramsier is serving as interim senior vice president and provost.

The meeting continued with a lengthy discussion about the problems involved with getting textbooks ordered in a timely manner, a process that is now done online. The bookstore was criticized for not ordering enough copies. It was also mentioned that not knowing the cost of required textbooks ahead of time affects the student's financial aid. Many book orders are late, because the text is chosen by an adjunct professor, who is not hired until a few weeks before the start date of the course. Another problem is the estimation of the number of copies being bought elsewhere, such as Amazon.com.

A discussion followed about the problems with the online curriculum and course

proposal system. Technical problems in the past were handled by Shannon Whalen, who lost her job. It was reported that this has caused a nightmare. Rex Ramsier said that Laurel Brooks in his office is trying to teach IT personnel about the system, but few people are available in IT and Laurel Brooks does not have the time to devote to it. He said that they should look into outsourcing the process.

Next on the agenda, the Senate approved a proposal from the Part-Time Faculty Committee to recommend amending the University rules to provide for certain specified benefits for retired part-time faculty.

As if that wasn't enough, the meeting continued in the cold with a long discussion about the President's desire to terminate graduate assistantships and fee waivers for certain graduate students. The four categories of graduate programs as seen by Scarborough are traditional PHD programs, professional doctoral programs, research focused master programs, and professional master s programs. He said the real concern was that we are giving too many tuition waivers for professional master programs. A committee has been formed and convened by Eric Amos, the Vice Provost for Research and the Dean of Polymer Sciences to look into all of this. The committee's recommendations will go ultimately next to the Graduate Council and then they'll come to Faculty Senate. One of the issues that came up during the committee charge was to examine whether we should be granting graduate assistantships for students who can pay for their tuition. The other one that came up was that we replace teaching assistantships with part-time faculty.

Before the discussion ended, Senator Swift made the following comments that I think you should hear to understand how bad the situation has become at UA. "I have been extensively following that for two and a half weeks now and I have met with Graduate Student Government. As an undergraduate student representing all of the students on campus, this is the number one concern for both undergraduates and graduates because students are very concerned about the overall experience, that all of the cuts that have been made, everything that we already know. I don't want to waste your time anymore, it is cold. It is so critically important to understand that there are so many other universities around us, 10, 20 minutes away offering assistantships with healthcare, Kent State on average, \$16,000 plus healthcare for a graduate assistantship, me being a senior, just using myself as an example, would I rather come to a University that's questioning cutting these kind of things and then helping the football team raise their budget or would I rather go to a University like Kent that potentially could have a better program, just saying what I would have studied, and potentially get healthcare with an assistantship? When talking about retention, drawing in the quality of students that the administration has been talking about for months and months now, this is it just a very -- we have all been talking about it, I just want to reiterate from the student aspect that this is extremely important when looking at gaining students and keeping them."

After a report from the University Council representatives that included information from Senator Stearns about a meeting with Larry Burns. Stearns mentioned that, just like when he met with us, Burns used the time to talk about himself, his background, the fact that he had 35 years of integrated marketing, and that he had the major responsibilities with the Medical College of Toledo and as Stearns mentioned, he described to them to explain why he was chosen for his position. The frozen meeting finally adjourned at 4:50.

F. University and Community Service / Website. Dan Sheffer reports that his sources are keeping his Website up to date and current.

G. Nominations Committee. Ed Lasher reports that he is making preliminary contact s. He expects to have a full report at our February meeting.

H. Scholarship. No report

I. Newsletter. No report.

4.Unfinished Business: Our UA situation. President Diane Vukovich received many good comments. and words of thanks regarding the "ads" that ran in the Beacon Journal.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Hans Zbinden, recording secretary
Next Executing Board Meeting is February 25, 2016
Alumni Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium

Minutes (65)