

The Association of the University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting, April 23, 2015
Alumni Office Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium

1. Opening Remarks: The meeting was called to order by President June Burton at 10 a.m. Present were Bob Blankenship, Stu Terrass, Frank Thomas, Rita Klein, Bob Gandee, Neal Raber, Loren Hoch, Linda Sugarman, Pam Rupert, Dan Sheffer, Carl Lieberman, Ed Lasher, Velma Pomrenke, Diane and Tom Vukovich and Hans Zbinden. The minutes of the March 26, 2015 meeting were approved as written.

2. Treasurer Bob Blankenship reports an available balance of \$7,312.83 as of March 31, 2015. This compares with a balance of \$6,109.88 as of March 31, 2014. It was moved to accept the report, subject to audit.

3. Committee Reports.

A. Programs. Tom Vukovich reported that we had 72 guests for the April 8th luncheon. Next year the charge for luncheons will go up to \$13; the menu pattern will be similar to this year's pattern. Neal Raber reported that 37 members signed up for the April 24 AUAR Road Trip, being an exploration of locations in Cleveland that will be new to many of us. An upcoming road trip will be a fund raiser for our AUAR Scholarship fund. Neal has made arrangements with the Little City Grill in Kent for a Meal and Wine Tasting event on Wednesday July 15. The cost will be \$35, with \$10 going into our Scholarship Fund.

Diane Vukovich reported on preparations for the upcoming Lobster and Suds Party scheduled for Friday, May 15 at the St. Sebastian Zwisler Hall.

B. Membership. Frank Thomas reported that our current active membership stands at 320 members.

C. Political Action. No report.

D. Benefits. Linda Sugarman distributed to all Board members present at this meeting a description of **Post Retirement Benefits**. The following headings summarize these benefits. No Fee Parking. Term Life Insurance. Health Insurance Coverage (excluding dental insurance) for Dependents, University of Akron Identification Card. Fee Reductions for the Retiree and Dependents. Athletic and Cultural events. Privileges at: the Book Store. Notary Public, Library and Computer Center.

E. Faculty Senate Meeting April 2nd 2015.

Chair Rich began the meeting by reporting that budget hearings had concluded and unit budget cuts should be forthcoming by the end of April. The strategic planning updates that he had expected to be reported from President Scarborough would not be on the agenda because President Scarborough was not present. Chair Rich continued by pointing out that money would be set aside for all colleges, including those that had not agreed upon a strategic plan. Those college faculties should not allow deans to push them to accepting a plan in order to avoid a loss of funds, because such would not be the case. Chair Rich continued by saying that there had been much talk about a new name for UA emphasizing technology and research, which had been suggested during a meeting to revamp Vision 2020. He said, "Faculty Senate would offer advice if such a proposal was made and senators would consider advantages and disadvantages. He would not recommend a change of name." He went on to explain, "The proposed name changes that deemphasize humanities, arts, and social sciences change the perception of the University. Humanities and Social Sciences generate more money than the research/technology areas. Over the last 15 years funds have been invested in the UA brand and to change it would mean more money that UA cannot afford."

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Faculty Senate (cont)

He continued his remarks by addressing the fliers that had been distributed in CAS threatening the gang rape of a faculty member in the Women Studies Department. He said, “This was an act of violence and threatening. Women were made to feel unsafe and undermined. The University cannot afford to ignore this in any way. Having spoken at length to the professor who was the subject of the threat, I feel that there was little in way of response. I have spoken to the President and I was assured that it would be looked into. I will continue to monitor the response.”

In his remarks, Provost Sherman mentioned that the strategic plan process had been completed in CBA, CAST, CHP, and the Law School. They were expecting the preliminary report of the Higher Learning Commission visit, which would be reviewed, corrected and returned. The final report is expected in September.

Senator Lazar from the library had the first question for the Provost. She expressed her dismay that the administration had not made a statement condemning the fliers circulated in CAS. Provost Sherman said that the university did respond through Email Digest and Zip mail. Senator Lazar said that it was not a response, but rather a notification that a hate crime had been reported in CAS. Eileen Korey explained that the Email Digest article did only report the incident and was in response to a request by the police department. Senator Lazar then said, “I have noticed that at some institutions where there were similar situations, the administrations came out with a strong statement – stating that no activity of this sort is to be tolerated. The Email Digest merely acknowledged a blatant threat was made to a faculty member and that it was being investigated.” She continued saying, “Why didn’t the President make a stronger statement? There is a gulf of communication between faculty and administration. Many colleagues have expressed different levels of disappointment and also outrage, especially when they are requested to participate in sexual assault surveys, and yet nothing came from administration about this situation. It is incredibly frustrating. We need statement from the administration saying we’ve got your back and we will preserve your safety.” The Provost responded by saying that they would review their procedures.

Senator Sastry then inquired about the Strategic Planning process, in that he had heard that programs were being diluted and some that are unique were being changed. He continued by saying that our credibility is in jeopardy.

Provost Sherman assured him that programs are being reviewed to determine what is distinctive about each one and the object of the process is to advance and enhance the brand of the university. There is no plan to erode the quality of programs. Senator Bouchard then told him the administration is causing de facto changes in programs just by refusing to allow tenure track faculty hires. Provost Sherman responded that part of the budget process is the determination of faculty hires.

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Faculty Senate (cont)

Senator Lillie asked the Provost for comments about the articles in the Beacon Journal about the Corrosion Engineering Center. He responded that they are looking over the most recent set of agreements.

The meeting continued with the report of the University Council representatives, Senator Lillie and Senator Erickson. They pointed out that even though UC has been in operation for more than 3 years, the BOT has never approved the bylaws of UC. Unless and until those are approved and implemented it is very difficult to see UC as more than a body that receives information and talks about things but is not relevant to the future of UA. Lack of approval is affecting shared governance. Committees have found that the person doing the committee's secretarial work was not allowed to count that time as part of their university work and were to do it outside their usual time. UC doesn't have the support of an administrative assistant as does Faculty Senate. The Higher Learning Commission visit looking into shared governance issues spent a considerable amount of time with UC concerns. Their report should be interesting. The meeting adjourned at 4:03 pm.

F. Website. Dan Sheffer. All has been updated

G. AUAR Scholarship. Hank Nettling reported to June Burton that no new moneys were received during January and February, 2015.

H. Newsletter. Pam Rupert noted that the next Newsletter is planned for the beginning of the fall semester.

5. **Unfinished Business.** The motion was made to accept the report of the Nomination Committee that the following slate be presented to the membership to serve as officers or representatives of The Association of the University of Akron Retirees beginning July 1, 2015. President Elect: Neal Raber. At large members of the Executive Board: Loren Hoch, Ed Lasher and Laura Moss
Laura Moss. The motion passed unanimously.
6. **New Business.** June Burton noted that Hank Nettling has resigned from the Scholarship committee. Diane Vukovich is exploring names to replace Hank. Bob Gandee and June Burton will be attending OCHER meetings.

We take note of the passing of three colleagues: Robert Dial (English), Peter Gingo and (Mathematics) and Linda Moore (Communications).

The Board meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. **Hans Zbinden**, recording secretary

**Next Executive Board Meeting is May 28, 2015.
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