

**The Association of the University of Akron Retirees  
Executive Board Meeting, January 22, 2015  
Alumni Office Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium**

**1. Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order by President June Burton at 10 a.m.

Others present were Tom and Diane Vukovich. Rita Klein, Ed Lasher, Loren Hoch, Linda Sugarman, Don Sheffer, Carl Lieberman, Pam Rupert, Velma Pomrenke. Hank Nettling, Bob Gandee, Neal Raber, Stu Terrass, Bob Blankenship and Hans Zbinden. Absent with notice were Frank Thomas and Cathy Edwards. The minutes of the December 4, 2014 meeting were approved as corrected.

**2. Treasurer**

Bob Blankenship reported an available balance of \$8,307.68 as of December 31, 2014. This compares with a balance of \$7,581.94 on December 31, 2013. It was moved to accept the report, subject to audit.

**3. Committee reports.**

**A. Programs.** Upcoming events, spring 2015.

- a) February 11, Bruce Ford, Official City Photographer.
- b) February 15, Brunch, followed by Agatha Christie's Toward Zero.
- c) March 11, Prof emeritus Marge Koosed is speaker.
- d) April 8, program still open.
- e) April 24, Annual road trip. Neal Raber outlined our various destinations: Western Reserve Historical Society, Sokolowski's University Inn, Christmas Story House, Portside Distillery and Brewery, with the final stop being the Sweetie Candy Company.

**B. Membership.** Rita Klein reported that our active, paid membership now stands at 312 retirees. She has sent out a mailing to the 31 most recent retirees informing them of our AUAR group, our activities and our invitation to join us.

**C. Political action.** No report.

**D. Benefits.** Linda Sugarman reported as follows. Reminder to all retiree dependents: Keep all notices of credible prescription coverage that you receive from the Benefits Office. If a retiree dependent should change from the University plan to a plan that uses Medicare part D (such as the STRS plan).they will have to prove that they had the equivalent of Medicare Part D for all the years since they turned 65 or since Medicare part D was instituted. If a retired Dependent does not have those letters then the University Benefits Office should be able to provide adequate documentation of that credible coverage, It appears that Retiree Dependent Benefit information was not included on the Benefits website page for 2015.

**E. Faculty Senate Meeting Dec. 4, 2014**

In his opening remarks, Chair Bill Rich reported that the Senate's standing Part-time Faculty Committee has been meeting frequently to develop a proposal to increase part-time faculty salaries. He said, "The minimum salaries for the three ranks of part-time faculty members have not increased for the last 13 years. As a result of inflation, the purchasing power of those salaries is now approximately two thirds of what this was 13 years ago. In my view, this enormous cut in the real dollar value of part-time faculty salaries is unconscionable. I expect that in our February meeting we will receive a recommendation from the Part-time Faculty Committee to remedy this situation."

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**E. Faculty Senate Meeting Dec. 4, 2014 (cont.)**

In his remarks, President Scarborough mentioned that they were preparing for the formal budgeting process that would begin in January. That it would include budget hearings with all of the units. He said that he has been meeting with the Faculty Senate Chair, the AAUP President, and the Department Chair Representative on the University Council Budget Finance Committee and the Budget Director to facilitate the process before it begins in the January to March time frame.

In response to a question about an Associated Press article that stated Akron, Kent and YSU were combining services including academic programs, President Scarborough responded, "In some ways it's sad to say; unfortunately that article was more to do about nothing than substance. There wasn't really much of a basis for that particular article. So that's the reality of the article.

Next, he responded to a question about the University of Alabama Birmingham dropping their football program by saying, "I can tell you as recently as in the last week or two in conversations with trustees and others, even before UAB's decision, we've got to do something. Staying where we are is not going to work. We've either got to have a new strategy to make it work or we've got to have another strategy to taper it down. But the status quo is a very difficult place to live right now. So that conversation is alive and well, and I'm sure it's going to be alive and well in this next budget process. When the football team goes five and seven, it doesn't always work that way. But tongue in cheek; let's hope the men's basketball program and the women's basketball program have a little better season."

Senator Bouchard had the next question. She said, "Okay. So I have a hard question about Gen Ed. We're now in the implementation phase, and it's been a totally faculty driven process. And yet the other day, you commented to a selection of chairs the idea that maybe we should have some sort of alternate, easier version of Gen Ed out there, and even voiced the idea that perhaps we could *farm out* Gen Ed to some online company like Straighter Line. I looked them up on line. They basically are a program that zips through some really easy version of Gen Ed. And on their website they talk proudly about how such fine for profit universities as Strayer and Capella took them as transfer credits. And so my question for you is "Are you going to say that you need to learn much more about this process, and even as we speak are hoping to meet with Dr. Linda Subich, who's in the Dean's Office of College of Arts and Sciences, and who had been the organizer and coordinator of this faculty driven process?"

He responded, "I would have never used the word easier. So that premise is incorrect. He said, "He planned to meet with Dr. Linda Subich to understand how for the last three and a half years this project has been carried out." Senator Lazar from the library asked him the following controversial question, "I was wondering what the vetting process was, whether it went through the Office of the President and what discussions about this occurred. I'm not involved with it, but I was rather embarrassed to see that for the Black Male Summit our speaker is Stephen A. Smith, who, I think it's good to get interesting people, but I was wondering if everyone was aware that he was suspended by ESPN for a week for his comments regarding the Ray Rice incident which he basically said, you know, well, women really have to think about what they say if they want to be safe. And I wondered what

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The process of choosing this person was. I am not a member of the black male demographic, but I think in any situation having that person as the primary speaker causes me a lot of concern and embarrassment for a, what I understand is a program to help strengthen a population. And since it seems like a done deal, I wanted to make sure everyone at a high level knew what they were doing. And I was wondering how that decision was made and whether those things were taken into consideration and still considered that to be the best option.”

He responded by saying that he was unaware of the situation and commented, “So I will certainly withhold judgment, personal judgment, and would encourage us to use the processes that serve us well to examine this concern that you expressed.”

After Provost Sherman reminded everyone that the narrative is being prepared for the upcoming visit of the Higher Learning Commission, he responded to two questions. First it from Senator Bouchard asked, “Last spring we heard that in the sort of reconfigured CAST they would no longer have the Developmental Programs. So where are they? He remarked that he thought that they still resided in CAST. Then, Vice Provost Ramsier remarked, “We have the administrative function of Developmental Programs monitored by the Student Success organization, Stacey Moore's area, but the academic functions are monitored by the Office of Academic Affairs, the Provost's Office. Part-time faculty hiring and changing the course scheduling and adding and dropping classes all comes through the Provost's office and not in a college. It's a centralized unit with dual reporting lines, administrative and academic.

Senator Saliga asked, “There has been a push, I know we've heard some in our department, and I've heard from some others about making courses available on line, going entirely on line. The push that we're hearing about is for College Algebra to go completely on line. Our faculty really are not in favor of this, but it keeps coming back from our chair that this is what we need to do. We have to do it.” Provost Sherman responded, “The work is out of the Transformational Planning Grant from the Urban Serving Universities in APLU. To deliver the grant, the College of Arts and Sciences is working with the faculty in Spanish to look at meeting the requirements of the grant to plan for the potential to deliver Spanish for the Health Professions in a modularized approach. The discussions I understand that are underway are those that would ask the question might such an approach apply to College Algebra or not? And I understand that that's happening between the Dean's Office and the department chair and the faculty.”

The meeting concluded after the Senate approved the name change of the Department of Associate Studies in the College of Applied Science and Technology to Department of Applied General and Technical Studies.

- F. COMMUNITY SERVICE ON WEBSITE.** Dan Sheffer reported that we are up to date on listing our Special Events on our website for the period January 15 to June 30.
- G. AUAR Scholarships.** Hank Nettling noted that he will be in touch with both of our recipients (Emily Vickers and John Wirth) to have them come to our April 8 luncheon so that we can make an acquaintance with them.

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- H. Newsletter.** Pam Rupert reported that the winter 2014 edition of our AUAR Newsletter is now "in the mail." Four hundred copies were printed; this number includes a few extra copies that will be available at our luncheons for the benefit of our guests.

The Board meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

***Hans Zbinden, recording*** secretary

**Next Executive Board Meeting is Thursday February 26, 2015.  
Alumni Office Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium**

Minutes (55)