

The Association of the University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting, March 28, 2013
Alumni Conference Room, Stitzlein Center

1. Opening: The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by President Bob Gandee. Others present were Hank Nettling, Bob Blankenship, June Burton, Linda Sugarman, Ed Lasher, Pam Rupert, Velma Pomrenke, Marilyn Carrell, Neal Raber, Barbara Banks, Diane and Tom Vukovich, Carl Lieberman, Loren Hoch and Hans Zbinden. Absent with notice was Frank Thomas. The minutes of the February 28, 2013 meeting were approved as written.

2. Treasurer: Bob Blankenship reported an available balance of \$7,195.92 as of February 28, 2013. This compares with a balance of \$7,317.91 as of February 29, 2012. It was moved to accept the report, subject to audit. See the attached financial summary.

3 Committee Reports:

A. Programs. Our luncheon on April 10 will have as speaker Mark Price, Akron Beacon Journal staff writer. Tom Vukovich gave a preliminary listing of luncheon speakers for the coming year: Diane Vukovich, Whale Watching in Baja, California, Mexico; Don Baker, editor of Akron Life magazine; Laura Lowe, Fashion on the Titanic; Sarah Auclair, our International Student; June Burton will plan a program for our December luncheon.

Tom outlined the destinations in our April 26 Road Trip. In Medina, 1) Little Wiz Fire Museum, 2) a Victorian Home and Museum, 3) the A. I. Root Candle Company, 4) then lunch at the Cork Screw Saloon. After lunch 5) we visit the Seville Historical Society and finish the day 6) in the Winery at Wolf Creek.

B. Membership: Jim Fee has informed the Board that he is leaving Akron to live with family in Memphis, Tennessee; he "will continue to be a member of AUAR even if at a distance." Bob Gandee indicated that Frank Thomas expressed interest in taking the Membership Committee responsibilities.

C. Political Action / Affiliates.

June Burton, Loren Hoch and Hank Nettling attended the March 19 OCHER meeting in Columbus. Hank gave us these highlights:

- 1) On the legislative side we were advised to watch for these issues at the federal level: Mandatory Social Security and a possible move to Defined Contribution plans.
- 2) The view from Public Employee Retirement, Inc is that in their system, \$1.00 can grow to be \$3.85 in the retirement system due to investment returns.
- 3) Health Care (presented by AU alumnus Greg Nickel, now with STRS):
The biggest concern is maintaining Medicare Plan. Aetna is the most popular Plan and has the highest deductible.

D. Benefits. Linda Sugarman gave us the following report.

Retirees and employees are no longer kept in the loop about future health benefits. They will only find out what has happened after a final decision has been made. Health benefits will be negotiated by the University and its Unions. It has been years since there has been a faculty union, the AAUP negotiated health benefits and the other employee organizations on campus followed that model. The retiree dependent health benefits have also followed that model. There is now a new union on campus and we do not know what model will be followed.

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E: Faculty Senate. Neal Raber reported on the meeting of March 7, 2013. In his remarks, Chairman Rich mentioned that the Higher Learning Commission members had completed their accreditation visit and had informed the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that they were impressed with the amount of faculty student interaction on campus.

President Proenza began his remarks by reminding the senators that two forums were scheduled to get input on the looming fiscal budget deficit of \$26 million. He also mentioned the success of the men's and women's basketball teams. He then opened the floor to a discussion of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and more generally to online courses at AU. He started by saying that no one knows what changes the evolution of online courses would bring to the university learning environment nor to where it will eventually lead.

The discussion continued and President Proenza listened to many comments about such things as high dropout rates of MOOCs, the lack of up to date technological equipment at UA, and basically the futility of attempting to go full steam ahead in such an endeavor. Senator Lillie reminded President Proenza that without the careful consideration of the faculty, we would have gone ahead with Pearson as the UA online course vendor. Proceeding with Pearson was stopped even after the President's representatives made a presentation to Faculty Senate indicating that Pearson was a done deal.

During committee reports, Dr. Rudy Fenwick, current chair of the Ohio Faculty Council, reported that the Council was preparing a resolution to deal with the controversy over the faculty load requirements in the Governor's budget bill HB 59. The meeting concluded with the approval of the Academic Policies Committee proposal to establish the interdisciplinary *Institute for Human Science and Culture* within the Center of the History of Psychology.

Communications Committee. Additional report by Neal Raber.

At our meeting on Monday, March 18, I reported on the progress of informing retirees of the procedure to acquire a subscription to the Email Digest. It was suggested that I follow up by seeing how many retirees were interested in receiving it. I also learned at the meeting that of the 469 responses to the Campus Communication Survey, two were from retirees.

F. University and Community Service. No report.

G. Scholarship. Hank Nettling reports that contributions to the AUAR Scholarship fund now amount to \$54,888.

H. Newsletter. Pam Rupert plans to have our next Newsletter published by the end of August.

4. Unfinished Business.

A. Our final Wednesday Luncheon of the current season will be on April 10, 2013.

Following the presentation by speaker Mark Price there will be a short General Membership Meeting.

B. 2013 Nominations. The AUAR nominations committee recommends the following tentative slate to be presented to the membership.

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B. 2013 Nominations(cont.)

President Elect: Diane Vukovich. Faculty Senate Representative: Robert Gandee.
[This term shall be until the September 2014 Senate meeting.] Members at Large:
Loren Hoch, Ed Lasher, Dan Sheffer.

C. Scholarship Fund Solicitations. For our perusal and editing, Loren Hoch distributed a two page statement regarding Memorial Gifts. Any changes will be discussed at our next Board meeting.

5.New Business. Bob Gandee called attention to Founders Day on May 3, being an opportunity to gain the attention of a new class of University retirees to our Association.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Hans Zbinden, recording secretary.

Next Executive Board Meeting is Thursday, April 25, 2013.

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Minutes (38)