

**UMRA Board of Directors
Minutes, Meeting of Tuesday, 22 September 2015**

Members present: Roger Clemence (2014–17), Joanne Eicher (2010–13, 2013–16), Vernon Eidman (2010–13, 2013–16), John Howe (2015–18), Jean Kinsey (President), Virgil Larson (2010–13, 2013–16), Jeanne Markell (2014–17), Hal Miller (Past President), David Naumann (2008–11, 2015–18), Kathleen O’Brien (2013–16), Chip Peterson (Secretary), Donna Peterson (President Elect), Gloria Williams (2015–18)

Members absent: Carl Adams (Treasurer), Steve Benson (2015–18), Sherilyn Goldsmith May (2014–17)

Other participants: John Adams, Cathy Lee Gierke, Ginny Hanson, Jan Hogan, Ted Litman, Earl Nolting, Dale Swanson

Kinsey called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

1. Adoption of agenda

Action: Without change, the Board adopted the agenda as previously emailed to members.

2. Welcome and introductions

Members introduced themselves.

3. Board minutes

Action: The Board approved, without change, the previously emailed minutes of its meeting of 26 May 2015.

4. Association minutes

Action: The Board also approved, as drafted, the minutes of the annual Association meeting of 26 May 2015.

5. Bylaws

Kinsey drew the Board’s attention to the draft of proposed bylaw amendments that members had received by email prior to the meeting. She noted that several people had worked on the changes during the summer and that the Executive Committee had made further changes at its meeting of Sept. 14 before sending it to the Board. *Action:* The Board approved the proposed amendments, as drafted, for submission to the membership for final approval at the October 27 luncheon meeting.

6. Operating Manual

Kinsey pointed out that the draft the Board had received by email was a work in progress and will need to continue being updated through the year in responses to changes in, for example, committee membership. *Action:* The Board endorsed the draft with one correction (dates in table of contents) and one substantive change (deletion of the parenthetical “excluding the president” in the makeup of the Nominating Committee). [*Notes for future reference:* 1) There was some discussion of archiving UMRA materials. John Howe and Hal Miller will take the lead in this area. 2) In the introduction to section 3 (“Representatives and Liaisons”) the Board was uncertain about the accuracy of the sentence, “Representatives to SCFA and the University Committees are technically appointed by

the U Committee on Committees on recommendation of the UMRA president.” The Board agreed to leave this section as it stands for the moment but to seek confirmation of its accuracy.]

7. Financial Report for 2014–15

Action: The Board approved the final financial report as submitted by outgoing Treasurer Dick Skaggs. It will go to members for information in the October newsletter and be posted on the website.

8. Journal of Opinion, Ideas, and Essays

John Howe reported. JOIE, the online journal, is being (re)launched, now as an UMRA project. It is open to all types of publication. (Eicher clarified that JOIE is for types of creative work that doesn't easily find other outlets.) Submissions may come not only from retirees but also—on a tentative basis until experience shows the effect on the volume of submissions—from active U faculty and staff. John and Judy Howe are spearheading JOIE. The JOIE Board has shrunk somewhat through attrition; besides the Howes it currently includes Joanne Eicher, Ed Griffin, Jan Hogan, and Pete McGee. University librarians are helping out. *Action:* As a result of the ensuing discussion, the UMRA Board determined that: a) the JOIE Board should propose its membership for approval by the UMRA Board, b) the JOIE Board should name its panel of reviewers without need for UMRA Board approval, and c) JOIE's web page should make clear for submitters of material that final publication decisions rest with JOIE's editors and review panel.

9. Website development and committee proposal

Naumann reported. Work to replace the UMRA website has been underway for over two years. The new site went active September 15 (drumroll of acclaim from Board members), and the old one now is dead except for a link directing users to the new one. The new site has a number of features that should make it more user-friendly, including: a) not-yet-active links to the UMRA member database and b) use of Drupal, the content management system (CMS) that the U uses. The tentative target time for activating the database (including its credit card capability via PayPal) is winter break, after which it should be possible for UMRA members to do, online, such things as renewing memberships and making luncheon reservations. Pilot training of UMRA information contributors will begin this fall with officers and newsletter editor Hanson. Gierke has been serving as co-webmaster; she and Naumann have been ably assisted by a CSOM student and a CSOM IT staff member. Kinsey urged all Board members to spend some time surfing the new website if they have not already done so, and Naumann asked all to notify him of any problems they encounter in using the new website. *Action:* The Board gratefully made official Lee Gierke's position as co-webmaster.

10. CARES Committee

Nolting reported. The committee, which was started by Ron Anderson in 2012, does such things as sending condolences in case a retiree or spouse's death. It helps survivors or caretakers plug into grief groups, identify dementia resources, etc. It has developed a program to train *care guides* who can consult with those who seek guidance as caregivers and have other questions about navigating the health care system. To date ten volunteers have signed up for this activity. This committee has organized a number of after-meeting workshops for UMRA attendees.

11. Campus Club;

O'Brian reported. As UMRA representative, she attends monthly Campus Club Board meetings. CC is in good shape financially, thanks especially to special events such as retirements and weddings. The UMRA-CC relationship is good. CC membership has been gradually declining (a net loss of about 50 members per year on average, spread across retirees and active staff alike). CC has

been carrying on a discussion about its relationship to the U that is remarkably parallel to UMRA's discussion about its own.

12. Big Ten Annual Meeting; Program Committee

D. Peterson reported on two items. Big Ten conference: She attended annual conference of Big Ten retiree organizations, held this year at Michigan State. She concluded from the discussions that UMRA is doing well; our range of activities is strong compared with that of many of our Big Ten counterparts. [*Note for future reference*: Kinsey alerted members that for UMRA's October Board meeting she would like to include a discussion of whether or not to establish an ongoing budget line for someone to attend the conference.]

Program Committee: This year's programs—workshops as well as speakers—are now all set, except that the January speaker had to withdraw because of a schedule conflict with teaching commitments and a new speaker has yet to be identified. Several slots for the 2016–17 year have already been filled as well. [*Note*: A discussion about meeting dates established that it is the 4th Tuesday of the month, not the 4th Tuesday of the *fourth full week* of the month, unless that conflicts with a major holiday in which case it is likely to be held on the 3rd Tuesday.]

13. Status of UMN Relations; additional Board member

Adams reported on two items. Status of UMRA-UMN relations: UMRA has been struggling for a couple of years to clarify the relationship, and especially to develop a good model for working more closely with the Provost's office. Adams sees three main barriers to a solution: tradition (the U has largely ignored retirees), management problems (most U units don't know how to deal with retirees or even to keep lists updated), and HR rules. Adams has been communicating with Provost Karen Hanson, whose initial preference, it seems, is to have UMRA plug into the U through the Vice Provost for Faculty. Additional Board member: Kinsey had asked Adams, as chair of the 2015–16 Nominating Committee, to identify one or more candidates to fill the current Board vacancy. He recommended Shirley Barber, who has agreed to serve if elected. *Action*: The Board elected Barber by acclamation to fill the Board vacancy for the term 2014-2017.

14. Membership Committee

Larson reported. The reception for new members will be held prior to the October luncheon. Membership renewals are going well—538 so far. Some always lag, so more are expected.

15. URVC

Kinsey reported briefly on the annual reception for retiree volunteers, which had been held at Eastcliff the day before.

16. Benefits

Litman reported that health insurance premiums will almost certainly rise, but the magnitude of the increase is still unknown.

17. Communications/Newsletter

Hanson noted that the September newsletter had gone out late and that slower US Mail delivery is compounding the time crunch. She urged measures to assure that the newsletter can reach members in a timely manner. *Action*: The Board endorsed Hanson's suggestion that the 24th of the month be established as the deadline for submissions, with the understanding that exceptions will occasionally have to be made.

18. Research Funding status

Hogan reported. There is no new money for this round. Adams and others are pressing the Provost's office, which says discussion of future funding is still on the agenda. The U has not decided whether the monies should come through the Provost's office or that of the Vice President for Research. Adams suggested that future funding may hinge in part on the issue of UMRA's relationship to the U.

19. Other

Eidman noted that the first of the three workshops on retiree financial management will be held following the October luncheon and speaker.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Chip Peterson, Secretary, with
edits by Jean Kinsey, President