

**UMRA Board of Directors  
Minutes, Meeting of Tuesday, 27 October 2015**

Members present: Shirley Barber (2015–17), Steve Benson (2015–18), Roger Clemence (2014–17), Joanne Eicher (2010–13, 2013–16), Vernon Eidman (2010–13, 2013–16), Sherilyn Goldsmith May (2014–17), 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), Chip Peterson (Secretary), Donna Peterson (President Elect), Gloria Williams (2015–18)

Members absent: Carl Adams (Treasurer), Kathleen O'Brien (2013–16)

| Other participants: Ginny Hanson, Jan Hogan, Ted Litman, Dale Swanson

Kinsey called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**1. Welcome and introductions**

Board members welcomed Barber, who has agreed to serve the remaining two years of a term that became vacant when Carl Adams took over the Treasurer position, and introduced themselves.

**2. Minutes of Sept. 22 meeting**

The minutes were approved as drafted.

**3. Treasurer's Report (Carl Adams)**

Kinsey summarized the written report that Carl Adams had sent to her in advance of the meeting. Since the year-end report for 2014–15, UMRA income and receipts have come to \$14,572.51 (mostly from dues), and expenses have totaled \$1,999.19 (mostly for printing and mailing). The organization's finances appear to be solid.

**4. Big Ten Annual Meeting report (Donna Peterson)**

The meeting this summer of Big Ten retiree associations proved very helpful, both as a source of ideas and as a sort of validation that UMRA stacks up well vis-à-vis its peers. The conference program was highly varied. Each association has a different mix of programs and activities (for example, scholarships, retiree travel programs, breakfasts and lunches, etc.).

**5. Future funding for representation at Big Ten and AROHE meetings (Jean Kinsey)**

Kinsey drew the Board's attention to the draft resolution she had emailed to members in advance of the meeting. Although an UMRA representative has often attended the annual Big Ten retirees' conference as well as the biennial AROHE (Association of Retiree Organizations in Higher Education) conference, the Board has had to approve funding on an ad hoc basis each time. Kinsey suggested that a recurring commitment might streamline the process as well as affirming the desirability of regular representation from UMRA. The Board approved a motion to authorize up to \$1,000 to defray the costs of sending a representative to each of the two conferences (which would come to a maximum of \$3,000 over a two-year period), with the understanding that Kinsey would convey the decision to Carl Adams and would bring it back to the Board for reconsideration should Adams have any concerns about it. The Executive

Committee will select the representative to each conference. A suggestion was made (although not incorporated into the motion) that representatives submit a brief written report upon return from a conference, with particular emphasis on interesting ideas gleaned from other institutions' activities and programs.

#### **6. Approve UMN former faculty as UMRA member? (Jean Kinsey)**

Travis Thompson was about to join UMRA this fall when he looked at the membership guidelines on the website and questioned whether he was eligible, given that he is not technically a U of M retiree—even though he was on the faculty from 1966 to 1991 before going to Vanderbilt and then the University of Kansas (and finally back to the U of M for part-time teaching at the U of M beginning in 2006). Kinsey noted that the Board has granted other exceptions in the past. Eicher and Clemence both opined that any retiree who has worked here and feels s/he fits in should be able to join UMRA regardless of whether the final retirement was from the U of M or not. The Board adopted that stance and directed the Executive Committee to recommend how to implement it. In the meantime, the proposed bylaw changes going to the membership for approval in November will not be modified to reflect the new policy.

#### **7. Task force on U Relations (John Adams, Hal Miller, Donna Peterson, Jean Kinsey)**

Kinsey noted that Adams has been working long and hard on clarifying the nature of UMRA's ties to the U. Kinsey has now asked the president-elect and the two most recent past presidents to join her in a task force to seek resolution. A particularly vexing issue has been how to contact recent retirees. At present, because of some privacy concerns on the part of the U, UMRA has only been able to get a list of pending retirees and send them one email message calling their attention to UMRA; this has limited impact because many new retirees need some time to settle into retirement before they are really ready to pay attention.

Donna Peterson reported that a recent conversation with Kathy Brown (VP for Human Relations) had given her hope for a favorable outcome. Brown had seemed receptive to Peterson's proposal that UMRA be allowed to send newsletters to new retirees for one or two years after their retirement, with recipients having the right to opt out. That would not only improve new retirees' consciousness of UMRA and what it offers but would also make them more aware of ways they could contribute to the U and the community through such vehicles as URVA and OLLI. Brown told Peterson she would check with others on the idea.

Kinsey is compiling a list of connections UMRA, or retirees more generally, already have with the U, including U financial support (e.g., funding of the Development Grants for Retirees, or the U's in-kind donation of staff time to support UMRA projects), and retiree contributions to the U and the community (e.g., volunteering through URVA, lobbying the Legislature for U support, etc.). Eicher suggested adding guest lecturing and continued service on committees for graduate degrees to the list.

Howe recollected that some years ago, when similar conversations had begun, the U Attorney found that UMRA was not tied to the U (and seemed to say by implication that it should not be). The Board encouraged the task force to continue pursuing the matter in the hopes that the General Counsel's office this time will prove more supportive.

#### **8. Web page development (David Naumann)**

The new website seems to be working well. There has been lots of positive feedback, as well as assistance from members when they notice glitches. Work continues apace on the second phase, which should result in database and online payment capabilities; target date is early 2016.

**9. CARES committee plans and projects (Jean Kinsey for Earl Nolting)**

Nine people are being trained to be advisers to members experiencing illness, family deaths, or other crises. They aim to complete the training and begin their work by early 2016.

**10. Program Committee report (Donna Peterson, Hal Miller)**

Peterson reported that committee is scrambling to get speakers for January (speaker had to cancel because of a conflict with teaching) and March (proposed program featuring UMRA professional development grand recipients didn't pan out).

Miller highlighted a few of the upcoming workshops.

**11. JOIE progress and launch; appointment of JOIE board members (John Howe)**

The JOIE board needs some replenishing; eligibility is not limited to UMRA members. The other major need is more publicity; too many retirees are still unaware of JOIE. At the request of the JOIE selection committee, the JOIE board is working on a clearer statement of purpose and description of boundaries. Howe hopes to report back to UMRA on this in a couple of months.

**12. Benefits (Ted Litman, Dale Swanson)**

Open enrollment in retiree health insurance plans is coming up in November. Changes in the plans are generally minor. The brochure that went out to retirees is clearer than in the past.

**13. Communications/Newsletter (Ginny Hanson)**

The deadline for material for the November newsletter was October 24; any additional submissions must arrive immediately, as publication must be sooner than normal because of the date of the November meeting (a week earlier than usual because of Thanksgiving).

**14. Research Funding status: Report on funds and RFP process this year (Jan Hogan)**

Happily, the Provost's office came through with \$45,000 of last minute funding just when it looked like the program would have to be suspended for this year. Once the committee sees the proposals, Hogan might request a \$5,000 match from UMRA to bring the total available to \$50,000. The Provost's office seemed receptive to the possibility of a three-year commitment, which would make program planning and publicity easier for UMRA and its grants committee. Even though the Provost's office is replacing the office of the VP for Research as the funding source, staff support will continue to come from the latter. Kinsey is sending a letter of thanks to the Provost.

**15. History/Archive Committee (John Howe, Gloria Williams)**

Kinsey announced that Williams has now volunteered to chair the committee and will take over the UMRA archives from Howe and Miller.

**16. Other**

Larson noted that UMRA membership renewals so far are running about three percent above last year's. The committee will gently prod those members who still have not gotten around to renewing.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.