

**Minutes of the UMRA Board of Directors  
Campus Club, September 26, 2017  
Judith Garrard, Secretary**

*Members present:* Carl Adams, Vern Cardwell, Judy Garrard, Cathy Lee Gierke, Ole Gram (representative from Provost's Office), Judy Leahy Grimes, Cherie Hamilton, Kathy O'Brien, Claudia Parliament, Chip Peterson, Dick Poppele, Jerry Rinehart, Gloria Williams

*Members absent:* Steve Benson, John Howe, Jeanne Markell. (There is also one vacant position following Martha Feda's resignation)

*Guests present:* Becky Anderson (editor), Kris Mortensen (editor), Ole Gram (Provost's Office), Tom Hyder (Minnesota Gerontological Society), Jean Kinsey (co-chair Council of Past Presidents), Dale Swanson (UMRA rep to Benefits Committee)

The meeting came to order at 9:00 a.m.

**1. Adopt agenda**

With the addition of two last-minute written reports to the previously distributed materials, the Board approved the agenda. Although the many attachments are not included with these minutes, the Secretary will submit a hard copy of all meeting materials for future inclusion in the University Archives.

**2. Introductions**

All present introduced themselves.

**3. UMRA and the Minnesota Gerontological Society—Jerry Rinehart & Tom Hyder**

Jerry Rinehart, UMRA President-Elect, introduced Tom Hyder, Director of the Minnesota Gerontological Society. Tom distributed some descriptive materials and described the mission and focus of MGS, the free monthly Webinars for 2018–2018, and the annual conference. All MGS members hold individual memberships (as opposed to organizational memberships). Membership benefits include a free subscription to the *Journal of Applied Gerontology* and online access to archived webinars. Although most members are professionals in the field, MGS is not an accredited organization nor does membership qualify one for licensure of any kind. MGS's focus is on education and wellness. In describing the structure of the MGS, Tom focused especially on the Research Committee and the Education Committee. He invited UMRA to appoint one UMRA member for each of these committees. MGS also holds monthly webinars on topics related to aging; Chip suggested that UMRA develop a system for announcing this opportunity to the membership.

**4. Announcements**

- a. *UMRA's 2016–2017 submission to University Archives.* Chip called the Board's attention to an attachment outlining guidelines for submitting 2016–17 UMRA materials for inclusion in the year's deposit into the University Archives. Future iterations of the Operating Manual may incorporate some version of these.
- b. *New member reception.* Chip noted that the reception will be held from 10:00 to 11:30 am, prior to the October 24 luncheon.
- c. *Positions still needing to be filled.* Chip noted that the announcement in the September newsletter had yielded several volunteers but that he would announce at the luncheon that the following were still needed:
  - Rep to the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
  - Discount Coordinator
  - Cares Committee long-term chair (Ron Anderson agreed to interim chair until someone is willing to be appointed).
  - More members for Cares Committee, History Committee, and Social (or Activities) Committee

- d. *Council of Past Presidents and follow-up on MOU.* Jean Kinsey, co-chair, reported that one meeting was held in September and another is scheduled for Oct 16 in order to tap the experience of the members of this Council. Progress will be reported at the October Board meeting.
- e. *October luncheon: Future directions for UMRA.* Chip called the Board's attention to a handout (too new to have gotten into the mailing) consisting of an upcoming newsletter article describing the Oct 24 luncheon meeting, at which an UMRA town hall will replace the usual guest speaker. Chip will briefly introduce the program, after which Jean Markell will facilitate an open discussion about ways UMRA might improve and expand opportunities for the membership.

## **5. Proposed changes in committees**

Chip noted that the Executive Committee had endorsed two changes in UMRA's committee structure:

- From temporary Social Task Force to a standing Activities Committee
- Expanded History Committee role to include "doing history"

The Board approved these changes. Further details will be published in the Operating Manual. Claudia Parliament volunteered to join the Activities Committee.

## **6. 2017–2018 Operating Manual**

Chip requested the Board's feedback on the previously distributed draft of the 2017–18 update to the Operating Manual. Apart from corrections of some contact information, members offered no suggestions for changes. In the course of discussing the Operating Manual, Chip announced that a Board Member, Martha Feda, has had to resign. The UMRA bylaws stipulate that the Board can appoint a new member when this happens. Jean Kinsey, Chair of last year's Nominating Committee, shared a list of potential nominees from that committee's discussion. The Board ranked a few top names and authorized Chip to contact them in order to determine their willingness to serve. (*Update:* Will Craig subsequently agreed to fill the remaining two years of Martha's term, although previous commitments will prevent him from attending the Oct meeting.)

## **7. Proposal for SIG on Financial/Legal Issues for Retirees**

Chip called the Board's attention to an attachment outlining UMRA member Andy Whitman's proposal to establish a new special interest group. To prevent conflicts of interest, Andy had agreed that neither he nor any resource people he might bring to SIG meetings would accept clients from the SIG. Andy will also reiterate at each meeting that UMRA bears no liability for decisions taken by participants as a result of information learned through this SIG. In the course of the discussion a question was raised as to whether UMRA had a code of ethics or a conflict of interest policy (it does not) and whether it might want to develop one. The Board then gave the green light to Andy. Chip will follow up.

## **8. Luncheon venue and problem of insufficient capacity—Jerry Rinehart and Judy Grimes**

There was energetic discussion about the problem of the expanding number of members and the limited space for the luncheons. In particular, in recent months reservations have reached room capacity one or more weeks before registration deadline. In a recent meeting Jerry, Judy, and Campus Club director Ann Holt had discussed various options, none of which was ideal. The Program Committee, which Jerry chairs, has decided to experiment with a late afternoon time slot for the annual meeting in May, which will permit use of the larger West Wing. It will include hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar in lieu of the usual luncheon. Following the town hall on Oct 24, other options for next year will be explored.

## **9. Reports**

- a. *Treasurer's report—Carl Adams.* Carl plans to have the annual report ready in time for the Oct Board meeting. He noted that the current UMRA finances are about the same as last year and that the reserve has not been touched.
- b. *Membership report and graph.* The two attachments show that membership is almost the same as last year at this point. Chip distributed an additional handout that had arrived after the Board mailing: a report on recruiting from Membership Committee chair John Anderson. Thanks in part to the efforts of UMRA member Bill Donohue, UMRA has now regained access, at no cost, to lists of employees who have separated from the University. The arrangement is still less than ideal, because the University insists that privacy concerns prevent it from indicating which separations

represent retirements; the Membership Committee has thus had to choose an arbitrary cutoff point (at least ten years of University employment) to distinguish likely retirements from other reasons for separation.

- c. *Newsletter and other communication issues.* Jean Kinsey summarized an attachment consisting of a report on the transition to the E-newsletter and also introduced Becky Anderson and Kris Mortensen, two of the new copy editors for the Newsletter. Jean and the editors will welcome feedback on the e-newsletter and suggestions for improvements.
- d. *Retiree health plan rates.* Dale Swanson, who represents retirees in the University Benefits Committee, called the Board's attention to the attachment announcing rates for 2018. Rates have generally remained stable or nearly so. Dale noted that Blue Cross-Blue Shield may have a prescription benefit increase, which retirees aged > 65 years should take into account when weighting the various choices for 2018–19. He also announced these dates:
  - Oct 24 – UMRA workshop after the luncheon will be on Health Plans only, not Dental Plans. This will be announced in the newsletter prior to Oct 24.
  - Nov 7 – Benefit Fair, where representatives of all retiree health plans will be available to meet one-on-one with individuals.
  - Nov 9 – Report on benefit plans will be published; e-edition will be available before Oct 24.
- e. *UMRA Cares Committee report.* Chip noted that Earl Nolting's resignation as chair had left a huge gap, which Ron Anderson has stepped in to fill on an interim basis, to the deep gratitude of all concerned. An attachment from Ron, who was unable to attend the meeting in person, described the directions in which he hopes to take the committee.
- f. *Professional Development Grants for Retirees.* At an October 4 meeting, the members discussed the impact of a new University-wide Workflow System for Grant Administration. An orientation session will be open to help UMRA grant applicants master the system.

#### **10. Food for thought**

Chip called attention to three attachments that can help provide context for some of the Board's deliberations. He urged members to keep them on hand and review them from time to time during the year.

- a. Three pieces on retirement in higher education, published together in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*
- b. A report by John Adams on recent conversations with University Regents on retiree issues
- c. Jerry Rinehart's report from the recent conference of Big Ten retiree organizations; the report includes much comparative information on approaches and issues at other schools.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 am.