

UMRA Board of Directors
Minutes Meeting of Tuesday, 28 January 2020

Members present: Vern Cardwell, Frank Cerra, Will Craig, Cathy Gierke, Cherie Hamilton, Eric Hockert, Jeanne Markell, Ron Matross, Jan Morlock, Claudia Parliament, Chip Peterson, Donna Peterson, Dick Poppele, Jerry Rinehart, Gloria Williams

Members absent: Carl Adams, Lynn Anderson, Bill Donohue, KaiMay Terry

Others present: Kris Mortensen

Cerra (substituting for Donohue who is traveling) called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

1. Introductions.

Members and guests introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of 11/19/19 Board Meeting.

Approved, with one minor correction: Kris Mortensen was mistakenly listed in the attendance list as a board member.

3. Review of Holiday Event

Cerra reported that word-of-mouth feedback had been positive and that he and Donohue were pleased with the experiment and recommend continuing next year. Rinehart noted that the buffet had been prepared for about a hundred participants vs. the seventy-five who attended. The only real problem had been unreliable microphones for the acapella student singing group. The Campus Club did not charge UMRA for the unreliable sound system. There was some inconclusive discussion about how much to spend on food next year.

4. Program Committee Update

Hockert briefly previewed today's talk by John Suzukida on US concentration camps for Japanese-Americans during World War II. Gierke will record it for the UMRA website. Cerra drew the board's attention to the previously-distributed table identifying confirmed speakers from now through January 2021. The discussion then veered off briefly into possibilities for sponsorships, with no closure on the topic.

5. Communication and Outreach Committee

Although committee chair Jean Kinsey had been unable to attend this meeting, Cerra drew the board's attention to her brief report, previously distributed. Current initiatives include Gierke's effort to finalize a system for recording luncheon speakers and the addition of a web link to the recent UMRA letter, published online by Minnpost, expressing enthusiasm and optimism about the direction the U is taking. Primary authors Donohue and Cerra were congratulated for their great work on this perspective piece.

6. Social Activities Committee

Committee chair Cherie Hamilton reported that six UMRA members have enrolled so far in next fall's trip to Portugal and reminded all that the signup deadline is March 1. UMRA has reserved 12 double cabins and 4 singles on the riverboat. Post-deadline registrations will be possible only on a space-available basis. Our partner for the trip, Road Scholars, is also offering participants an optional five-day, four-night post-trip tour of Lisbon (rather than pre-trip as originally planned), at \$1,099 all-inclusive. Airfare is coming in at \$1,200. The committee will be meeting immediately after this board meeting to confirm everything.

Hamilton also noted that UMRA members can enroll in a Sedona (AZ) trip prior to AROHE's national conference. Trip participants need not necessarily attend the conference, whose costs are entirely separate.

Craig reminded the board of the upcoming opportunities to attend Gopher sporting events as an UMRA group at a reduced price: women's basketball Feb. 2 and women's hockey Feb. 22. He is also working on a Twins game sometime in the summer.

7. Recommendations for Nominating Committee

Rinehart noted that the nominating committee, which he chairs as immediate past president, needs to be up and running in February. He reminded the board that the bylaws prescribe a committee of five members (including the chair), three of whom should come from outside the board, and he asked board members to suggest people for the other committee slots, as well as potential officers and board members.

He noted that Lynn Anderson does not plan to continue as secretary after this year. There will be at least two board vacancies, as Markell is finishing her second term and Poppele does not wish to continue. Gierke is interested in a second term and Cardwell is undecided. Thus at least two officer positions will need to be filled (president-elect and secretary) and at least two at-large board positions.

8. Organizational Memory and Continuity Task Force

Rinehart called the board's attention to the previously-distributed excerpt from "The Principles of Nonprofit Excellence," developed by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, and he suggested that some UMRA body (a task force?) might want to undertake a review of UMRA's present structure and policies in relation to those principles. As an exploratory step in this direction, he asked members to review the eleven principles (or "dimensions") that characterize non-profit organizational life, and to identify two areas that, if examined, might provide of greatest benefit to the Board's effectiveness. These results will be compiled for discussion at the February meeting.

Meanwhile, UMRA's Organizational Memory and Continuity Task Force has now met twice and will continue working to develop systems and documents that can ameliorate the effects of turnover in the organization's leadership.

9. U of M Legislative Requests

J.D. Burton Chief Government Relations Officer, spent the last half hour of the meeting updating the board on the status of the U's funding requests to the Legislature. During this, the shorter session of the biennium, only the capital request is in play; the U has not made a request for supplemental operations funding. This year, however, the stakes are higher than usual because the Legislature failed to agree to a bonding bill last year.

With the aid of two handouts, Burton outlined the U's request, which includes some matching funds from the U itself. The proposed total is \$375.8 million, of which the U would put in \$58.6 million and the state \$317.2 million. The request is divided into two major categories: \$200.0 million for Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPR), and \$117.2 million for specific projects: Child Development Building replacement (Twin Cities), A.B. Anderson Hall renovation (Duluth), Chemistry Undergraduate Teaching Laboratory (Twin Cities), and design work for a Clinical Research Facility (Twin Cities). The HEAPR request does not include a U match; the specific projects do.

Governor Walz's request included all the proposed funds for the specific projects except the Clinical Research Facility design work, but only \$125 million of the \$200 million for HEAPR. Although the Governor's request on the whole was reasonably good to the U, Burton warned that "the University is crumbling" and that HEAPR needs to be funded more generously in coming years.

Burton urged UMRA members to join UMN Advocates (<https://advocates.umn.edu/>), which can facilitate effective lobbying. The bonding bill requires a supermajority, so that members of the minority party (and especially minority party leaders in the two houses) are important. Telling your own story can be especially compelling. Focus your efforts on your own district's representative and senator. Make clear that you're a constituent and that you're paying attention. Emails, phone calls, social media, and one-one-meetings can all be helpful. Burton urged members to block out March 26, which is a legislative blitz date for UMN Advocates.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.