

UMRA Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)
Monday, September 25, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Draft Minutes

In attendance (virtual): Board members: Will Craig, Cathy Lee Gierke, Kristy Frost-Griep, Eric Hockert, Laurie Koch, Russell Luepker, Kate Maple, Ron Matross, Jan McCulloch, Jerry Rinehart, Barbara Shiels, Julie Sweitzer, Diane Young, KaiMay Terry, Brad Clary, Diane Gihl, Michael Hancher, Frank Cerra

Eric Hockert opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Opening remarks – Eric

Thanks all for agreeing to serve on the board.

Thanks also previous and current leadership, Ron, Julie, Kristy, Jerry and Laurie who serve on the executive committee.

According to the bylaws, is expected that board members are to participate in other UMRA activities. If you are not participating, please find one activity in which you can engage. Eric will send out an email asking for each member to send to Eric a list of at least one activity in which you are participating.

ACTION: Send an email request to each Board member asking them to reply to Eric with a list of their additional roles/contributions to UMRA - Eric

Logistics of meetings - Please make sure you raise your hand and wave it so we all can see. Bylaws do say we should go by Robert's Rules of Order. Everyone should have the opportunity to speak so Eric will try to give everyone the chance to speak once before an earlier speaker speaks for a second time. Motions should be spoken clearly. Eric will repeat the motion so we have an accurate description in the minutes and that everyone is clear.

Introductions – All (name, dept., year retired) All those present, introduced themselves.

Agenda – review and approve – Eric had one correction. The next meeting is October 23rd **NOT** October 30th. Barbara approved, Michael seconded. Motion passed with the date correction.

Minutes – review and approve (attachments May 2nd and June 2nd). Since there are no corrections, the chair can approve the minutes. Eric approved both sets of minutes.

Financial – review and approve FY24 budget

Kristy gave a detailed financial report. FY 23 actuals are relevant. We started the dues process in May, which means we brought in money in FY 23, \$8,320. The River Cruise also brought in \$2,646. We paid \$1,400 for it. These show up in FY 23 in the budget, but the activities were not

until FY24. The end of the year looked good, as it shows that we had \$7,411 in net income. It also shows the dues that we collected early for FY24. So we really have about \$5,920. However, we set \$2000 aside for the BigTen conference. This gives us \$3,920 available.

We will need to have about other sources of revenue for the BigTen conference as it may cost \$30,000. We might have to go to the provost, find sponsors, increase attendance fee, etc.

Dues for FY 24 for a total to \$14,020. We are close our goal. We brought in more in sponsorships this year thanks to Bev. We can accept donations from members. We are a 501C4, but those donations are not tax deductible. The expenses we will incur include: the Newsletter (Kris Mortenson presented a new model this year with some cost savings.); luncheons; the Como event from last summer; the River Cruise; Conferences (BigTen, AROHOE, etc.); \$2000 for the Big10 conference; host committee costs (print labels, etc.); insurance (liability insurance and directors' and officers' insurance); membership costs for mailings; memorials; and miscellaneous expenses.

This shows that we have a net \$3300 loss but again this is a cash-based budget. We paid for somethings from last year.

End of year cash balance, if we take out all the cash flow items, we have \$2,486.

The final column is what happens when we take out all the cash flow noise, the back and forth of cash coming in one year for the next year, and expenses paid for one year for another year. The budget shows what it costs us to operate. We have about \$42,000 in revenue and about \$42,000 in expenses. We really do have a balanced budget for operations and events. The budget that needs to be approved is a cash flow budget even though it shows up as a net loss.

Michael asked if there is an endowment. Kristy replied that we do not. We have money in savings and a certificate. The savings is reported in the budget. The certificate may be about \$6000 or \$7000. (On 9/28/2023, Kristy amended this amount to \$10,000.)

KaiMay asked about the difference between a 501C3 and 501C4. Kristy responded that a 501C4 is a social welfare organization. Donations to a 501C4 are not tax deductible, but a 501C4 allows for advocacy activities. Eric mentioned that both he and Kristy have looked into this.

Last Monday the Executive Committee recommended the approval of the FY24 budget as presented by Kristy. It is up to the Board of Directors to actually approve the budget.

Frank moved to approve the budget as presented. Diane Young seconded.

Russell noted that now would be a good time to buy CD's, interest-wise.

MOTION: The motion is to approve the FY 24 budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Program update

Julie thanked members of the program committee. Almost all programs until May 2024 are scheduled, although we are still waiting for one workshop. Fall 2024 has already schedule a forum with Kathryn Pearson. The rest of Fall 2024 will be worked on sometime in March. The events look really good. We have several new moderators to join Julie and Mary. The 4th Tuesday in May falls after Memorial Day so after a great deal of consultation, we have decided to move it to May 21st (the 3rd Tuesday) and the May 14th for the third workshop. Changing the date has happened before for various reasons. We have booked the Campus Club for the May event, although all the other luncheons will be at Midlands Hills Country Club. Occasionally we have had to change the dates of workshops. For example, our annual fall workshop on Health Care was changed to a Thursday because the presenters had a retreat on the Tuesday.

We are working on two special Regent's sessions. One has been confirmed for October 4th with the four newest Regents. We should really try to have a decent showing at that just to impress them that we are involved. The second will be on October 20th. They wanted to meet with us as the presidential search advisory process. We have an **in-person** meeting with two Regents, Mary Davenport, who is chairing the advisory process, and Regents Chair Janie Mayeron. They want to hear from us as to what we think is important in searching for a new university president. Janie Mayeron talk with us about leading the University in this year of transition. No location has been determined. It will either be St. Paul or West Bank so parking will be easier. It will be at 9:00 AM and we have an hour. It is very important for us to promote this. We really hope that many of the Board members will be able to attend since we all have unique perspectives that none of them would have. The Regents are very eager to meet with us.

Brad mentioned that he reached out again to Melissa Hortman's staff to confirm a date in January. We are still waiting for a date. Frank Cerra said that we should give them some latitude on the date. Brad said we offered both January and February. Julie suggested that they can pick a date.

Eric asked about a holiday event. Julie said the two summer events were fantastic. Julie noted that Jan told her Will has taken that on and is working on one in either December or January. Eric mentioned that he has asked Jan to coordinate with Julie and be a part of the program committee so Julie will have overall visibility for these activities.

Will said that the musical group they had at past events is wonderful, 7Days A Cappella. Jerry helped find them. They seemed to have gone under the radar. Both Jerry and Will have tried chasing them down. If we can't connect with them, the School of Music has several other possible student groups. The Campus Club is willing to do something for us, but Will will check in with Midland Hills. Some of it may come down to price. We may not want to have a full dinner, but a social hour. It is still to be decided, but we need to have a someone to perform first.

Eric asked which month, December or early January? Julie mentioned that we do have some events for January. Will suggested maybe December. It must be self-supporting, so we will need to consider this.

Diane said that 7Days A Cappella is on FaceBook.

Jerry said he left a message for them. He suggested another group, Basses and Tenors. He also noted that their music is secular and seasonal. It was appropriate and great fun.

Diane Gihl said that the group, 7Days A Cappella, are in the middle of auditions which maybe this is why they may not be responding.

Eric mentioned that everyone is on the board for a reason!

Organizational Continuity Committee – brief update on plans

The Organizational Continuity Committee reviews and analyzes the reports submitted by the various UMRA committees.

Jerry said that there are 2 parts to the work. First, the committee gathered and gleaned what was in the reports, and second, do we really need all the reports and how we do the review process. Are all these reports needed. There is a very big difference between a special interest group and a committee chair and a representative or a liaison. We might want to think about how we call for these reports. Our plan is to update this process. The group has reviewed the more than 40 reports. We need to figure out what is good for the organization and for the future leaders. It is not a good idea to write a report that is going directly to the archives is not a very wise idea. It should not be just for historical records, although that is important, but what else can we get out of this process. The group has the following members; Julie Sweitzer, Julia Wallace, Jean Kinsey, Cathy Lee Gierke, and Jerry Rinehart.

Eric said that the results will be the focus for the October meeting.

Organizational structure proposal – Membership/Communications and Outreach – Ron

Eric mentioned that Ron was the past president of UMRA, and has participated in many other UMRA activities. He is ideally suited to make this recommendation. The Executive committee approved this recommendation. It does not require approval by the Board but we would like to consult with the Board. According to the bylaws, the president can make or eliminated committees in consultation with the Board.

Ron started by mentioning that he was on both committees and noted that there was considerable overlap between the two committees. The membership committee sends our renewal letters which are crucial in doing outreach to the membership as well as being involved in new member events. They also represent UMRA at retirement events and other activities, so the Membership committee is doing communication and outreach. Conversely, the Outreach committee does membership activities through the Newsletters and website, which are crucial

ways to maintain the membership. They were also involved with making UMRA visible and respected within the University. Jean Kinsey asked Ron to take it over last year when Ron talked Jean into being a chair again.

Ron talked with Ginny Hanson and Kris Mortenson and shared his idea of coordination of the two committees. Ron wants to combine the two committees and maintain all the same functions. Hopefully we can get some new energy and ideas and attract new members and maintain member satisfaction and make UMRA more visible and respected in the University and without. We need to make sure the functions are maintained but we need to find ways to groom assistants and/or successors. We do outsource some of the functions. Ron is proposing one committee which would be called the Membership and Communications Committee. Both John and Jean want release from their service and Ron will be ideally positioned for the chair of the new committee.

Eric again mentioned that according to the bylaws, the president can change, add or eliminate committees with consultation with the Board.

Jan thinks it is really a good time for Jean and John to work with this combined committee to help it be more efficient. Also, as a member of the host team, we have long time members who noted that they would love to do things and get the same attention as is placed on new members. Ron responded by saying that it would be a great idea to have a member of the host committee on the new committee. Jan agreed, but first she wanted to talk with the committee.

Jerry thinks it is a great idea, particularly focusing on the image we present to the community. The letter that was sent to new retirees didn't have the marketing spirit to it but had more of a procedural tone to it.

Michael wanted to know if the members of the 2 committees would be invited to participate in the new committee. Ron said that absolutely they should be asked but it would be up to them. Michael also wanted to know what the size of the new committee should be. Ron hadn't thought about the appropriate size. They would probably meet quarterly.

Eric suggested that Ron draft a brief note that would go out to the membership and maybe announce it in the newsletter. Ron wasn't convinced because it may not be of interest to the operational change.

Eric thanked Ron for putting this together and agreeing to chair the new committee.

Michael mentioned that the first people to be told would be the current members and at the same time they should be invited to be on the new committee.

President's report – Eric

Agenda for the year: Engagement with the organization - how do we engage our members, both new and our existing members and how do we continue to provide value to them? We want to be more inclusive of all members – living away from Twin Cities, and maybe those at the other campuses.

Engagement with the University - How do we increase our visibility and interactions with the University, including increasing connection with University Senate. Eric had lunch with Gary Engstrand. He has a deep knowledge of the University Senate. We already have representation on some Senate committees. Developing an understanding of the University Senate could give us an addition way to connect to the University and to provide value to the University.

Engagement with the community – this would include the BigTen Retirees Association, AROHOE, etc.

These are the three areas Eric would like to put some emphasis on this year.

Frank had mentioned to Eric earlier that the past-present be the liaison to the campus club. Ron has agreed to do this.

Membership numbers

We had 837 members as of August 25, 2023 (Virgil Larson)

We added 172 new members in past 12 months, 151 added so far in CY2023 as of Sept. 5, 2023 (listserv per John Anderson)

There are 526 of the 837 with UMN email addresses

63% of new members have renewed and 90% of other members have renewed. (Virgil Larson 9/25/23 email)

Eric and Ron attended BigTen retirees conference in Madison. We are hosting in 2026 and will start planning in January. Eric plans to lead this. He will be past president in 2025 and past, past president in 2026 so this would give a focus to work on. When Julie and Eric spoke with Provost Crosen, they brought up the funding of the conference. Julie mentioned the possibility of administrative support, but Provost Crosen thought in-kind support was easier. We already have 4 people have agreed to participate in the conference planning - Diane Young, Sally Kohlstedt, and Cherie Hamilton, Russell Luepker.

We think we will need between \$20,000-30,000 dollars. We will need to do some fund-raising for this event. We hosted this in 2014. Eric has the binder from this.

Provost meeting with Provost, Eric, Julie and Deb Cran. We spoke about engaging with the University and UMRA's contributions to the University (e.g. \$34 million that UMRA members have donated to the University Foundation, URVC volunteers, Silver Gophers, U Senate reps/liaisons, Alumni Association, Age Friendly University, and BTRA (Big Ten)). We thanked her for support of UMRA. She brought up the Campus Club. She was firm that she cannot support the campus club. It won't sell at the legislature.

Anything else? What should Eric be doing? What should we be doing? Send Eric an email if you have ideas.

Wendy brought up access to email. It isn't just email but the entire Google Suite. The onus falls on the departments to enter the status when someone retires. Spouses are not in the data bases, which is a complication. It is not as simple as the Provost mentions. There are many details that need to be considered. Julie said that we have promises but it is not a certainty that we keep our emails. Ron said it is now time to go back to OIT. We have a list of UMRA members. We need to get a firm commitment from them and then we need to talk about how to do it. This is important for a lot of our members. A number of retirees joined UMRA just to keep their emails.

Ron asked if we are the department or would it be the department from which they retired? Wendy said that it is the department from which a person retired. There are many details that have to be figured out. In any case this would not cover spouses.

Eric thought that the October agenda may have too many items, so we should think about what we can actually cover. Ron could give a very brief report on the new committee. Julie will have a brief update from the Program committee, Will will give a short update on the Alumni Association update.

Jerry said that the OCC report should not take up the whole meeting so we can include other things. Jerry may only need 30 minutes. If members have other agenda items, please send them to Eric.

KaiMay asked about the 501C4. Can we be a 501C3? Jerry said when he looked at this a few years ago, the reporting was more complicated than a 501C4 and that the details were killers.

Michael asked if the provost gave any suggestions as to how UMRA could help her office. Julie said that Eric had explicitly offered that. One suggestion she had was to reach out to OLLI. Michael wanted to know if she wanted our help with the annual request. Eric said that the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) does through its liaisons to the legislature, although he would like to have more of a role.

Barbara said hoped to see everyone at next forum at Midland Hills on the recent Supreme Court decisions.

Frank said that he and Bill Donahue did a lot of work on the email issue and there was a written letter that states that UMRA would be allowed to continue their emails.

ACTION: Frank will forward the letter to Ron as it is important to have it in writing before moving ahead.

Russell mentioned that there are two members on FCC who serve as liaisons to the legislature and we might connect with them. Eric asked Gary to draft a letter to those 2 people.

Jan wants us to remember that there is also a P&A Senate that we should reach out to as well.

Will – Go Gophers

Eric mentioned that Jane and Eric will be traveling. Send urgent matters to Julie Sweitzer.

Kate moved to adjourned. KaiMay seconded it. The motion was approved.

Next Board meeting

October 23, 2023 1:00pm-2:30pm