

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Engaging the Future

UMRA Board of Directors meeting

AGENDA

Monday, January 22, 2024 1:00pm-2:30pm

Zoom – <https://umn.zoom.us/j/91462992094?pwd=b2pKNzVDTUxxeWVhL3pGdHQ4Vm9FUT09>

Zoom will open 15 minutes before start of meeting for social time.

1. Regular Items
 - a. Opening remarks – Eric
 - b. Agenda – review and approve
 - c. Minutes (BOD Nov. 2023) – review and approve (Attachment 1)
2. Action Items
 - a. None
3. Updates
 - a. Annual calendar items – updates
 - i. SCFA – Michael Hancher
 - ii. BAC – Nancy Fulton, Russell Luepker
 - iii. P&A Senate – John Butler
 - b. Program – Julie
 - c. Nominating Committee – Ron
 - d. Membership and Communications – Ron
 - e. Financial (Att. 2) – Kristy
 - f. UMN email, Internet identity - Wendy
 - g. President's report (Att. 3) – Eric

Next BOD meeting

1. February 26, 2024 1:00pm-2:30pm
2. Agenda items for February BOD meeting?

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn?

Supporting Documents (attachments)

1. BOD Minutes November 2023
2. Financial Report
3. President's report

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

UMRA Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)

Monday, November 27, 2023

1:00 pm-2:30 pm

Draft Minutes

In attendance (virtual): Board members: Will Craig, Kristy Frost-Griep, Eric Hockert, Laurie Koch, Russell Luepker, Ron Matross, Jerry Rinehart, Barbara Shiels, Julie Sweitzer, Diane Young, KaiMay Terry, Brad Clary, Diane Gihl, Michael Hancher, Wendy Lougee, Jan Morlock, John Bantle

Guests: None

Eric Hockert opened the meeting at 1:00 pm.

Opening remarks – Eric welcomed and thanked everyone for their contributions to UMRA. He noted that it is important to have the information on the spreadsheet for several reasons: to keep the website up to date; be able to identify future leaders within UMRA; and as a resource to go to when questions may arise. People have until Friday to make changes.

Approvals

Agenda – Jan Morlock moved to accept the agenda as presented and Diane Young seconded it.

Minutes (October 2023) – With no additional corrections, the minutes are approved.

Action Items

Membership and Communications – dues change proposal

Ron stated that the membership trend is good news. It is at least a 6 year high with 808 members. Compared to 2022, membership increased by 31%. Continuing membership is up by 28% and new membership is up by 42%. We were at 615 last year. We picked up a lot of people this year. Ron is trying to develop a set of metrics for membership and reports which would give us a baseline and use year after year. We looked at renewal rates broken down by renewing and new members because new members always have a lower renewal rate since their first year was free. That is good news too because from 2022 to 2023 we went from 42% to 67%. Renewals by continuing members went from 76% to 93%. The overall renewal rate went from 71% to 88%. However, our 2022 renewal rates are lower than 2019, pre-pandemic. They then bounced back up this year. The fingerprints of the Hosting committee and the Membership and Communications committees are there. Also, the total number of retirees has surged, and a bit maybe due to the rumors regarding our email preservation. Renewals by dues type are up considerably, 619 renewals. The other part of our charge was to develop a proposal for a dues increase. Since new members start enrolling in January, we need to let them know as soon as possible what their dues will be after their first year.

Dues haven't been increased since 2018. Ron had proposed to his committee that we raise the single dues from \$30 to \$35 and couples from \$40 to \$50. During their meeting, John Sullivan looked up the consumer price index and suggest that we should keep up with inflation. To do that, we need to raise the dues to \$40 for singles and \$60 for dual memberships. The committee decided to look ahead not only for the Big10 conference, but to be prepared for the future inflation. It was suggested to raise it to those levels, which Ron's committee agreed to. They also decided to change the term from "couples' membership" to "dual membership". These changes would start July 2024. Those new members who enroll in February get a couple of extra months.

Motion: Jan Morlock moved to approve the dues proposal to raise the rate to \$40 for a single and \$60 for a dual membership. Seconded by John.

Julie understands Ron's concern about sticker shock, but the inflation argument is really strong and through the power of consultation, consensus and collaboration the committee agreed to these numbers as opposed to some other arbitrary numbers. Julie supports the proposal.

Diane also supports it and noted that last year the University Woman's club raised their dues by \$15 and membership has held steady. It is the reality of the times in what it takes to run an organization.

Brad wanted to know whether the subject of cost came up as a concern in any surveys and if people thought these were reasonable rates. Ron noted that he didn't know of any surveys that reflect the cost of dues or data regarding costs.

Diane Gihl agreed with the committee that small increments would not be advantageous.

Kristy looked up the survey about the cost increase of the luncheon and 80% of respondents said they would be willing to pay a \$5 increase in the cost of the luncheon.

Eric thanked Ron personally and officially as well as his committee for the proposal. He called for the question.

The proposal was approved unanimously.

Updates

UMN IT services - changes for retirees – Wendy sent out a status report of what we know. One thing that we found through our discussions with administrators and the feedback we have received from Eric's letter is that the concerns about risk are associated with using one's UMN email address for non-University business. Is there an argument to be made about retirees' level of risk? Can UMRA be a partner for the University that has integrity and isn't risky? We need to provide evidence that it would be a good move and a benefit for them to allow us to retain our access as the benefits outweigh the risks. We don't know the costs and haven't been able to get them. We need to demonstrate that affiliation creates loyalty (and benefits to the U

that follow), and that loyalty anticipates recognition and rewards. You might recall the Delta example this year when they introduced a new model for rewards. That change created a great deal of negative feedback, which caused Delta to reconsider their new model and roll it back. This is what we want the University to do.

Another issue relates to retirees saying, "I have so many files on the drive, that is where I keep everything." The University counters that this compromises security by keeping all your personal data on the drive. We need to find a way to provide examples of positive impact of sustained access on scholarship, engagement, and volunteering supporting the University.

The University is countering by telling us that we have free options for email everywhere. You don't need the service from us. But that isn't exactly true. The free Zoom service is different with more restrictions. It is certainly not true when it comes to the libraries access to electronic content. The Libraries currently allow retiree access to licensed content. There are no equivalent services if we lose the libraries. We need to provide examples how these are used.

Strategy – we need to get better data. We don't know how many retirees are impacted. [OIT says 5100 retirees]. How many accounts are active? From Eric's data, there are close to 900 members with at least 593 report having a *@umn.edu* address. We know that about 40% of UMRA are faculty and not all faculty are emeritus. Colleges have been inconsistent on using the emeritus title. We also don't know how many alumni are impacted and how that is driving some of this decision. Wendy did find a July 2023 UMAA report to BOR indicating a recent update of 180,000 email addresses. We also don't know if there are truly incremental costs. We know Zoom has a pure head cost, but we don't know if that is the actual use of the system or the potential use of the system. We do need this data and so far, we have not had responses to our requests to get it.

The second strategy is how do we demonstrate our engagement? How do we show we are engaged with this issue? We will have several forums for members to meet with OIT leaders and others. We will need to update members. Faculty should check on whether they have emeritus status. We need more compelling examples of engagement and demonstrate that we really are low risk.

We can each use our own networks and make contact with people. We hope to engage our Senate representatives. We have yet to hear back from the president and provost regarding the letter that was sent. The Regents could be engaged. We are a member of the Age-Friendly University, and we have the Center for Healthy Aging on campus. In a survey that was done in 2021, 85% of the faculty knew they could retain their email but only 15% of staff knew they could retain their email. The survey also asked about the library rating and that received high marks because the library was available to retirees.

There is by no means a high probability that we will succeed, but with more pressure and better argumentation we can advance will give us a better chance of making a change.

Jan Morlock thanked Wendy and Eric for this strategic work. She agrees that the inconvenience rationale is not persuasive. If we do a public forum, let's pick the people who will speak and do a lot of coaching as what they will say to make sure the most potent arguments are coming forward. The strongest argument is not only for engagement but in looking at the volunteer report, it shows an enormous amount of engagement with the University through volunteer activities. Maybe the University has a stake with keeping all of us engaged with thousands of hours of contribution.

Diane Young remembered that when she retired, she was told she could keep her email and library access. Was this a contract with the University that would continue? Thinking that it would continue, she organized her life around her email, etc. She proceeded on this assumption. Wendy was told that it wasn't a true benefit of employment. She tried to look at websites from the Way Back machine, but none of the links worked anymore. The idea that we would have email and library access came through loud and clear in the feedback. The University is saying that they will provide us email, it is just not the one you have now. Nobody back then was talking about identity and if you look back at all the recent Regents' minutes, you will see that it is all about identity and risk management.

Eric noted that with the Age-Friendly University, one of the principles there talks about the support for retirees. The report includes retirees keeping their emails. Do we have any documentation of the University's promise? Bernie acknowledged that the University is providing email for life, alumni.umn.edu, just not the umn.edu email. Julie notes that the library and services are the arguments we should make. Wendy mentioned that there is a catalogue of all the services, but we don't know what they all are.

Last summer after the cyber-attack, they turned off the University directory. A person without a umn.edu address cannot access the directory now.

John asked that if cost is an issue, can we pay for the email? Wendy said the OIT is unwilling to become an Internal Service Organization, which would be the way for charging for the service. The issue of compromising on the benefit might be a way to reduce costs, if we knew what they were. The risk card is probably what the University will argue. The question is: are we more or less risky than a 20-year-old student?

Brad asked if there is overlap between our group and the pool of adjuncts at the University. If there is overlap and the University provides umn.edu to adjuncts, how much money would they actually save by cutting our emails? Wendy replied that adjuncts are probably not retirees. Adjuncts are not always continuous employees and have their emails cut off when not employed.

Diane Young on the risk issue. How are we more of a risk now as retirees than we were as employees? Wendy said that the University was much more flexible about using your email for personal use in the past and now it says that it is only for your role at the University. We are

probably no more risky now than we were before, but that doesn't mean we weren't risky before.

Wendy requests that we contact people, provide a robust list of how you use your email. Send it to OIT and Eric. Wendy is putting together a list of talking points. Eric said that we have a consistent, robust message so that we have one voice and say the same thing.

Michael mentioned that OIT is asking for input, we have asked OIT to provide data but haven't heard anything.

Eric said that we want to help the University accomplish its goal, but we think that shutting off retirees is not going to help the University but to harm it.

Ron asked if we are clear that our focus is to retain email for UMRA members alone or for all retirees. If the issue is risk, we can help mitigate that because we know our membership. It would really be helpful if we knew how many retirees use their University identity.

Barbara wanted to know if the University goes through with this, what does this mean for our UMRA Zoom meetings? Wendy said that our contract with the U provides us with several Zoom accounts.

Program Committee– Julie

We had a workshop last week and a forum tomorrow with small attendance. We learned that we need to move them away from the Thanksgiving time. January and February are on Zoom. In January, the workshop is on therapeutic approaches on aging, which is basically about drugs that are designed to keep us from diseases that are associated with aging. The January forum is with Pat Miles, whose husband unexpectedly died a few years ago. While she thought they were well off, their finances and legal issues created unforeseen issues. She also had the trauma of an unexpected death.

Winter party – January 31. Jan Morlock confirmed the midwinter celebration, welcoming the light. The price will be \$38 per ticket. It is an afternoon event. Will said it will be at Midland Hills. Cathy has arranged for musicians Dan Stouffer and his partner, Dan Chenard with appetizers, desserts and a cash bar. We would need about 70 people to break even.

Jan Morlock thanked John for the great line-up on the PDGR grant forum. It was wonderful to see what retired researchers were doing. Julie noted that this would be a good example to share with the administration as to what retirees do.

Nominating Committee – Ron

We need to get the nominating committee going. We need people who we think would be good for the nominating committee. Eric wanted to know who should be on it automatically because of their positions on the Board. We need about 3 non-board members.

URVC – Jerry

Jerry provided information on the URVC contributions to the University. The numbers are understated but are robust. During the past five years (including reduced activity during the pandemic), URVC volunteers contributed over 38,000 hours to campus projects alone, which is about a third of all the hours the URVC contributes to the community. In addition to service to the community, we have a new program, the Post-Doctoral Mentor program with about 9 doctoral students matched with faculty retirees. There is particular focus on international students. Terry Smith on the URVC board is leading this effort. This is another good thing that UMRA adds to the University. Jerry is concerned about the decline in participation by retirees since the pandemic.

Campus Club – Ron

The Campus Club board has not met for a couple of months. At the last meeting Ann Holt noted that the Campus Club will go into debt. They are lobbying the current president and are hopeful that he will do something as he eats there several times a week. Julie noted that we are booked for May for the Campus Club. We will need to start holding dates for next year.

Financial – Kristy

Overall, we are in good status. We are doing well on events against budget. We have collected more dues than budgeted. Starting the dues in May rather than September was a fantastic decision.

President’s Report – Eric

Organizational items

We should consider gathering information on whether or not we want to reduce our reliance on the University because it isn’t as friendly as it was. Also, because with a new administration we might lose the web site, listserv, printing the newsletter, PDGR dollars, digital conservancy, URVC financial system, URVC parking vouchers, parking discounts, etc. Should we be prepared with a plan and what to do with our finances (budget, dues, sponsorships, donations, etc.). Eric will send out a list of all the ways in which we are dependent on the University. This data would help us make better decisions about how we might be effected if we get cut off.

ACTION: Eric will send out a list of all the ways in which we are dependent on the University

Ole Gram reached out to Eric on how UMRA might be able to work with faculty who plan to retire. Michael had had an earlier connection with Ole about a roadmap he might develop for retirees. Eric and Julie will meet with Ole and Beth Lewis this week. Eric plans to talk about AROHOE. Eric and Cherie Hamilton are on the board. AROHE has put together a reimagining retirement series directed at the non-financial aspects of considering retirement, transitioning to retirement and being in retirement. Fidelity gave \$90,000 to develop this program. There was the Encore Transitions program, but the University no longer offers it. We may have UMRA members be on a panel to share their stories. Ole’s interest is in the faculty but not the staff. It may later include staff.

AROHOE reimagining series. Ron and Eric are having coffee to talk about AROHOE and how we might advertise this, as well as the new Membership and Communications committee.

Jan commented on Eric's upcoming meeting with Ole and Beth. Ron, Jan, and Bill before that, spoke with CLA future faculty retirees and current retirees. The event was intended to encourage them to be donors to the college.

Wendy tied this idea to email event. When she met with Foundation, they were surprised about all the services that were attached to identity. They questioned whether the retiree email issue will influence donations.

Julie asked if the alumni association is fully aware of the impact of the identity related issues. Wendy said that alumni do not have all the access that retirees have. Alumni have email and workspace but not library access. They will lose their umn.edu workspace and email.

Eric plans to meet with Erin Heath, director of the University Senate to explore more about how UMRA can contribute to and participate in university roles e.g. Senate committees beyond the ones we currently have. Eric is still looking for more guidance as to how the University Senate works.

Eric is preparing his next article for the newsletter and would like to focus on UMRA needs e.g. database assistance for Virgil and a Regents liaison. If you have other suggestions for his article, send Eric an email.

Jerry wanted to know if the alumni association is going to take over the email domain and cover the costs. We don't know, but they do have some strong technology infrastructure.

Michael wanted to know about the risks with switching domains. The alumni domain alumni.umn.edu will not be on any of the University servers. Therefore, will not be a risk.

Jerry moved to adjourn, and Russell seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Next Board meeting: January 22, 2024, 1:00 pm-2:30 pm (No meeting in December per the By-Laws)

University of Minnesota Retirees Association

Financial Report

November 2023

Fiscal year July 1 through June 30

OVERALL STATUS: GOOD

UMRA		
	6.30.23	12.31.23
Savings Certificate	\$ 10,256	\$ 10,325
Savings Account	\$ 6,974	\$ 6,976
Checking Account	\$ 10,813	\$ 14,978
Total Checking and Savings	\$ 28,043	\$ 32,279

URVC	
Carryforward	\$ 4,213
Total Available 12/31/23	\$ 6,780

	UMRA		
	Budget FY24	Dec	YTD
Revenue:			
Sponsorships	\$ 8,550	\$ 1,100	\$ 3,800
Summer Social			\$ -
Summer 2023 Como			\$ -
Summer 2023 River cruise	\$ 1,550		\$ 1,152
Winter Social		\$ 1,260	\$ 1,260
Annual Dues	\$ 5,700	\$ 360	\$ 6,295
Annual Dues - next year	\$ 8,000		\$ -
Luncheons/Events	\$ 17,280	\$ 60	\$ 7,890
Future Luncheons		\$ 140	\$ 1,380
Silver Gophers			\$ 345
Donations	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Transfer out of Savings	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
Total Revenue	\$ 44,080	\$ 4,920	\$ 26,122
Expenses:			
Cares Committee (memorials and expenses)	\$ 900		\$ 415
Newsletter printing/mailing	\$ 4,100	\$ 1,376	\$ 2,494
Newsletter personnel contracts	\$ 7,200	\$ 300	\$ 3,100
Membership committee costs	\$ 500		\$ -
Other Annual Meeting costs			\$ -
Luncheons/Events	\$ 21,500		\$ 7,807
Summer 2023 River Cruise	\$ 2,800	\$ 13	\$ 2,393
Summer 2023 Como	\$ 2,300		\$ 2,325
Host Committee	\$ 400	\$ 154	\$ 190
Square / Stripe fees	\$ 940	\$ 57	\$ 468
Big 10 Conference costs	\$ 2,000		\$ -
Big 10 Conference 2026 reserve	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
Insurance	\$ 1,500		\$ 579
AROHE	\$ 240		\$ -
Other	\$ 1,000		\$ 186
Total Expense	\$ 47,380	\$ 1,900	\$ 21,957
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (3,300)	\$ 3,020	\$ 4,165

	Budget FY24	Dec	YTD
	Revenue:		
Allocation	\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
Total Revenue	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000
Expenses:			
Student workers	\$ 2,305	\$ 81	\$ 1,044
Parking	\$ 500	\$ 31	\$ 371
Crash Plan License	\$ 43		\$ 18
Food			\$ -
Dues: Better Impacts	\$ 732		\$ -
Office supplies	\$ 150		
Comm/Mktg suppl	\$ 100		
Volunteer Recog	\$ 75		
Postage/Mailing	\$ 55		
Other		\$ -	
Total Expense	\$ 3,960	\$ 112	\$ 1,433
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 40	\$ (112)	\$ 2,567

Notes:

Approx \$9.5k of cash activity in FY23 relates to FY24, also FY24 \$2K exp that relates to FY23

Sponsorships receivable \$0

Net event expense - see next tab, we appear to be doing very well with Midland Hills

Total FY24 dues collected so far: \$ 14,615 total budgeted \$ 14,020

Dec =

50.000% of year

spending YTD =

0.35825 %

UMRA EC and BOD President's Report

January 2024

1. Email/IT issues
 - a. Wendy and I met with Bernie to identify ways retirees can retain email and Google workspace. So far have identified –
 - i. Emeritus – need to confirm with their departments and HR
 - ii. Student – enrolled
 - iii. Appointment – not everyone retires 100%
 - iv. POI – complicated and restrictive process
 - b. Requested a training session (or two) from Bernie or his designates, they replied quickly and we're working with Kellie Greaves and Adam Twedt. Talked with them January 11.
 - c. Article for newsletter with Wendy and Kris Mortensen prepared and finalized.
 - d. Plan a mailing to members with an update.
2. Faculty retirement planning panel
 - a. Provost's office – Beth Lewis, Ole Gram (Julie Sweitzer and me)
 - b. March (Zoom) and April (in-person) with several UMRA members as panelists
 - c. Julie leading with Beth
 - d. Julie to moderate, I'll do opening welcome and remarks
 - e. They wanted UMRA to take the lead so they don't appear to be encouraging faculty to retire (which they don't want to do, of course). This is also good for UMRA to let faculty know we exist for them in retirement.
3. Provost's office
 - a. Meet with Beth Lewis and Ole Gram this week to explore other ways UMRA and contribute to the U. Here are some example possibilities -
 - i. Exit interviews
 - ii. Mentoring e.g. post-docs, young faculty
 - iii. Outreach to other campuses starting with Duluth.
 - iv. IT issues e.g. clarify process for emeritus status
4. Foundation
 - a. I requested an update of UMRA giving from Lynn Praska
 - b. She suggested they might complete this by Spring 2024!
 - c. We've had
5. AROHE Reimagining Retirement series
 - a. Announcement sent – Ron
 - b. 361 signed up so far (14 from UMN)
 - c. I'm on the AROHE committee that produced this.
6. UM Duluth

1/15/24
Eric Hockert
UMRA President

- a. Ron and I are in the initial stages of reaching out to other campuses to increase UMRA's connections starting with Duluth.
 - b. Talked with Julie Westland and developed next steps to engage other UMD retirees and UMD UMRA members.
 - c. Possibilities include a visit by TC UMRA members to Duluth for a joint event and establishing an UMRA "chapter" in Duluth (likely a longer term effort).
7. Big Ten Retirees Association 2026 conference
 - a. Committee members – Russell Luepker, Sally Kohlstedt, Diane Young, Cherie Hamilton, Diane Gihl, me.
 - b. Initial planning meeting this week. 2.5 years in the planning!
8. UMN Womens' Club
 - a. I met with Linda Boss (President) mostly to maintain the connection between UMRA and them. Ron met with last year's President.
 - b. Discussed several potential joint activities that she will discuss with her group.
 - c. She mentioned a lower level of group interest in doing something like this but will explore with her people. We plan to reconnect in early March. Low likelihood, however.
9. President search
 - a. Sent letter to the Regents (Brian Steeves, will give to each Regent) and the Star Tribune (Scott Gillespie). Got replies from both. Scott Gillespie – "The commentary editors will be sure to consider it."
 - b. Thanks to Bill Donohue, Jay Weiner, Frank Cerra, and Julie Sweitzer for preparing the letter.
10. Financial
 - a. Plan to establish a website process to accept donations – Kristy, Virgil, Cathy, Max
 - b. We have already received an anonymous \$2,000 donation!
11. Legislative advocacy
 - a. Frank Cerra to explore with UMN Govt Relations beyond just getting added to the email list to receive notifications to send letters.
12. UMN Senate
 - a. Plan to arrange in-person with Erin Heath
 - i. Current reps/liaisons
 - ii. Other ways we can contribute?
 - iii. Better understand the Senate
13. Regent Liaison
 - a. Seeking a pro-active liaison to represent UMRA's interests, my President's column this month.
 - b. Have a few suggested candidates already.
 - c. Know each Regent individually
 - d. Understand their key issues

e. Identify ways we can support and influence the Regents

What else –

- should I be doing?
- should the EC, the BOD, and UMRA be doing to engage and support our members, the university, and our communities?