

UMRA Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, September 27, 2021
1:00 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.

Approved Minutes

In attendance (virtual): John Anderson, Will Craig, Frank Cerra, Bill Donohue, Gary Engstrand, Eric Hockert, Ron Matross, Jan Morlock, Kristine Mortenson, Jerry Rinehart, Terry Roe, Julie Sweitzer, KaiMay Terry, Cathrine Wambach, Diane Young

Regrets: Cherie Hamilton, Vernon Cardwell, Jan McCulloch, Cathy Lee Gierke, John Bantle, Greg Hestness

The meeting began with introductions, and members shared something new they hoped to do in UMRA. Jan then shared the **financial report**, noting that the August event cost UMRA approximately \$190 (Greg Hestness' report was in the board packet.) Bill moved approval and Will seconded, with an unanimous vote in support.

Memorandum of Understanding: Bill presented the draft revision of the MOU. The current MOU was adopted in 2017 and remains in effect. It allows review after three years. In 2020 UMRA informed then Provost Hanson that we had no suggested changes. After Provost Croson took over, she contacted Bill to say that UMN could no longer provide financial support for UMRA's research program, due to the financial constraints of the COVID crisis. Provost Croson said her office would provide a revised draft, but none has been forthcoming. In summer of 2021 Bill led a small group to review the MOU and the current draft is intended to reflect the reality of the cooperative relationship between UMRA and UMN. The significant changes include:

- Acknowledgment that the financial support for UMRA research has ended, but commits UMN to restore the funding when they believe it is appropriate,
- Adds the current practice of UMN sending letters about UMRA to new retirees, and adds that UMN will do so for three years after retirement, and
- Notes the cooperative nature of the agreement.

The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the draft, which if approved will be sent to Provost Croson with copies to Ole Gram and Deb Cran. Bill moved approval and Frank seconded the motion.

Eric asked if Bill expected any pushback? Bill said he expected the MOU would be sent to General Counsel, and that some minor changes would be made. Jan noted the address should be Suite 250. Terry asked about retirees' access to umn.edu and Bill said it was in there, but tech support generally might be an issue. Diane noted the UM Foundation promotes the high numbers of donations and total dollars contributed from retirees. Bill thinks UMRA members should always point out that in the last campaign UMRA members gave \$31 million. Kris noted that UMF staff have presented to UMRA. The vote was unanimous in support of the motion to send the revision to Provost Croson.

Transition Task Force: Frank summarized the current recommendations of the task force exploring the return to in person meetings.

1. UMRA should not return to in person meetings before March 2022.
2. UMRA should move to two events per month, down from three, retaining the Workshop and Forum models but dropping UMRA AM.

3. There should be a Host Event committee for each event, as part of the Program Committee.
4. If members have ideas for events, they should take them to the Program Committee who will decide if they could be presented as a Workshop or Forum, referred to the Social Activities committee, or organized by the member.

Frank noted that four venues are still under consideration, and the committee will meet next later in October.

Members noted that the challenge is encouraging members to generate ideas, yet balancing that with the logistics. There was discussion of whether this was a board or Program Committee decision, and members agreed with Ron's statement that the board decides on the overall structure, with the Program Committee filling in the content. Gary asked who will make the venue decision. Jan said she thought that was a board decision because it has financial implications for the organization and individual members. There was a unanimous vote in favor of the recommendations.

Program Committee Report: Ron said the committee will meet this Friday, October 1. Programs are currently scheduled through November. Bill suggested that he ask members to suggest speakers before the meeting, as past experience demonstrated this was helpful. Ron said he intended to do so.

Personnel Issues: Jan presented five items.

1. Gary has resigned the role as secretary, and Julie Sweitzer had agreed to serve as secretary for the remainder of his term, pending board approval.
2. Jan proposed electing Gary to a special term on the board to match the unexpired portion of his one year appointment as secretary, through June 2022.
3. Eric Hockert is nominated to be chair of the Communications Committee upon the recommendation of the previous chair.
4. Cathrine Wambach has agree to serve as UMRA's liaison to the Regents, replacing Jerry Rinehart who had to step back. Cathrine has already prepared a summary of September's Regents' meeting, which will be distributed shortly.
5. Jan proposed a new formal liaison to the McNamara Center, and nominated Virgil Larson. Julie, Gary, Eric and Cathrine stepped out of the virtual meeting while the remaining members discussed their candidacy. Jan reported that all had been elected as noted.

The last item was a proposal to set three year terms for the liaison positions, consistent with board terms. Frank and Gary simultaneously moved approval, and Bill seconded. The vote was unanimous to set three year terms.

URVC: Eric presented the report, noting Jerry Rinehart was now chair of URVC, and Deanne Magnuson is vice chair. There has been an increase in the number of volunteers and volunteer hours. They are trying to shift the volunteer opportunities to be within the UMN. He noted that Jerry and Deanne had met with University Relations VP Matt Kramer, which provides \$4,000 in funding for URVC. URVC doesn't have authority to spend it directly, but submits items to U Relations staff to process payments. Eric turned to Jerry to discuss URVC's relationship with UMRA.

Jerry complimented Eric for bringing structure and definition to URVC. Jerry noted that URVC and UMRA have similar goals related to facilitating the engagement of UMN retirees. It is confusing to have two separate organizations, and he thinks URVC should become an UMRA committee. Bill said it was a good idea, and he had thought the same when he was liaison to URVC. There was a question about the time frame for a change, and Jerry suggested one year to make sure it was done well. Diane and Julie noted that when they were new to UMRA they

were confused by the emails from URVC, assuming it was connected with UMRA. Will said volunteering was exactly the kind of thing retirees do, so they should be the same organization. Eric noted the merger would prevent confusion. John said URVC started as an UMRA committee. He thought its return to UMRA would provide stability by adding a third leg to UMRA - volunteering along with the existing educational and social functions. The major stumbling blocks in previous discussions were individuals in URVC who preferred the separation, and the fact that URVC is part of U Relations within UMN, while UMRA is a separate organization. KaiMay asked whether URVC is interested in attracting younger people such as students, as volunteers? Eric said there are non-retirees on the URVC volunteer list. Ron noted there are strong student services offices organizing volunteer opportunities for students. Some favored staying focused on retirees, but remaining open to broader recruitment if a department had that need (e.g., multigenerational volunteer or research activities). Kris noted the technology challenges could be the heavy lifting. Jan noted that the scope of eligible volunteers could be part of the charge for a small task force to consider the potential merger, and that group could explore what peer institutions do as well. Jerry agreed to lead the team, with Eric and Will as members, and Kris 'on call.' Jan may appoint another member later.

President's Report: Jan noted the Big 10 conference is scheduled for July 25-27, 2022, at Northwestern and suggested the new president (her term will have ended) and president-elect attend. The Association of Retirees in Higher Education is virtual, and Jan, Ron and Cherie Hamilton are attending on behalf of UMRA. The UM Alumni Association approached UMRA about participating in the April 2022 Day of Service, so that will be discussed later.

December social event: Members discussed the possibility of an in person social event, repeating the success of a 2019 event with around 100 people. Will said he enjoyed the Minnesota Orchestra last week wearing a mask, and had to show his vaccination card. Others noted that masks come off when you serve food and drink. Frank preferred vaccination, recent negative COVID test, good HVAC (he is satisfied with the Campus Club) and masks, but finds the new variants unpredictable and highly contagious. Some considered an outside event but others noted variable temps as well as the cost of tents and heaters (which can essentially create an indoor venue). Kris noted that health recommendations are against such events, and the board had accepted the Transition recommendation against in person events before March. The consensus was to pass on holding such an event this year.

Jan ended the meeting at 2:50, saying she would provide the previous meeting's minutes at the next board meeting.