

RETIREE ASSOCIATION BOARD MINUTES
November 26, 2019
9:30 a.m., Vista conference room, MAC Hall

Attendance: President Dan Spielmann, Pat Przybelski, Chris Sampson, Carol Emmons, Curt Heuer, Frank Madzarevic, Judi Pietsch, Ken Fleurant

Excused: Barbara McClure-Lukens, Kathy Pletcher **Guest:** Jacob Depas

Welcome new member

Dan acknowledged Ken Fleurant joining the board effective this meeting.

Minutes of previous meeting

Pat moved and Judi seconded approval of the minutes from the October 15 meeting with one amendment: Removing extraneous detail about the per-plate price of the fall 2019 association dinner. All ayes.

Update on UW-Green Bay developments

Dan introduced Jacob Depas, development officer with University Advancement, by thanking him for his assistance in providing current information on past recipients of the Retiree Association student scholarship. (The Association intends to reach out for alumni updates on these people as a possible way to better promote the scholarship fund.) Jacob's update included positive news on UWGB fall enrollment: total numbers are up, at a time most other campuses are level or down slightly. Transfer numbers are especially strong and new or newish programs are exceeding projections, with the new mechanical engineering program at 100 majors doubling its target, and the already established engineering technology program at a robust 140. Jacob went on to note that the Chancellor Search is proceeding, with the application/nomination window just closing. He talked about initiatives and community outreach being energized under new Provost Michael Alexander.

Communication, surveys involving retirees; and Association objectives

Dan reported that he received only a couple of communications following the recent (and casual, low-key) pitch to UWGB retirees about what they're up to, or would like to see from the Association. Discussion followed about what might very well need to be a systematic and comprehensive project, should the board pursue. It was agreed that in the absence of new board member Barbara McClure-Lukens, who has significant expertise in this area, we should schedule discussion for the next (January) agenda. Preliminary ideas tossed out included a retiree survey, making better use of the existing Listserv, building a more robust Facebook presence, and just getting more effective with email and web communication.

Discussion drifted to the relative difficulty of maintaining accurate emails for current retirees and even getting post-retirement addresses from the newly retired. Pat talked about previous and current efforts to get after-the-fact lists from Human Resources, the "exiting process" and how the Retiree Association gets some help from HR in making new retirees aware of the Association. Discussion followed on the Computer Center's phase-out of the "ret.uwgb.edu" accounts, new security measures and the growing complexity of email communication. Ken has long coordinated the effort to solicit and maintain retiree emails and Listserv participation, and he pointed out that despite the ongoing growth in the total number of UWGB retirees (a new cohort each and every year), the list has slipped from a high of about 300 addresses a few years ago to closer to 200 today.

List of scholarship recipients

What next? Now that Jacob and the Advancement Office have provided contact info for the all-time roster of Retiree Association Scholarship beneficiaries, can we develop a plan for enlisting these recipients in both thanking previous donors and, most important, recruiting new donors and contributions? Dan suggested it might be most logical to focus this effort around the annual banquet. Testimonials, either in person or online or in printed material or all of the above, should be shared at or around that event. Carol noted that when she scanned the list she saw numerous alumni with roots in NE Wisconsin, and a range of careers including teachers and social services professionals – which makes for a powerful message about investing in these students and the community. Another positive was noted in the steady growth of the scholarship fund from \$700 to \$1,400 in annual award(s); the Association would like to build on this success with a campaign to further grow the principal and enable distribution of a second scholarship each year. Dan said he would follow up with Jacob to further discuss.

Bookstore discount

Dan reported on his recent communication with Phoenix Bookstore management, now that the store has moved from University to private management. (Some retirees had expressed concern that the bookstore might pull back from its longstanding and generous history of donating promotional items and offering discounts to groups such as the Retirees.) Dan described the conversation as generally positive. It was noted that the Bookstore recently extended an invitation for individual retirees to sign up for the modest, campuswide discounts available to bookstore email subscribers.

Upcoming Retiree events

- Chris shared that the annual “Krash the Kress” basketball event would again take place in February, and retirees would again be able to take advantage of the same discount and pre-game tailgate packages offered to students and alumni.
- Chris shared preliminary details on plans for a “Retiree Night at the Philharmonic” of Feb. 22 at the Weidner Center. Kelli Strickland has offered us a block of discounted tickets (about half-price) and free use of a room for a pre-concert reception. Provost Michael Alexander has already been invited to be the featured guest at the informal reception. More details to come.
- Dan shared follow-up on the idea that a wider audience of retirees might be interested in the same sort of behind-the-scenes tour of the new STEM Building as the board received at its October meeting. Suggestions included a 4 o'clock afternoon time as optimal, on a Friday (or maybe Saturday) in April.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the board will be Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. in the Vista conference room, MAC Hall.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at about 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Chris Sampson, recording secretary