**DRAFT RETIREE ASSOCIATION BOARD MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 30 2025**

**9:45 a.m., MAC Hall Vista Room**

**Attendance:**  President Dan Spielmann, Vice President Pat Przybelski, Treasurer Frank Madzarevic, Recording Secretary Chris Sampson, directors Kevin Fermanich, Ken Fleurant, Jeanellyn Schwarzenbach

**Guest**: Brian Rammer of University Advancement

**Approval of minutes**

Fleurant/Przybelski moved and seconded to approve minutes of the previous (January 2025) meeting. Motion passed.

**Update on University news**
Rammer highlighted the following:

* The UWGB “Day of Giving” on April 3 was a big success. Raised $200,000 including $65,000 from the Council of Trustees. In a single year, went from 260 new donors to 1,000 new donors.
* Spring enrollment set records for both headcount and FTE enrollment, up 2.5 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively, from last spring. The growth was across all categories, with notable gains in graduate/doctoral (22 pct.) and high school students (4 pct.).
* On April 28, representatives of UWGB and Lakeshore (Technical) College in Sheboygan County signed the “Forward” agreement that will bring Lakeshore in partnership with UWGB and its Sheboygan campus to offer 4-year degrees in Education and Nursing.
* Carnegie Foundation Designation – UWGB has been re-designated with a promotion to the class of “Research College and University,” one of only 216 institutions nationwide at that rank. Within the UW System, the other comprehensives listed are La Crosse, River Falls, Stevens Point and Superior; the designation is based on research activity relative to institutional size. Additionally, the Carnegie Foundation rates institutions on the basis of access and graduate success. UWGB is in the top category for access.
* The Cofrin Technology and Education Center (the “new library”) is to be the subject of an Earth-Honoring Ceremony (a modern-day take on a groundbreaking) on May 1 at the old Circle Entrance near the Phoenix statue. Construction begins on May 2 with completion planned for very early 2027.
* Work continues on the underground ATC transmission line work in the Arboretum. The section from the Nicolet Entrance to Keith White Prairie will be done in May; from there to the Bay Settlement Entrance and related areas should be done by December.

**Recent and upcoming** **Retiree Association outings**

* President Spielmann recapped the Feb. 22 basketball reception prior to the Green Bay-Milwaukee women’s game; turnout was about two dozen and consensus was it was a successful event;
* On the arts and culture front, the April 2 evening with the Green Bay Film Society at the Neville was also a hit, with a turnout of more than 25 and a snack/refreshment bill that came in under the $300 allotted. Excellent movie, too – topical with a humorous touch, and retiree Prof. Carol Emmons led a lively Q&A afterward.
* Spielmann said a planned Library Archives tour will have to wait until fall, for lack of a suitable date and schedule flexibility for Archives staff. Most likely, we will now explore dates for this September.

**Publicizing a volunteer opportunity?**

Dan said he wanted to get board member reaction to how the UWGB Retiree Association should respond to a request from Brown County Human Services to publicize a call for volunteers to assist the county’s Child Protective Services program. While most board members agreed it’s a slippery slope if we start giving out access to our contact list – there are a million good causes and where do we draw the line? – it was also the consensus that this particular ask seems to fit the campus-community partnership history and public service calling. We can do these on a case-by-case basis in the future. Dan said he would fold the Human Services blurb into a future roundup/reminder to retirees.

**Update on Retiree Financials, Scholarship Fund**

Spendable funds in the Retiree Association operations account stand at $5,790. The larger and restricted Retiree Association Scholarship Fund has bounced around with the recent market volatility, but still amounts to $127,072 at last look. That number represents a nice increase in recent years, both from ongoing appreciation but also sizeable new gifts. Most notable among the latter have been $20,000 in gifts over the last two years from Helen Schwartz. Helen, herself a longtime supporter of social justice and local programs including JOSHUA, dedicated the donations in memory of her late husband, Lee Schwartz, a distinguished faculty member in Environmental Sciences. Rammer noted that this coming year, the Retiree Scholarship will have twice the impact, with four awards to be distributed, each in the $1,000 range. Previously, two such scholarships per year had been awarded; in fact, in the not-too-distant past as the fund was still growing, it had been just one, and the award amounts were typically smaller. Why four this year? Brian Rammer explained that the two most recent recipients experienced change of plans and left some of the money unclaimed. It was determined that the best course of action was to “re-award” the two scholarships to the next year’s pool.

**New website for Retiree Association**
Pat, Dan and Brian worked with the University’s tech support and web designers on redesigning the Retiree Association website. Pat says she hopes the changes make things a little more straightforward in terms of navigation and finding things, and that streamlining has removed unneeded or seldom-accessed pages. The list of retirees has been adjusted, although challenges remain in keeping that list updated and accurate on an ongoing basis. Pat and Dan invited feedback from board members on the new site and its functionality. Pat thanked Brian for his assistance on the project.

**Planning the summer 2025 Retiree Cookout**

Dan asked the board members for input. There was general agreement that the format could follow that of the last few years: Let’s plan for Weidner Center, probably the last two weeks of July, preferably a Tuesday or Thursday (not a Wednesday), informal tailgate-style meal with one featured speaker. Dan said he would explore the speaker options mentioned by board members, talk to the Weidner about finding a suitable date, and get back to us in May.

**Next board meeting**

The next meeting is tentatively set for 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 20, in the Vista Room.

**Adjournment**

Przybelski/Madzarevic, colleagues from the land of seemingly random vowels and consonants, came together to move and second adjournment at 10:30 a.m. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Sampson, recording secretary