

UMRA Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)
Monday, March 24, 2023
10:00 a.m.
Approved Minutes

In attendance (virtual): Board members: John Bantle, Bill Donohue, Frank Cerra, Will Craig, Cathy Lee Gierke, Kristy Frost-Griep, Cherie Hamilton, Eric Hockert, Russell Luepker, Ron Matross, Jan McCulloch, Jan Morlock, Jerry Rinehart, Barb Shiels, Julie Sweitzer, KaiMay Terry, Cathrine Wambach, Diane Young

Visitors: Kris Mortensen, Jeanne Markell

Ron Matross opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and said he appreciated member flexibility with the change in meeting time. Barb moved and Frank seconded approval of the March board meeting minutes, with a unanimous vote in favor.

Finances: Kristy presented the written report, noting that spending was a titch over budget for URVC. Jerry said that URVC was trying to spend down the carry forward, primarily on student workers. UMRA dues collection is low but sponsorships are up, and event spending is slightly high. She noted that total funds are at the top of the report.

Social Programs: Eric reported on behalf of Jan Morlock, who is leading a team planning three events, including a Como picnic, Mississippi boat trip, and a potential December holiday event. The team is requesting approval of down payments on the Como (\$1,502, in two payments) and boat (\$1,400) events. Diane reported on a positive meeting with the Como catering staff and the person who was missing last year is back, and she promised the problems of last year won't happen. Jerry asked about costs for attendees, and Diane said it is currently estimated at \$30.02 for Como. If there are more than 70 attendees, the cost per person will go down. A service fee is included in the price, and any other tip is optional. The planning team will discuss what to charge. Eric asked if UMRA will subsidize these events, and Ron said he believes the registration fees should cover costs. Eric and others agreed. Eric moved approval of the down payment costs, Diane seconded, and there was a unanimous vote in support.

CARES: Jeanne Markell joined the meeting and reported on the committee's activities and concerns since she became chair. Jeanne and Ron explained that at one time the committee had trained individuals to provide counseling and support to members who needed it. There wasn't much demand for the service so today the focus is on condolences for families of deceased members. HR sends her reports of deceased former employees which contains limited and not always accurate information. They also get word of mouth reports. Former Extension employees who are on federal retirements are often missed in the HR reports. Jeanne and team identify next of kin, sometimes through public obituaries or other sources. They are concerned about family privacy and preferences about announcements, so they don't include names in the UMRA newsletter until after a public obituary or with family permission. Cherie asked if members should send obituaries they see to Jeanne, and Jeanne said yes, an email or text with the name would be helpful. Jeanne noted they make a \$30 contribution to

charities noted by family on behalf of deceased members (including spousal members), and asked if a contribution should be made on behalf of spouses who are not members? Jerry suggested a card but no donation, and Ron and Jeanne agreed. Cherie asked how the committee knows if the person was an UMRA member. Jeanne said she sends the names to Virgil to ask if they ever were a member. Cathy Lee said she could provide updated Excel lists to Jeanne, who said that would be helpful and save Virgil time. Kris noted that the new members included some who retired from HR, and maybe it would be helpful to ask one of them to join CARES and help navigate HR? Jeanne said it was a good idea.

Program: Eric reported there will be 18 new members at the April 25 Forum so there will be a new member welcome. The May 23 annual meeting, to be held in the Campus Club, will wrap up this year. Programs are set for fall subject to confirmation. Jerry said the Silver Gopher t-shirts will be for sale for \$15 at the Forum. The first two volunteer opportunities were weather challenged but went well. Cathy Lee noted that one person emailed UMRA asking about the possibilities of an 'old member' reconnection event. Eric thought it was a good idea, and Ron said the Membership Committee meets Wednesday and can discuss. Cherie said the Social Activities committee used to exist but recently she couldn't get anyone to join.

Election: Ron noted the same process is being used as last year. An email with the election ballot will go out May 15th, with votes due May 19th. The approved slate of candidates, bylaws and minutes will be on the ballot. Kris said a link to the bylaws is already on the web and will be in the newsletter.

Venue Selection: Ron proposed steps for deciding on next year's site, noting that earlier the board had adopted the principal of one location for the year. The decision needs to be made by early June for timely arrangements (cancellation or booking) with the sites. He proposes sending a survey to all who attended one or both of the Forums at Midland Hills asking about food, service, access, etc., and preferred location for next year. The survey would be sent immediately after the May forum at the Campus Club. In May the Host Committee will gather up-to-date cost estimates and the latest on the future of the Campus Club, in time for a proposed special board meeting on June 5 at 1:00 p.m. with an option for absentee voting.

Cathy Lee and Cathrine said it sounded reasonable and a good way to proceed. Russ wanted to be sure all board members would be able to vote, and wondered if those members who are unhappy with the results of the vote might quit. Diane noted there are 100 reservations for the April Forum, the largest since she's been on the host committee, suggested approval of Midland hills. Jerry thought the survey should ask if the decision would affect their attendance. Barb said she enjoyed Midland Hills but had been lobbied for the Campus Club by one person. Kris said it will be a hard choice and likes the idea of both/and. Ron said he thought the board had foreclosed consideration of using two sites but it could be considered. Jan seconded Kris' idea of using both locations and doesn't think people will be confused. Ron said the last he heard the Campus Club might only be in business through December unless the U financial support changes, so we could consider Campus Club in fall and Midland in spring. Kristy said one Prospect Park couple said the Campus Club is better because of the easy transportation by

train. KaiMay asked whether the vote should be based on what is best for UMRA, or should we look at what UMRA's role as a unit of the University is in shoring up the Campus Club? Ron noted that we had asked how important UMRA's business is to the Campus Club finances, and the response was not much, that UMRA is one customer among many. Cherie said that in response to KaiMay's point, if the U is abandoning the Campus Club, what does that say? Kris noted the Governor will be living at Eastcliff and asked about holding events there, but Diane said they charge for tables, chairs, tents, etc. Ron asked if everyone was ok with the plan, and there were nods and no objections.

Regents: Ron said the letter initiated by Bill Donohue was already sent because the Regents were meeting to establish the selection process. The letter had been acknowledged as received but no substantive response. Cathrine reported that the Regents met at Morris, followed by President Gabel's resignation. They held a special Meeting April 20 which focused on an interim president. They want to make a selection quickly and discussed parameters including avoiding trickle down impacts, wanting to keep the system going but not make major changes, and excluding candidates for the long-term position. Jerry asked about the new Regent candidates, and Cathrine said the legislature has not scheduled a vote, but the Regents want the new people on board.

Ron **adjourned** the meeting at approximately 11:27 a.m.