

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Faculty Senate Conference Room – 327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Jeanine Carr, Fred Curran, Steve Cutler, Alan Gottlieb (via Skype), Michael Gurdon, Beth Mintz, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson

Absent: Mary Jane Dickerson

Call to Order: Chair Jack McCormack called the meeting to order

1. Minutes of May 21, 2019, approved as amended
2. Faculty Senate Meetings of April 22 and May 16, 2019

The University Benefits Advisory Council offered comments on the revised retirement plan, which will reduce the number of accounts available to new contributions from greater than 200 to about 25. This will have little effect on our membership since most retirees are not making new contributions. The goal is to rationalize the choices and offer best in class funds. The recommendation was that there should be faculty input on the choices, rather than the current situation where only administration is involved. There also should be transparency about the criteria for selection of funds. Both Fidelity and TIAA will have representatives, and these will be fiduciaries.

3. RFAO Board Meeting

- Jim Barr provided further explanation of plans for parking privileges for Retirees. He is faced with a reduction of the total number of parking places on campus because of construction at the medical school and elsewhere and with a funding deficit of his department. His goal is to make better use of the available parking at an equitable rate. Following discussions at our meeting of May 21, 2019, he had a better appreciation for the parking needs of Retirees, many of whom continue with academic activities and committee memberships on campus as well as use the libraries and exercise facilities. A consultant concluded a report and a number of options were considered, including allowing only 3rd and 4th year students to park on campus, recovering parking spots from the hospital, and construction of a parking ramp behind the DoubleTree hotel. With regard to retiree parking, his staff will be monitoring the number of retirees who are actually using on-campus parking each day. Under consideration is charging individuals for parking pro-rated to any university salary or billing the departments that are benefiting from their services.
- There was a discussion regarding HERMES, a newsletter for members sent out twice a year. This has been offered to members for more than 10 years, but the feeling of the Board is that more modern, timely methods of communication should be considered. There also was discussion of the website, which has outdated information, and possible approaches to update it.
- There was a discussion of officer nominations for the coming year and recruitment of new Board members. Michael Gurdon expressed an interest in standing for election to serve as President.
- There was discussion of board members reviewing the by-laws of the Board. These also may need some updating.
- One member offered that in informal discussions there may be a possibility of Retirees getting a reduced cost for hearing aids.
- There was discussion of pharmacy plans and whether Retirees were aware of the Caremark-CVS plan. A representative from Benefits will be invited to a future meeting to inform the Board of options.
- Chairman McCormack will meet with the new president this fall and he will be invited to a future Board meeting.
- Dr. Julia Russell, UVM Associate Chief Information Officer, will be invited to a future meeting to discuss computer discounts and the cost and access to specialized software by Retirees. About 60 of 600 Retirees have expressed an interest.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

Executive Board Meeting

Monday, September 16, 2019

Faculty Senate Conference Room-327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Mary Jane Dickerson, Alan Gotlieb (via phone), Michael Gurdon, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson

Absent: Jeanine Carr, Fred Curran, Steve Cutler, Beth Mintz, Lee Thompson

Call to Order: Chair Jack McCormack called the meeting to order

1. Minutes of August 27, 2019, approved as amended
2. RFAO Board Meeting
 - There was a discussion of the planned election of Officers. It was noted that the RFAO constitution indicates that a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer and 5 other members should be elected at a spring semiannual meeting for a term of 2 years. However, it was the feeling of the board at that time that there were valid reasons to delay the elections: namely until after the new university president was in place and because several current board members and potential officers were unexpectedly unavailable for medical reasons. Consequently, a slate of candidates will be presented to a general meeting of the membership on September 19, 2019, with an explanation for the need for a fall election. Nominations for Executive Board membership will be solicited from the general membership.
 - The officer nominees will be: Michael Gurdon, president; Beth Mintz and Jeanine Carr, co-vice-presidents; and Richard Branda, secretary-treasurer. Jack McCormack will become an *ex officio*, full voting member of the board as Past-President.
 - Mary Jane Dickerson and Alan Gotlieb expressed a willingness to continue to serve on the board.
 - The board hoped to recruit an information officer to the board. There was also an interest in recruiting new board members, and Judith Van Houten was suggested.
 - Jack McCormack reported that there have been 25 responses to the general meeting call so far. Since a quorum of 30 is desirable for the election, he will send out a reminder of the meeting.
 - The board expressed a hope that the general meeting will be collaborative, with considerable input from the membership regarding issues of concern to them and ways that the RFAO can be of help. Examples of topics for discussion will include parking, access to bookstore discounts, HERMES versus electronic information dissemination, access to recreational facilities, and Retired Scholars Awards.
 - It was noted that the organization's constitution should be updated.
 - Plans for future meetings include a further discussion of software access by Julia Russell and an invitation to President Garimella to speak at the spring meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

General Meeting, Retired Faculty and Administrative Officers

Waterman Memorial Lounge

September 19, 2019

- A quorum of 30 members was present.
- Chair Jack McCormack welcomed the group and made introductory comments. He noted that this organization has been in existence for 50 years and has proven to be useful to its membership and to the university. It has enjoyed a good relationship with President Sullivan, who recently retired, and looks forward to continuing similarly with President Garimella. He pointed out that our organization is a member of AROHE which represents retired faculty from many colleges and universities nationally.
- An election of officers and executive board members.
 - Officer nominees were:
 - Michael Gurdon, President
 - Beth Mintz and Jeanine Carr, co-vice-presidents
 - Richard Branda, secretary-treasurer

Each nominee offered brief remarks about his/her background and interest in the position. A voice vote followed which carried without objection.

- Nominees for the board were:
 - Mary Jane Dickerson
 - Alan Gotlieb
 - Steve Cutler
 - Lee Thompson
 - Fred Curran
 - Jack McCormack as Past President, *ex officio*

The nominees were introduced and a voice vote carried without objection.

- There followed a discussion of current issues.
 - Parking on Campus. Chair McCormack presented an overview of the Committee's activities regarding campus parking. He noted that the director of parking has been invited to two meetings to discuss the issues as related to retired faculty campus parking. He also noted that a consultant has presented recommendations to the parking director and our Committee has requested a copy. The Committee has also requested that the number of parking spots actually used on any given day by retired faculty be counted. Since parking spots are leased to the hospital and others will be lost to construction projects, there will need to be some adjustments in allocations. A member pointed out that currently there is a long waiting list for parking by junior faculty.
 - Access to Bookstore Discounts. Board member Steve Cutler noted that software is not available to retired faculty but is to students, faculty and staff. The committee has met with Julia Russell regarding this issue. It is estimated that about 10% of the membership would be interested in obtaining software. Ms. Russell will estimate

the cost and will be invited to meet again with the Committee, probably in November.

- HERMES Newsletter. Chair McCormack stated that this newsletter has been mailed twice a year but it might be preferable to distribute this information electronically. The members in attendance felt that electronic distribution would be more timely and efficient. However, there was a concern that a small number of members may not have access to a computer and prefer a newsletter. This will be evaluated further by the Committee.
- Website Management. Chair McCormack noted that the website has not been updated since Lou Izzo left the Committee. Dwight Matthews volunteered to work with the Committee to get the website up and running again.
- Access to Recreational Facilities. Evidently some members have been unable to use the recreational facilities, perhaps because they are excluded by the Peoplesoft system. A member suggested that the Rec Sports office can activate access if necessary.
- Retirement Plan Changes. Michael Gurdon reviewed the Committee's monitoring of the changes proposed to the retirement plan. There will be two vendors, TIAA and Fidelity; Prudential has withdrawn. The plans will be simplified with fewer fund choices. The changes may be implemented in the spring.
- A question was raised regarding the health plan and whether the billing for retirees could be handled separate from the student accounts.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Faculty Senate Conference Room-327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Fred Curran, Mary Jane Dickerson, Alan Gotlieb (via Skype), Michael Gurdon, Beth Mintz, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson

Absent: Jeanine Carr, Steve Cutler

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 12:30pm

1. Minutes of Board Meeting, September 16, 2019, approved.
2. Minutes of General Meeting, September 19, 2019, approved.
3. RFAO Board Meeting
 - Retired Scholars Awards. Past-president Jack McCormack reported that six applications were submitted for funding. It was noted that the awards are for a maximum of \$2,500. A Sub-Committee was formed, consisting of Beth Mintz, Mary Jane Dickerson, Michael Gurdon, and Lee Thompson. The Provost's Office will appoint an active faculty member to the Sub-Committee. The applications will be distributed to the Sub-Committee for review and then discussed at a meeting on October 29, 2019, from 12:05-1:45pm (based on the availability of the Senate Conference Room). Jack McCormack will chair the meeting as a non-voting member.
 - Discussion of items from the September 19, 2019, General Meeting:
 - Parking: The Board is still waiting for an analysis of the number of parking spaces utilized by retirees. It was noted that the principal concern is about maintaining permits for occasional use by members for committees, libraries and recreational facilities rather than for members who hold university positions with substantial pay. In addition, the Board has not seen the section of the consultant's report relevant to retiree parking. Bill Barr will be contacted regarding the report and when and to whom it will be submitted.
 - Access to Bookstore Discounts for software. The Board is anticipating a meeting with Julia Russell, Ph.D., regarding making available software access at reduced cost to retirees.
 - Website management and HERMES Newsletter. Since Dwight Matthews has offered to assist with the website, the Board agreed that he should be invited to join the Board as Chief Information Officer and attend a meeting soon. With his input, the Board will consider options for presenting information from the Board to the membership. This probably will be mainly website based and by e-mail. However, the possibility was discussed of a printed newsletter summary being distributed by mail or as a handout at a luncheon meeting.
 - Access to Recreational Facilities. After further discussion, the Board decided that this is often an issue unique to an individual, rather than to the membership generally, and should be dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis.
 - Retirement Plan Changes. The Faculty Senate will hear a presentation at its January meeting by Richard Cate regarding the method for selecting the investment options for the retirement plans. Chair Gurdon will attend this meeting and report back to the Board, but he invites any interested members to attend as well.
4. Vision Care as benefit. The active members of the faculty were offered vision care benefits but these were not extended to the retired faculty. The ostensible reason was the attendant administrative difficulties and costs. Chair Gurdon has made further enquires, and will schedule a meeting on Tuesday, October 29th, from 11:30-noon, with Wanda Heading-Grant from Human Resources regarding this issue. Jack McCormack and Lee Thompson will also attend. It was suggested that Dave Dummit also be invited to attend, since he has taken an interest in these matters.
5. Other Issues. Chair Gurdon reported that he has discussed possible Board membership with Judith Van Houten, and she expressed a willingness to serve. The Board unanimously agreed that she should be offered membership.
6. The meeting was adjourned at 2pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for: November 19, 2019

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

Executive Board Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2019 (date change due to weather on November 19)

Faculty Senate Conference Room-327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Alan Gotlieb, Jeanine Carr, Beth Mintz, Mary Jane Dickerson, Fred Curran, Michael Gurdon, Judith Van Houten, Stephen Cutler, Jack McCormack

Absent: Lee Thompson, Richard Branda, Dwight Matthews

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order

1. Minutes of Board Meeting, October 19, 2019, approved.
2. Report from the Faculty Senate: Michael Gurdon (RFAO Representative to the Faculty Senate)
 - a. Meeting of October 28
 - i. Presentation of Graduate Degrees
 - ii. Discussion of a new University wide advising model (software called Navigate); implementation underway; some concern about student privacy issues
 - iii. .General Education Alignment Task Force organized to address accreditation requirements that students at UVM should complete the equivalent of 40 General Education credits in a Bachelor's Degree Program. A new expanded GE curriculum is to be presented to the Trustees in May
 - b. Meeting of November 18
 - i. Resolutions: In Memoriam for Professor Susan Hasazi and Professor Ken Fischell
 - ii. Course evaluation platform update. GPA calculation change for repeated courses: the first grade received is disregarded when calculating the GPA.
 - iii. Petition presented on basing of F35 jets at the Burlington Airport. No vote taken; item tabled until December meeting.
3. RFAO Board Meeting
 - a. Meeting with Dr. Julia Russell, UVM Associate Chief Information Officer. There have been concerns expressed by retired faculty about access to software/computer discounts that are available for students and active faculty and staff. Other issues include problems with synchronization of individual systems with UVM systems. Dr. Russell noted that we need to clarify the numbers of retirees who would need access to specialized software.
 - b. Future Meetings (President Garimella; Provost Prelock)
 - c. Relationship with United Academics (Beth Mintz; objectives and progress).
 - d. Retired Scholars Award (5 Awardees; 3 expressions of interest but no applications; 1 did not complete application since the support being sought was awarded by outside source; modification of application format etc.)
 - e. Vision insurance (potentially favorable developments) Respectfully submitted, Jack McCormack.

Executive Board Meeting

January 21, 2020

Faculty Senate Conference Room-327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Jeanine Carr, Fred Curran, Stephen Cutler, Mary Jane Dickerson, Alan Gotlieb (via Skype), Michael Gurdon, Dwight Matthews, Beth Mintz, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson, Judith Van Houten

Absent: none

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 12:30pm

1. Minutes of November 21, 2019, approved as presented
2. RFAO Board Meeting
 - Faculty Senate Report (Michael Gurdon):
 - A motion seeking Faculty Senate support to oppose stationing F-35 military jets in Burlington was offered and discussed. Although about 16-17 senators were in favor, the motion failed by one vote.
 - Dean of Libraries Bryn Geffert presented information regarding the UVM contract with Science Direct, which will be up for renewal in December 2020. The contract for \$1.8 million/year gives access to a large number of academic journals but represents 25% of the collections budget. Therefore, the acquisition of other journals and of books is severely restricted. Alternatives to renewing the contract will be discussed with faculty at the departmental level, and may include open repositories, article-sharing sites and interlibrary loans.
 - Beth Mintz reported that United Academics has added a representative from the RFAO to its Executive Committee as a non-voting member. Its constitution will be amended accordingly. The meetings are held approximately every 2 weeks from 1:15pm to 2:45pm in the social work conference room (4th floor Waterman). Beth attended the first meeting and mentioned mutual concerns of the RFAO and United Academics including parking, access to software and library resources, and health care. RFAO input should be helpful in the Committee's future deliberations on retiree benefits.
 - The ongoing discussion of retired faculty access to software continued.
 - A letter from Marianne Burke, Emerita Associate Professor of Libraries, was introduced. She reported her difficulty in updating software at UVM. She pointed out that this software in addition to library access is necessary for retired faculty to support their research and scholarship.
 - Chair Gurdon then presented correspondence from Simeon Ananou in follow-up of Julia Russell's comments at the last meeting. Mr. Ananou's conclusions, after explorations with the software vendors, are that there would be significant costs involved in extending use of software packages to the RFAO community and that ETS lacks the financial resources in the foreseeable future to support this extension. He suggested that affected retired faculty work with their departments to identify funding. In return correspondence, Chair Gurdon pointed out that a relatively small

number of RFAO members may be affected and proposed that a survey be performed to establish that number. Jack McCormack reported that a limited survey 2 years ago found that about 10% of members were affected by this restriction.

- Chair Gurdon proposed that this item remain on the agenda for future meetings to identify approaches to attain our goal of increased software access for members.
- Dwight Matthews presented a list of UVM software, some of which are restricted for use by retired faculty and others that are not. Given time constraints at the present meeting, further discussion of this topic will be carried over to the February meeting.
- Retired Scholars Award Program. Beth Mintz presented a draft budget template, which was requested by the Provost's Office to add clarity to applications. The draft was accepted as amended after a brief discussion.
- Discussion of the RFAO websites. It was noted that currently there are two websites; one was designed by Lou Izzo but has not been updated in 2 to 3 years, and a more concise website prepared on a contract through the Provost's Office. Dwight Matthews reported that he is in conversations with Jim Vigoreaux from the Provost's Office regarding ways that the RFAO website can be updated and improved. He asked that RFAO board members bring suggestions for content to the next board meeting.
- New Business.
 - Chair Gurdon will miss the next meeting, which will be chaired by Co-Vice Chair Carr.
 - The spring luncheon meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 3rd.
 - It was suggested that a representative from HR attend a future meeting to discuss the high cost of the J health care plan.
- The balance of the meeting was held with President Suresh Garimella in attendance. Members of the committee were introduced and there was a discussion of current committee concerns regarding programs for active faculty that do not carry over into retirement such as the vision program, software access and parking. He acknowledged that there were areas for improvement but that changes must be fiscally prudent. He then outlined his strategic vision for UVM, which includes enhancing all facets of undergraduate and graduate student success (education, research and internships, affordability, diversity, and employment). UVM also has a land grant mission and must support Vermont's economic growth and quality of life. He would like, in consultation with faculty, to identify focus areas that UVM can be identified with that are of special interest and expertise. He hoped that the retired faculty would stay engaged and continue to contribute to UVM through scholarship and mentoring.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05pm

The next meeting is scheduled for: February 18, 2020

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

February 18, 2020

Faculty Senate Conference Room-327 Waterman

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Jeanine Carr, Fred Curran, Stephen Cutler, Dwight Matthews, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson, Judith Van Houten

Absent: Mary Jane Dickerson, Alan Gotlieb, Michael Gurdon, Beth Mintz,

Call to Order: Vice-Co-Chair Jeanine Carr called the meeting to order at 12:30pm.

1. Minutes of January 21, 2020, were approved.
2. RFAO Board Meeting
 - Faculty Senate Report: Jack McCormack
 - An ad hoc Committee will be charged by the Senate Executive Council to perform a comprehensive review of the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.
 - New Post-Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy
 - Name change PhD in Animal, Nutrition and Food Sciences to the PhD in Animal Biosciences
 - No Contest termination Bachelor of Music degree
 - Conferral of about 200 degrees in various colleges
 - A resolution requesting UVM and affiliated institutions create a plan to divest from fossil fuels.
 - An outline of a plan to assess the Residential Learning Community was presented with a goal to complete the assessment for the April Senate meeting.
 - An overview of the proposed Catamount Core Curriculum was presented. It is proposed to be 42 credits in three main areas: Liberal Arts, Core Skills, and Common Ground Values. Ad hoc committees will be formed to refine each proposed category.
 - United Academics Report: Jeanine Carr reported on attending 2 meetings of UA
 - One meeting was devoted to discussion of revision of its constitution
 - During the second meeting there were discussions of the relationship of UA to other organizations and unions and the need for a policy regarding endorsement of issues such as climate change.
 - It was noted that retirees are eligible to join AAUP and AFT as affiliated members by paying dues directly to these organizations.
 - Retirees who were part of the bargaining unit can maintain their affiliation with UA by paying dues.
 - Discussion of RFAO Website: Dwight Matthews
 - Dwight is in discussions with the Provost's Office regarding control of the site. The goal is that either the Committee controls the site and content, or

that the Provost's Office retains control but responds in a timely fashion with changes and updating. There is a need to consolidate the two present sites into one.

- An outline of content was discussed:
 - An introductory paragraph describing eligibility for membership
 - Vision, Mission and Goals
 - Constitution
 - Executive Board
 - An archive for an updated history of the organization and HERMES
 - A description of the accomplishments of the organization and its value and benefits to members
 - Retired Scholars Award
- Events, news and possibly death notices should be distributed to members by list-serve
- Brainstorm ideas for invited speaker for the Spring luncheon. Several names were put forward.
- New Business
 - The Provost will attend the March meeting and Human Resources office senior staff will attend the April meeting
 - There was a discussion of possibly alerting members to the opportunity to extend Anthem coverage for identify protection

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm

The next meeting is scheduled for: March 17, 2020

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

May 7, 2020

Video Conference on Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present: Richard Branda, Jeanine Carr, Fred Curran, Stephen Cutler, Mary Jane Dickerson, Alan Gotlieb, Michael Gurdon, Dwight Matthews, Beth Mintz, Jack McCormack, Lee Thompson, Judith Van Houten

Absent: none

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 1:06pm

1. RFAO Board Meeting
 - a. Chair Gurdon and the Committee thanked Dwight Mathews for setting up the video conference.
 - b. The Chair then asked members of the Committee to give brief updates on changes in their lives during the Covid-19 lockdown.
 - c. Chair Gurdon submitted to the Committee summaries of Faculty Senate Meetings from Feb 24, March 23 and April 20, 2020.
 - d. Chair Gurdon informed the Committee that he is completing his second three-year term on the Faculty Senate and that that is the term limit. He recommended and the Committee agreed that he notify the membership that the position is open and ask for nominations of self or others for the Senate seat which includes full voting privileges.
 - e. Website update. Dwight Mathews communicated with Jim Vigoreaux from the Provost's Office in continuing discussions. For the present the Provost's Office will keep control of the website and update it twice a year. Dwight recommended that the Committee have some control of the content. He and Michael plan to meet virtually with Jim and Jennifer in the near future.
 - f. There was discussion of the RFAO listserv. It is managed by Gary Derr but needs updating. The Committee felt that the listserv is more important than ever during the lockdown to keep the membership informed about important notices. There was concern that in addition to being outdated the listserv did not reach all members, some of whom may use different e-mail addresses. It was suggested that the effectiveness of the listserv in reaching members be tested by a "ping" or by asking for a reply.
 - g. Gary Derr asked the Committee to postpone announcement of the retiree grants program since it may not be funded this year because of the budget crisis. Jack McCormack reported that the program is on hold at present but that there will need to be further clarification by Gary Derr or Richard Cate.
 - h. Retiree benefits. The Committee suggested that the membership be contacted by letter or e-mail to inform them that the Committee is monitoring any possible effects of the University budget on retiree benefits. The Committee wishes to reassure them that every effort will be made to protect those interests through the Faculty Senate and contacts with the administration.

- i. Chair Gurdon stated that there will not be a cancellation notice of the spring luncheon meeting because it was never announced.
- j. Beth Mintz provided a report on United Academics (UA) activities.
- k. There was a recommendation that the Committee meet with HR managers for further discussion of issues such as insurance and access to software but this should be deferred until we can meet in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:48pm

The next meeting date and time are to be determined.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda