

RFAO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

August 19, 2026

In Person Meeting with Video Conference on Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present: Michael Gurdon, Jay Ashman, Gary Derr, Alan Gotlieb, Rachel Johnson, Mara Saule, Alison Pechenick, Beth Mintz, Ruth Farrell, Claire Burlingham, Judith Van Houten, Jane Kolodinsky

Absent: Taka Ashikaga, Ralph Budd, Dwight Matthews

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM

1. Approval of the Minutes of May 20, 2026

Minutes were approved.

Our new member, Jane Kolodinsky, was welcomed as our Senate Representative beginning her three-year term.

2. Update on United Academics (Beth Mintz)

UA has not yet met this fall.

3. UBAC update (Ruth Farrell)

It was reported that Holly Zanes left UVM for Harvard, thus leaving UBAC without its chair. A new chair should be appointed soon.

There was a much anticipated Communication to Retirees about recent premium increases in the August retiree newsletter. While acknowledging the increases, it did not provide any hope of an increase in UVM's contribution to the retirees' HRAs at this time. The future UVM contribution is being determined now by Via and UVM for the next Open Enrollment premiums. This is an extremely complex analysis given that insurance carriers use different anniversary dates when premiums typically increase. Also, retirees are distributed among many states, with their different regulations.

The UBAC Health Care Subcommittee needs a chair and members.

4. Retired Scholars Award Program

The awards for the current year have been made to six retirees. We returned to the idea of asking the recipients to make short videos describing their scholarship. This discussion was continued after the visit. (See immediately below.)

Invited Guests: Caitlyn Sisler and Molly Propst

The discussions were wide ranging with Caitlyn Sisler, new Associate Director of Total Awards, and Molly Propst, new head of Human Resources. One major take away from this meeting is that HR will continue to work with the broker Via on retiree health insurance. While there are some new companies in the portal (Mutual of Omaha and HealthSpring) it is not likely many retirees will switch due to the potential for underwriting. (Retirees will be informed about their premium and underwriting before they change

their existing coverage.) There will be no summer adjustment of UVM's contribution to the HRA for individuals after this year's mid-year premium increase, which was unanticipated by retirees. The university and Via's actuaries will work on the very complex mix of plans and states for the open enrollment time in fall 2026.

Another major point is that UVM remains committed to making contributions to retiree premiums.

5. Planning for fall business meeting

The venue: We hope to hold this meeting in Memorial Lounge with a speaker, business meeting and light refreshments. The process is iterative as we must invite our speaker, determine their availability, and find an appropriate room. Currently the most likely venues are Memorial Lounge with one date available to us in early November and John Dewey Lounge with, hopefully, more availability in November.

We reviewed the most recent list of nominated speakers, and ranked the choices. Michael Gurdon will contact our first speaker and return to us with the result. Judy and Rachel will then carry on with the planning with the Vice Provost staff.

We also discussed having the Retiree Scholar Award recipients record a short description of their scholarship. To gauge interest in this process, we will invite this year's six awardees to make recordings. A letter to the awardees will be drafted by Judy and Rachel.

6. Other Business

The new CEO of the UVM Foundation, Chris Jacobson, would like to meet with us.

There was a short update on the grievance by some retirees regarding changes in commitments to premiums for some retirees.

Communication: Gary Derr will continue his work with Susan Davidson to improve communications from the administration to the retirees.

The next Board meeting will be on Sept.16.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm

Respectfully submitted, Judith Van Houten