EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

November 17, 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, Mara Saule

Absent: none

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 10:01am

1. Minutes of October 20, 2020, approved as delivered
2. RFAO Board Meeting
   • United Academics Report (Beth Mintz)
     o Negotiations between UA and the University are ongoing, but no progress is expected soon.
     o The question of whether UA would represent the retiree position on access to UVM e-mail as part of these negotiations was brought up again by RFAO board members. The general sense was that this was a low priority issue for UVM and would probably not be pursued since the University was more concerned about a possible computer security issue than cost.
     o There were continuing discussions by the UA executive board of a potential relationship between UA, retirees and the RFAO. Possible models being considered are a voluntary relationship between a retiree and UA, an Associate Membership with UA after paying the current national, state and local Association dues adjusted for associate membership (about $145/yr), or an affiliation of RFAO members with UA.
     o If RFAO was affiliated with UA, the status of members who were never members of UA would have to be determined. It would be undesirable to split retirees into union and nonunion RFAO groups. It would be preferable for RFAO to represent all eligible retirees.
     o UA is open to discussion about whether fees would be paid by affiliate RFAO members and appeared willing to change their by-laws to be inclusionary.
     o There was a feeling by our board that a small fee might be acceptable to our members to become voluntary or associate members but might be cumbersome. It seemed preferable for UA to change their by-laws to form an affiliation with RFAO. Then any retiree who is interested could be included in interactions with UA regardless of prior relationship to UA.
     o As a starting point RFAO already has an affiliation with UA in that we have a position on their executive board.
     o It was concluded that Beth should continue discussions with UA, that written proposals should be prepared for UA consideration, and that a UA representative be invited to a future meeting to discuss these proposals.
   • Faculty Senate Report (Mara Saule)
     o The Faculty Senate met on November 16, 2020. There was an unusually large attendance of about 265 members.
     o The main subject of discussion was the proposed academic reorganization chaired by David Jenemann, Dean of the Honors College.
     o To be implemented by 2050, there would be 4 possible colleges:
       ▪ Agricultural, biological and environmental sciences
       ▪ Arts, letters and the human experience
       ▪ Societal health
* Engineering, business and technological innovation
  o The main points of discussion were the rationale and context for this long-term vision and a concern that consideration now will distract from the serious short-term problems of UVM.
  o It was noted that there has not been much input and engagement by faculty and emeriti to date.
  o Never-the-less the timeline is to refine the plan in the period of January-March 2021 and begin implementation in April.
  o During the RFAO board discussion, there was a question of whether our organization should be involved in the process. The board shared the concern that proceeding now will distract from dealing with serious current UVM problems. There was also a question of how the reorganization would impact the research component of the University.

* Review of and feedback from the webinars explaining the new Medicare Advantage Plan.
  o There were about 50 attendees at the Thursday session and about 20 on Friday. A recording of the Friday session is on our website.
  o A message will be sent to the membership informing them that the recording is available for viewing by those unable to attend the “live” sessions.
  o Chair Gurdon has sent a thank you to Greg Paradiso and will do the same for the BC/BS participants.
  o The general sense was that the sessions were well timed and well received.

* Determine a consistent day of the week for future monthly meetings: the board settled on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 2-3:30pm.

* Suggestions for invited guests to upcoming meetings.
  o Richard Cate, Vice President for Finance and Administration, to discuss HR issues
  o Greg Paradiso and Jes Kraus to discuss benefits for retirees
  o Simeon Ananou and Julia Russell to discuss e-mail and other software issues
  o UA representative
  o President Garimella in the spring

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14am

The next meeting is scheduled for: **December 16, 2020 at 2pm**

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda