

# University of Iowa Retirees Association (UIRA) Board of Directors Meeting

March 12, 2024, 1:00 pm  
USB 121P and Zoom

## MINUTES

**Attending:** Mike Barron, Chris Brus, Deb Cobb, Lois Cox, Ed Dove, David Fitzgerald, Lesanne Fliehler, Mike Hovland, Vicki Siefers, Cathy Wilcox.

**Not attending:** Diana Lundell, Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash,

### Call to Order – Deb Cobb, President

Deb called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

### Approval of Minutes

On a motion from Lesanne, seconded by Vicki, the February 13, 2024, minutes were approved.

### Reports from Officers

#### President – Deb Cobb

UIRA Inclusion in UI Policy Manual: Official I.2.8 (12). Final listing of the text for UIRA has been integrated into the UI Policy Manual. This is a great accomplishment. Deb will send an email to the membership, including a link, announcing our inclusion and its significance to UIRA.

One Day for Iowa (March 27, 2024). An email has been prepared urging the membership to give to the UI during One Day for Iowa. Deb has asked Kellie to send it out by the end of the week.

Update on BTRA mid-year conference February 14, 2024. During the 3 hour Zoom meeting, the attendees developed an agenda for the Annual BTRA Conference in Columbus, Ohio this July, which Evalyn and the new President-Elect will attend. Those attending will attend small group session to discuss areas of importance across all of the retiree associations.

Deb informed the board that she had sent flowers to Lois Lembke from UIRA for her husband's visitation.

To avoid competing with a UIRA program, the April BOD meeting has been moved to **April 11, 2024, at 1:00pm. Zoom only.**

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#### President-Elect – Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash

Evalyn is still out of the country so had no activity to report.

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#### Past-President – Ed Dove

Ed reported receiving a call from a Mercy Hospital retiree who had lost insurance during the transition from Mercy to ownership by UIHC. Ed contacted Rebecca Olson and she was very responsive to his request to follow up on the situation. He thinks the problem has now been solved.

Ed suggested that the board consider offering associate membership to Mercy retirees since they are now associated with the University of Iowa through their benefits. Discussion ensued and this item was tabled until a later date.

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## **Treasurer – David Fitzgerald**

The current balance in the UIRA checking account is \$21,311.03.  
Reserve funds, in two Vanguard accounts, total \$12,824.06.

A question arose about how Evalyn should pay for her flight and registration for the BTRA Annual Meeting in July. David said that Evalyn should charge both items on the UIRA credit card that Deb currently has.

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## **Standing Committee Reports**

### **Awards – Carolyn Wanat - Chair, Mike Barron, Nancy Langguth**

No report submitted. Reminder that Carolyn is not on the BOD, so needs to be added to the email list requesting monthly reports.

A question was asked about the due date for nominations. According to last month's report, nominations are due Monday, April 15, 2024 to Carolyn Wanat (carolyn-wanat@uiowa.edu).

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### **Photo Contest – Diana Lundell, Lesanne Fliehler**

We will continue accepting photos until the March 15 deadline. On Monday, March 18, Diana will provide the judges with access to the four folders on her Google Drive. They will have two weeks to do the judging and agree on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places.

When they report the winners, Lesanne and I will notify the UIRA members, prepare information for *The Gray Hawk*, and arrange for the monetary distribution to winning photographers and judges.

Lesanne noted that only those on the committee are prohibited from entering the photo contest. She encouraged board members to submit.

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### **The *Gray Hawk* – Lesanne Fliehler**

Deadlines for the March issue of *The Gray Hawk*:

Content deadline: Monday, March 18

Layout to Kellie: Thursday-Friday, March 21 or 22

Distribution: Tuesday-Wednesday, March 26 or 27

#### Programming

1. *Connect, Contribute, and Create: The Future of Optimal Aging (Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence)*, Jen Jones and Sam Wittrock, Thursday, March 28, 1:00 p.m., 2520-D UCC and via Zoom
2. *All Things Water: Improving Community Resilience to Floods, Droughts, and Declining Water Quality*, Larry Weber, Tuesday, April 9, 1:00 p.m., Meeting Room A, Coralville Public Library and via Zoom
3. *National Advanced Driving Simulator Tour*, Wednesday, April 17, 11:00 a.m., 2401 Oakdale Blvd., Coralville
4. *Incarcerations Among the Elderly*, Alison Guernsey, Wednesday, April 24, Noon, 2520-D UCC and via Zoom

#### Save-the-Date Programming

1. *Fraud Alert for Seniors*, Sally Leme, Thursday, May 16, 11:00 a.m., 2520-D UCC and via Zoom
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### **Membership – Vicki Siefers - Chair, Lesanne Fliehler, Chris Brus**

The Membership Committee met on Thursday, February 29 for an update on the state of the membership list. The membership list has problems with standardization of information. There are fields related to spouses with different last names, where the primary name of one spouse is used for both (other name in parentheses) and others where spouses with the same last name are ordered by adding a capital letter after the last name of both. We think this was originally done to keep spouses together in the dataset.

There are also other problems. The database appears to be an excel spreadsheet which has been added to for years (some data entered manually) which is why there is a lot of variability in the data. Before proceeding with the large data pull of new retirees from June 2023 to present, it will be necessary to configure an updated, standardized spreadsheet/database that can upload data from queries of the UI HR database and hopefully from the UIRA membership form, so the data are easily searchable, and we can run basic statistics.

The Membership Committee will work with Deb to set up a meeting with UI HR and their IT support staff to make a plan for setting up a new membership dataset/database. If the IT work is not covered by the MOU, we will ask the board for funding to complete this project as soon as possible.

Vicki and Chris explained the need to have a usable membership dataset up and running before adding a large number of retirees to the UIRA membership (June 2023 to the present). Mike Hovland stated that getting the database updated would not be hard once we were working with the people at the UI who do this type of work on a daily basis. Mike Barron affirmed what was in the membership committee report, that if resources need to be spent to get this done in a timely manner, we should provide them. Remediating this issue is a priority. A meeting between UIRA and UI HR and IT is needed soon. More discussion occurs under new business.

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### **Nominating - Mike Hovland - Chair, Mike Barron, Lois Cox, Jean Florman**

Mike H. reported that the business on the committee was moving along. Confirmation for two Officer nominees have been received. Todd Stewart – Treasurer, and Cathy Wilcox – Secretary. They are working on President-Elect and have a couple of good candidates.

Chris asked about the options available to her since she is moving out of the Secretary position. There were options presented, but the committee was not sure which would be best at this point. Chris stated that if she is chairing the Bylaws committee, she would prefer to remain a voting member of the board. She was not opposed to serving for one more year to complete Cathy's term. Discussion will continue in the nominating committee. They will meet again tomorrow (March 13).

Lesanne brought up the need to be aware of timing for the introduction of new board candidates in The Gray Hawk prior to voting by the membership. Candidates are usually listed in the April edition, with bios and other accompanying information. Kellie will then facilitate email voting by the general membership prior to the Annual Meeting.

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### **Program Planning – Ed Dove – Chair, et al.**

Ed reported that his committee will have presented 17 programs this year: 10 general interest; 3 on health insurance option, and; 4 about "old age." Ed proposed one additional program – an end of year picnic open to the membership. This had occurred annually in the past and all felt that was a great suggestion. Venues were discussed and will be investigated. May be a potluck where meat is furnished, and attendees bring a side. Details TBD.

Lois commented on the importance of sending a hardcopy thank you letter to presenters, copied to their supervisor or department chair. Faculty and many staff members are required to show outreach activities as part of their annual review and for tenure.

#### *Completed Programs since the last Board Meeting*

- The Importance of Blood Donation: The DeGowin Blood Center, Mandy McClenahan, Thursday, Feb 29. UIRA Coordinators: Lesanne Fliehler and Chris Brus. 7 attendees (In-person only)
- Creating the Hancher Season, Aaron Greenwald, Friday, March 8, UIRA Coordinator: Lois Cox. 35 attendees (22 Zoom; 13 In-person)

#### *Next Program*

- Fiction in the City of Literature, Loren Glass, Wednesday, March 20, 11:00 am, 2520-D UCC and Zoom (Hybrid). Suggested reading list to be provided. UIRA Coordinator: Lois Cox.

*For more upcoming programs, see The Gray Hawk report.*

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#### **SIG: Explorers Report – Alice Atkinson, Lesanne Fliehler**

Recent walk since our last report: Feb. 22 at City Park, 12 attendees

#### Upcoming Walks:

- March 19, Riverfront Crossing Park (walk along Iowa River then stop at Big Grove), 1:00 p.m.
- April 24, Kent Park (meet at the Education Center), 1:00 p.m.

We have moved several upcoming walks to the afternoon to potentially avoid early-morning wintry conditions, but as the weather warms up, we may return to 10:00 a.m. walks.

There have been a couple of opportunities to walk with the children with the Tamarack Discovery School, and some members have attended, enjoying their time with the kids, who love to jump in mud puddles.

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#### **Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

##### **Bylaws Review and Revision Committee (Deb, Mike, Chris)**

The committee is working on a draft of the committee structure for review by the board but it will be delayed until the next meeting. Setting up the membership database has become the priority for now.

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##### **UIRA Manual Update Subcommittee (Evalyn, Lois)**

The committee did not meet this past month. Evalyn is out of the country.

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##### **Website Review and Update Committee (Ed, Lin, Lesanne)**

Ed reported that the committee is meeting with Kellie tomorrow (March 13) to discuss division of duties. Lesanne has found several areas of the UIRA website that need to be updated. Ed also mentioned that Lin is on phased retirement, so we need to use his services now and may need to pay him for his time.

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#### **Old Business**

- *Update on Center for Advancement (UIRA Quarterly Report, Endowed Scholarship Fund)*

Mike Barron reported that he had talked to Tom Deprenger, but he had not heard from the person Tom referred our request to. No progress made to this point.

- *Update on the use of the Committee Retention Survey*

Chris reported that although she had received only 5 surveys before the board meeting, the survey seemed useful. Not only did it identify the intentions of committee chairs and members, but it also provided a prompt for committee members to think about how they wanted to be of service to UIRA in the coming year. Several more surveys were collected at the board meeting. They will be collated with those already reviewed. Chris will now send the survey out to non-board committee members.

- *Progress on disconnect between UI HR and UIRA re identifying provisional members and the need for an updated membership database*

Ed has been working with UI HR and Kellie on these issues but progress has been put on hold until significant issues with the UIRA membership dataset can be addressed. Discussed in New Business.

### **New Business**

- *Discuss whether to fill the Secretary position for one year (complete Cathy's term), or to appoint for a 3-year term.*

This was discussed during the report from the Nominating Committee.

- *Review and Implementation of MOU between UIRA and UI*

Several challenges for UIRA this year seem to have stemmed from the lack of a working structure in our newly formalized relationship with the UI. We have guiding documents, in particular the MOU signed between UIRA and the UI on October 6, 2022, that clearly lay out a plan for routine meetings to help integrate UIRA into the processes of the UI. Specifically:

- Schedule monthly meetings (or as needed) with the ASC and UIRA leadership.
- University Human Resources leadership will meet bi-annually with the UIRA Leadership to discuss topics of interest, including oversight of the MOU.
- The MOU will be evaluated annually.

Following the MOU will help UIRA and the UI become working partners in this new relationship.

Deb will set up a meeting with Cheryl Reardon to help identify who is responsible for setting routine meetings between UIRA leadership and UI attendees going forward. Secondly, Deb will request a meeting with our designated contact in HR to discuss the best way forward in setting up a usable membership dataset for UIRA. We need the ability to run monthly queries of new retirees (probationary members), as well as to set up an appropriate interface with the UIRA membership form so both sets of data can be uploaded into the UIRA membership dataset. To do that, we need to work with UI IT, through UI HR. Mike Hovland will be needed at this meeting to discuss with UI IT the specifics of what is needed.

### *For the Good of the Order*

Mike B. had a conversation with Bernie Sorofman about the need for an ex-officio member on the UIRA board representing the Emeritus Faculty Council (EFC). Would he be interested? Yes. Mike also talked with Connie Berman, President of the EFC, who was also positive about having this connection between UIRA and EFC renewed. Mike will follow up.

### **Adjourn**

On a motion from Lesanne, seconded by Vicki, Deb adjourned the meeting at 2:26 pm.