

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

April 11, 2024, 1:00 pm
Zoom Only

MINUTES

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

Not attending: David Fitzgerald, Diana Lundell, Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash.

Call to Order – Deb Cobb, President

Deb called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion from Lesanne, seconded by Ed, the March 12, 2024, minutes were discussed and approved as amended.

Reports from Officers

President – Deb Cobb

1. Ongoing meetings with Bylaws Review and Update committee.
2. One Day for Iowa donations to UIRA Scholarship Fund (\$1900). Deb will write thank you notes.
3. Meeting between UIRA and HR leadership goals (database, MOU review).
Kellie has taken ownership of getting the meeting(s) set up in compliance with the MOU between UI HR and UIRA. A Qualtrics survey was sent to those who were tabbed by Deb to attend this meeting. Some said the link to the survey was not live for them. Ed brought up that last year, the email with a Qualtrics link that was sent to the membership for voting on the slate of proposed Officers and BOD members for this year, was only usable for those with a UI email address. This needs to be addressed for any and all communication that involves the use of a Qualtrics survey. We know that there are alternatives that we may need to research. Progress is being made, albeit more slowly than hoped.
4. Deb will follow up on a suggestion that the general membership needs to be sent an email about the inclusion of UIRA in the UI Policy Manual and why that matters to UIRA.

President-Elect – Evalyn Van Allen-Shalash

No activity to report for this month. Evalyn will be back from her trip abroad on April 17.

Past-President – Ed Dove

See Program Planning Committee Report.

Treasurer – David Fitzgerald

The current balance in the UIRA checking account is \$21,646.80.
Reserve funds, in two Vanguard accounts, total \$12,734.34.

Treasurer not available for this meeting.

Standing Committee Reports

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

The deadline for nominations is April 15. I am happy to report that I have nominations for both the community and university service awards. After the April 15 deadline for submission is past, I will convene the Awards Committee to select award recipients.

Photo Contest – Diana Lundell, Lesanne Fliehler

Photos for the 2024 UIRA Photo Contest were accepted until March 15. We had 16 different individuals enter the contest, most submitting two or more photos. Judging took place March 18-30, by non-UIRA members and photographers Larry Mendenhall, Tim Schoon, and Susan McClellan.

Winners are listed below and have been notified via email. Their monetary prizes will be sent to them via US mail, and their accomplishments and photos featured in upcoming issues of *The Gray Hawk*. Contest entrants who did not win have also been notified via email.

The three judges will be compensated and receive their checks via US mail. This year again, they commented on the “complicated” nature of trying to award three places with our rule that a photographer can only win once. That is largely the reason we are only awarding a first place in the University of Iowa category (although the number of submissions in this category were also low). Lesanne and Diana will consult with photo judges and consider suggestions for potential changes in the rules.

UI

1. John Donelson Clark breaks NCAA scoring record

Iowa

1. John Moyers 12th Night – Riverside Theatre
2. Mark Reagan Trumpeter swans flying over Cone Marsh
3. Sue Otto Melodi’s Chalk Art, Iowa City Block Party

USA

1. Todd Stewart Mt. Rushmore
2. Pam Terrill Green River Canyon, Utah
3. Kevin Heckman Beaver pond near Valdez, Alaska

International

1. Stephen Scheckel Our ship through an iceberg porthole, Antarctica
2. Vicki Siefers Monet’s Garden in Giverny, France
3. Diana Harris Dala horse workshop

Lesanne suggested that we frame copies of the award-winning photographs to give to Hills Bank, the sponsor of the UIRA Photo Contest. They can then display them in the lobbies of their banks.

The *Gray Hawk* – Lesanne Fliehler

Deadlines

- Content deadline: Monday, April 15
Layout to Kellie: Thursday-Friday, April 18 or 19
Distribution: Tuesday-Wednesday, April 23 or 24

Programming

1. **Incarceration Among the Elderly**, Alison Guernsey, Wednesday, April 24, Noon, 2520-D UCC and via Zoom
2. **Fraud Alert for Seniors**, Sally Leme, Thursday, May 16, 11:00 a.m., 2520-D UCC and via Zoom

Additional Content

1. Annual Meeting (Save-the-Date Box)
2. Recent Recordings
3. Explorers Walks
4. President's Column
5. Photo Contest Results
6. Results from One Day for Iowa campaign
7. Board Members Election
8. What's Happening on the UI Campus?
9. New Members

Lesanne asked that members of the board and committees be aware of deadlines for submitting needed information for UIRA activities that follow a timeline. Currently, the need for bios and pictures of the Officer and Board nominees for 2024-25 that are generally found in the next issue of *The Gray Hawk*, was at issue. Discussion followed.

Since the names of nominees are available now, and board approval of the list of nominees is not required according to our bylaws, Mike H. will get bios and headshots to Lesanne by Monday, April 15th for inclusion in the next edition of *The Gray Hawk*.

This discussion also made it clear that the timeline for presenting nominees to the board (officers, board members and proposed for committee chair members) should be move from the May board meeting, to the April board meeting. Chris will revise.

Lois asked if an announcement could be added to *The Gray Hawk* that there will be "social time" prior to the program on April 24, Incarceration Among the Elderly. Social time will start 45 minutes before the program (11:15 am) with cookies, coffee, and water being provided by UIRA. Lesanne will add.

Membership – Vicki Siefers - Chair, Lesanne Fliehler, Chris Brus

The Membership Committee met 2 times on March 21 and April 2. The committee discussed two issues:

1. UIRA has been promising a provisional membership to all new retirees as of June 2023. A list of new retirees has not been provided yet and we fear the list is growing longer every month. A meeting has been proposed by Deb with HR to clear this up and to also clarify how the data should be supplied. The committee would like to see a database in use instead of the current Excel spreadsheet. The committee proposes that until this database can be implemented, we get the lists of new retirees and Kellie can keep them on a separate worksheet in the spreadsheet. We have communicated this with Kellie and she would like to attend this proposed meeting. The board has already discussed this issue and has agreed to pay for any IT work that would need to be done to implement a database.
2. The committee also talked about simplifying membership requirements for UIRA to reduce the confusion around spousal memberships. Any changes would have to be voted on by the board and added to the bylaws.

Ed requested that the Membership Committee review the possible addition of Mercy IC Hospital retirees to either be sent emails giving them the option to become UIRA members, or to have all Mercy retirees (past and present) offered a provisional membership, then the choice to renew and become a paying member of UIRA. Discussion of this possibility led to more questions than answers, so while worthy to pursue, members of the membership committee felt that this could not be added to the list of significant challenges the committee has on its plate currently. Once

we have a working database, have received the list of UI retirees from June 2023 to the present, and have accomplished integrating those retirees under the provisional membership, including much needed communication with this set of retirees, the issue of Mercy retirees will be tabled.

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

The slate of officer and board member nominees for 2024-25 is as follows:

- Treasurer, Todd Stewart (3-year term)
- President-Elect, Lois Cox (3-year term)
- Secretary, Cathy Wilcox (new 3-year term)
- Board at-Large, Jean Florman (2-year term; completing Lois Cox's 3-year term)
- Board at-Large, Cyndie Seyfer (3-year term)
- Board at Large, Chris Brus (1-year term, completing Cathy Wilcox's 2-year term)

The nominees were well received by other members of the board.

Mike was asked about *The Gray Hawk* editor position that is open for 2024-25, because Lesanne's term on the board expires this year. Confusion about who appoints the editor was resolved by reading the bylaws, which states the president of the organization appoints the editor. Therefore, the Nominating Committee had not been seeking anyone for this position. Unfortunately, this had not been communicated to the president. Lesanne had given Deb and the Nominating Committee areas where she would consider being involved until the new editor was comfortable with the position (layout, specifically) and two potential replacements. Deb will now contact those potential nominees.

The possibility of paying someone to create *The Gray Hawk* each month was discussed. It would be too costly for UIRA unless we could find a sponsor who would swap services for an ad in the newsletter, as other associations have done. A suggestion to use students to do this job was put forward, but it was not felt to be viable at this time. UIRA would still need someone, preferably on the board, to mentor and supervise the student as well as be accountable for the timing and quality of the product.

Another issue was whether the editor of *The Gray Hawk* needed to be on the board of directors. Many thought that was important but this issue was not resolved in this meeting

Program Planning – Ed Dove – Chair, et al.

Completed Programs since the last Board Meeting

- Fiction in the City of Literature, Loren Glass, Wednesday, March 20, 11:00 am, 2520-D UCC and Zoom (Hybrid). UIRA Coordinator: Lois Cox. 33 attendees (26 Zoom; 7 In-person)
- Connect, Contribute, and Create: The Future of Optimal Aging, Jen Jones and Sam Wittrock, Thursday, March 28, 1:00 pm, 2520-D UCC and Zoom (Hybrid). UIRA Coordinator: Ed Dove. 30 attendees (22 Zoom; 8 In-person)
- All Things Water: Improving Community Resilience to Floods, Droughts, and Declining Water Quality, Larry Weber, Tuesday, April 9, 1:00 pm, Meeting Room A, Coralville Public Library. UIRA Coordinator: Nancy Langguth. 43 attendees (22 Zoom; 21 In-person)

Upcoming Programs

- National Advanced Driving Simulator Tour, Wednesday, April 17, 11:00 am, 2401 Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA. UIRA Coordinator: Ellie Herman.

- Incarceration Among the Elderly, Alison Guernsey, Wednesday, April 24, Noon, 2520-D UCC and via Zoom (Hybrid). UIRA Coordinator: Lois Cox.
- Fraud Alerts for Seniors, Sally Leme, Thursday, May 16, 11:00 am, 2520-D UCC and Zoom (Hybrid). UIRA Coordinator: Ellie Herman.

Ed reported that the Program Planning Committee (PPC) had a list of programs that had been proposed by the 2023-24 committee members that would be passed along to Deb, who will chair the committee next year.

He will also evaluate, with the committee, whether the success of certain types of programs (based on topic area or other differences) can be associated with available presentation options (Zoom only, In-person only, hybrid). That information may be useful when deciding individual program presentation type, going forward.

Ed was asked whether the PPC had looked at setting specific days/time slots for UIRA presentations to avoid conflict with other groups. This would also allow board members and the UIRA membership to block off those days/time to increase participation. Ed said they were currently looking at this option. It was suggested that a meeting of representatives from UIRA, Senior College, and Emeritus Faculty Council, should take place to discuss.

SIG: Explorers Report – Alice Atkinson, Lesanne Fliehler

Explorers Report (Alice Atkinson, Lesanne Fliehler)

Recent walk since our last report:

- March 19, Riverfront Crossing Park and social time at Big Grove, 5 attendees.

Upcoming Walks:

- April 24, Kent Park (meet at the Education Center), 10:00 a.m.
- May 15, Two Horse Farm, 10:00 a.m.
- June 5, Turkey Creek Nature Preserve, 10:00 a.m.

As the weather warms up, we have returned to 10:00 a.m. walks. We will be considering walks during the summer months, too, even though most other UIRA programming will have ended for the year.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

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

The committee met on April 2 and 9. We reviewed the latest draft of the committee section of the bylaws and made a few changes to the text so that it was consistent with other documents, including the Timeline and Protocol for Identifying UIRA Committee Chairs, that was approved for use in the February BOD meeting. This section of the bylaws is nearing completion. The committee will start reviewing other sections of the bylaws to insure that they are consistent across other documents.

UIRA Manual Update Subcommittee (Evalyn, Lois)

No activity reported. Evalyn will be back from her visit abroad on April 17.

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

No activity reported for this month.

Old Business

Update on the use of the Committee Retention Survey

The survey identified areas of critical need for the 2024-25 program year:

The Membership Committee has no one returning for next year: losing the chairperson (term-expires); the Editor of *The Gray Hawk* (term-expires), and the remaining member (chairing another committee next year). This committee is critical to the organization, so effort needs to be expended now to identify a chairperson.

The Ad Hoc Website Review and Update Committee has no one returning for next year: losing the chairperson (term-expires); losing a committee member (term-expires), and the UI IT member is on phased retirement. This committee, although ad hoc, may have important work to do during the implementation of the new membership dataset, and reconfiguration of parts of the website.

Other committees are in better shape for next year, with most of them having a chairperson in place.

The survey has shown the board where committee chair and member needs are for the 2024-25 program year. The timing of the survey was slow this year, so a better mechanism for distributing the survey next year will be developed. An easier format will also be found, such as a fillable pdf or use of a Qualtrics or Survey Monkey survey.

Update on Review and Implementation of the MOU between UIRA and UI

Deb reported that Kellie was now the point person for working with UIRA to set up the first meeting between UIRA representatives and UI HR, hopefully with the addition of one of their IT staff. This is the first meeting in the set of scheduled meetings proposed as part of the MOU approved by both UIRA and the UI in October of 2022. One of the main items on the agenda will be to assign the person/position who will be responsible for setting up the routine meetings between UIRA and UI HR going forward. These meetings will be very helpful in developing a partnership between the two parties that is workable and efficient. The meeting will take place in mid-May and a survey of availability has been sent out to participants.

A question was raised about who would be attending the meeting. Deb replied that the President, the President-Elect, and the Past-President will attend the first meeting and at the request of the President, Mike Hovland and Chris Brus will also attend to outline the necessity of updating the UIRA membership dataset, as well as working with IT to initiate a data pull of “provisional members” who retired from June 2023 to the present.

Chris stated that we would approach the meeting not with demands, but with a “wish list” of what would be most helpful for the UIRA Membership and Nominating Committees to move forward in a productive manner. We also recognize that we need to work with the IT staff at the UI to determine what is actually feasible in terms of setting up the new dataset and developing standardized queries and protocols.

It is also a priority to run the list of UI retirees who received information in their retiree packets outlining their provisional membership in UIRA, allowing them to attend UIRA programs and receive *The Gray Hawk* until the next renewal cycle. This information has been in the retiree packets since June of 2023 and none of them have received any further communication from us. We need to set up a dataset of this set of retirees so we can make amends and start their provisional memberships. The Membership Committee has been unable to communicate with them because we do not have contact information.

Deb will keep the BOD informed as we move forward with setting the meeting with UI HR in May.

New Business

Addition of a new standing committee – Manual Update & Orientation

Mike Barron presented the rationale for adding a new standing committee that would oversee the annual updating of the UIRA Board Manual as well as coordinate all aspects of a Board Orientation each fall. These two activities are critical for developing knowledgeable board members and providing both new and returning board members with current documents that guide how we do business as a board, and as members of working committees. It will also keep us in compliance with the bylaws, the UI policy manual, and the MOU between UIRA and our working partners in UI HR, going forward.

It was also felt that the President should chair this committee, to provide oversight, and the President-Elect should be a member. This committee would review all aspects of the workings of the organization and would, therefore, provide a valuable educational experience for the President-Elect, under the mentorship of the President.

A very pertinent question arose: Do we have enough board members to carry the weight of an additional standing committee? After discussion, there was consensus that adding two additional board members would be prudent. This was not voted on, however.

Discussion about whether it was possible to add additional board members for 2024-25, based on the limited timeframe before the slate of candidates needed to be sent to the membership for a vote, brought up another topic of discussion.

According to Ed, the Qualtrics program used by the UI to send surveys to our membership, does not function for members who were not using their UI email addresses. This is a huge problem. The membership votes on the slate of officers and board candidates through a Qualtrics survey, and a large proportion of our members DO NOT use their UI emails. Ed will follow-up with Kellie to confirm that is the case. Chris stated that she used Survey Monkey during her time at the UI and it worked well. Chris will get information on the cost of using Survey Monkey and report back to the board on the feasibility of using it rather than Qualtrics.

For the Good of the Order

Mike H. reported that he had sent a link to all board members with information about opportunities to volunteer for activities taking place at The University of Iowa to support students during finals week. He encouraged board members to participate.

Adjourn

On a motion from Mike H., seconded by Ed, Deb adjourned the meeting at 2:45 pm.