

**The Association of The University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting February 24 2022 Minutes
Held via Zoom**

I. Call to order. The Board meeting was called to order on February 24 2022 at 10:02 am by President Rita Klein.

II. Welcome & Announcements:

Members attending via Zoom or phone: Jo Ann Collier, Cathy Edwards, Bob Gandee, Ali Hajjafar, John Heminger, Rita Klein, Carl Lieberman, Dan Sheffer, Laura Moss-Spitler, Harvey Sterns, Linda Sugarman, Mary Verstraete, Mel Vye, Martha Vye, Diane Vukovich, Tom Vukovich.

Absent with notice: Tom Nichols, Dick Steiner, Tim Lillie

III. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the January 27 2022 Board meeting were approved as distributed.

IV. Treasurer’s Report. John Heminger reported:

January 2022

UA Account income: dues \$24.00.
UA Account expenses: Print Services Dept. \$1473.06.
Petty Cash income: \$0.00.
Petty Cash expenses: \$0.00.

	UA Account	Petty Cash	Totals
Initial balance	\$9,696.66	\$243.99	\$9,940.65
Income	\$24.00	\$0.00	\$24.00
Expenses	\$1,473.06	\$0.00	\$1,473.06
Final balance	\$8,247.60	\$243.99	\$8,491.59
January 2021			
Final balance	\$9,777.20	\$79.40	\$9,856.60

The report was approved subject to audit.

V. Corresponding Secretary. Linda Sugarman reported she sent a card of condolence to Georgia Ritchie on the passing of her husband Bob Ritchie and a get well card to Rita Klein. She will send another thinking of you card to Jay Hershey who continues his recovery.

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VI. Committee Reports.

A. Programs: Tom & Diane Vukovich reported:

1. April 20 Wednesday Luncheon program (in-person) Dr. Gerald Newsome, OSU faculty retiree, OCHER representative to STRS board speaking about his perspective of STRS pension management. A short general membership meeting will be held immediately afterward.
2. May 20 Friday - Special Event. Lobster and Suds at Zwisler Hall St Sebastian's Catholic Church. The VFW site used in the past at a lower cost is up for sale. Though costs have risen at Zwisler Hall the manager has guaranteed the same rate for two years. In addition the cost of lobster has increased substantially. A motion was made by Dan Sheffer and seconded by Mel Vye to cover the difference in cost if expenses are not covered by reservations. Approved without dissent.
3. April 22 A road trip to downtown Canton is 'under construction'. Details coming soon.
4. March 16 program by Dave Lieberth will be recorded by the team of Dan Sheffer and Mel Vye. It will not be broadcast live for remote viewing but will be posted on the AUAR website later for members.
5. The Fall Soup and Chili event will be held at Goodyear Metro Park. There is a considerable price difference between Thursday and Friday evenings. Tom and Diane will investigate further and report back.

B. Membership: Mel Vye reported that he and Dan are in the process of revising the spreadsheet that tracks membership data. There are no new membership numbers to report.

C. Political Action. Bob Gandeereported the recent OCHER meeting in Columbus was lengthy with detailed explanations of the assumptions underlying the options under consideration for funding of pension benefits and the financial impact to the system of changes to eligibility and any changes in COLA adjustments. Dan remarked that active teachers are the ones paying for retiree benefits and their numbers are shrinking. The WEP provision reducing Social Security benefits is again being debated in Congress.

D. Benefits. Linda Sugarman reported there are no new university benefits to report.

E. Faculty Senate. Ali Hajjafar reported:

Faculty Senate Meeting Feb 10, 2022

Chair Budd called the meeting to order. In her remark, she mentioned of FSEC meeting with B.O.T. Board Chair together with Provost Wiencek in January. She said we had a productive discussion with topics regarding from how the University functions in the community post-COVID and the safety initiatives being implemented in the south of

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Exchange neighborhood to our ongoing efforts to grow enrollment. Having open communications between the faculty and B.O.T. is something I think can make a real difference to the strength of the University. She said Chair of University Council, President of the Akron-AAUP, and myself were invited to join President Miller's cabinet retreat. We were asked to submit topics for discussion around shared governance, campus relationships and enabling agency. We noted instances where we felt shared governance was working well, with our voices heard early in the decision-making phase. She said we will be included in the COVID task force meetings, as well. She said working with the administration to push back against HB327 got us much further than we could have achieved alone. We also discussed ways to build trust and improve morale with emphasis on improving campus relationships. While I believe relations between the administration and faculty have greatly improved from previous years, there is work to be done at repairing relations between the faculty and staff, which took a hit during the layoffs of 2014/15 and the RIF of 2020. She talked about the importance of the work of contract professionals and staff to the institution and said unless we are all talking to each other and pulling together as equals on the same team with the same goals, we won't get far.

The Executive Committee reported that since last regular Senate meeting, they have met five times, including the meeting with Chair of B.O.T. and Provost Wiencek. President Miller in his remark said we have a lot of work to do to get all those applications turned into yield and he asked everyone to reach out and do some special things to reach students. He announced that he will address Akron Press Club to give update on the University and will be upbeat and let the community know that the University is here, and the future is bright. He said most of the house bills we're watching are moving slowly because of the redistricting issues that are ongoing. He concluded his remark by talking about the importance of Intel's plan to invest in Ohio and its benefit to the University system of Ohio. Provost Wiencek in his remark, reiterated that the University hit its goal for application in January. He said we aggressively are working with students to get them confirmed. He said we are going to tweak our scholarships; stopped Akron Success and went back to President's scholarship and instituted more offerings to students who need more help. He said we are looking to donor scholarships as well, and we are working with Kennedy Co. to look at our offerings and looking at optimizing scholarship offerings. He said on advice of Senate and USG, student success software demos have taken place. Two vendors, College Net and Stellic are competing. Finally, he gave the same update for Dean searches as last month.

In committee reports, APC brought a motion to the floor regarding acceptance of DSST (Dantes Subject Standardize Test) examination as a form of alternative credit. The motion was approved by unanimous consent. CRC brought 173 course and 106 program proposals for approval. All except one course proposal on cyber forensics that was sent back were approved. Part-Time Faculty Committee submitted a written report. Graduate Council representative reported that except for CEPS (College of Engineering and Polymer Science), all programs have updated their FT Graduate Faculty Membership Criteria. She said Graduate Council is working on developing guidelines for Mentoring Agreements, for programs that do not currently have these in place. The goal is to help students know what is expected of them and what they can expect from their advisors. She added, Graduate Council is supporting the development of TA training and best practices. ITL will be taking the lead on this. Regarding GAs on probation, she said after discussion with Graduate Council, the Graduate School has solidified its probation practice for GAs. Per the university

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rule – graduate students that fall below a 3.00 GPA will be placed on probation. They have up to two consecutive semesters to return to good academic standing or be subject to dismissal. With respect to GAs, the following will hold:

- Graduate assistants may retain their assistantships for the two consecutive semesters while returning to good standing
- Any graduate assistant who does not return to good academic standing within two semesters or is placed on probation a second time is no longer assistantship-eligible and subject to dismissal. For those placed on probation a second time, loss of assistantship is regardless of whether the student was able to return to good standing within 1 or 2 semesters of consecutive funding

To assist with faculty and staff turnovers, the Graduate School's AKR for 2022 will be an onboarding project. The Graduate School is currently creating the onboarding documents that will explain the policies, practices and paperwork. Once the documents are drafted, the grad school will have small group meetings with staff and program directors, to explain the documents and help to educate everyone involved with graduate education. This will also help to make a more supportive and less frustrating environment for graduate students where those they interact with have the necessary information. USG representative reported on safety walk on and off campus, selections of student trustees that has begun, election, Mental Health roundtable, and working with Kerry Jackson on Ring initiative to get 100 Ring doorbells to students living off campus.

On **Feb 15** there was a Senate informal meeting with President Miller and provost Wiencek. Subjects discussed included: Planning process to study past retirement plans in order not to make mistakes in the future, how university handles start up packages for new hires, Library resources, change of President's Day holiday from Tuesday to Monday, and test optional for admission,

This concludes my report.

F. University & Community Service/Website. Dan Sheffer reported he updates information as he receives it.

G. Scholarship.No report

H. Newsletter. Martha Vye reported the Fall newsletter is mailed in late August. She thanked Mary Verstraete for taking pictures at the February luncheon program.

VII. Old Business.

Nominations for open positions on the board: Expiring term positions include Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Publicity/Newsletter, and 2 Member-at Large. Members of the Nominating Committee include Tom Nichols, Laura Moss-Spitler, and Mary Verstraete. They will forward a proposed slate of nominees in March with the opportunity to nominate additional members before voting takes place.

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VIII. New Business. None

IX. Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 11:18 am.

**Respectfully submitted:
JoAnn Collier, Recording Secretary**

Next meeting will be March 24 2022 in person/via Zoom at 10:00am in Infocision Board Room

- Meeting Schedule for 2021-22:
 - 2021 August 26; September 23; October 28; December 2
 - 2022 January 27; February 24; **March 24**; May 26; June 23
 - Photos of the board taken at the June meeting