

**FIVE COLLEGES LEARNING IN RETIREMENT
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 14, 2011**

The regular monthly meeting of the 5CLIR Council was held on Thursday, April 14, 2011 at the offices of Five Colleges, Incorporated on Spring Street in Amherst, MA.

Present: Larry Ambs, Elizabeth Armstrong, John Armstrong, Marybeth Bridegam, Laura Cranshaw, Peter Ferber, Arnold Friedmann, Dorothy Gorra, Sheila Klem, Joan Laird, Sandy Muspratt, Callie Orszak, Dorothy Rosenthal, James Scott, Beverley von Kries, Joan Wofford, Michael Wolff, Sara Wright.

Call to Order: President Larry Ambs called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Remarks by the President: Larry Ambs said that draft versions of the Operations Manual, as edited by Bobbie Reitt, are available for comment by officers, Council members, and committee chairs. The comments will be incorporated into a second draft and the final version will need to be approved by Council.

Report of the Vice-President: Joan Wofford reported that she is making good progress on her project to interview past presidents and current officers, Council members, and committee chairs.

Finance Committee Report: Sandy Muspratt distributed copies of the 2011 budget and also a third quarter report (on file with these minutes). He pointed out that we took in about \$60,000 in dues but that personnel expenses are around \$50,000, which leaves us only about \$10,000 in our working budget. Because of the small leeway, we are very dependent upon gifts, other revenue sources, and membership. He expects personnel expenses to increase about 2.5% plus a 1% increase in benefits next year. The final figures for personnel will not be known until after we complete our budget for 2012. Larry added that we cannot depend upon Great Decisions being a money maker and that the budget for the Civil War Symposium does not include an excess of funds.

Technology Committee Report: The report of the Technology Committee is on file with these minutes.

Curriculum Committee Report: Jim Scott referred Council to the written report he circulated (on file with these minutes). He added that the committee thought that the Moderator's Meeting on March 31 was a great success. In addition, plans for the Fall Preview on going forward.

Public Relations Committee Report: The posters were distributed to area sites but did not stay up for long, possibly because of their large size. It is recommended that smaller posters or flyers be used in the future as they are more likely to remain for a longer time. Peter Ferber reported that Flyer Girls is willing to distribute flyers for free. Joan Wofford is temporarily chairing the committee until a plan for the future of the committee and a permanent chair or co-chairs are found.

Summer/Winter Programs Report: Dorothy Gorra distributed a preliminary schedule of events planned for the summer and Marybeth Bridegam distributed information about the trip to view art in the Hudson Valley region. At this time there are 11 people signed up for the art trip but 30 are required in order for the trip to go ahead. Sandy suggested that fees, such as that for the Chester Theater, be rounded up; it is now \$22.50 and he suggested \$23. The rounding was done on the final version of the registration form. This raised again the question of adding an administrative

cost on to special events as an aid to our financial situation but the question was not pursued further at this time.

Marybeth said that Dorothy Gorra will be stepping down as co-chair at the end of the summer and asked for Council approval of Honore David to be the next co-chair.

Motion: Marybeth moved approval of Honore David as the new co-chair of the Summer/Winter Programs Committee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Marybeth expressed concern about the closeness of the deadline for registering for summer programs (May 14) and the deadline for registering for seminars to be eligible for the lottery (May 20). It was decided that Callie will send out reminders about the May 14 deadline by email.

Membership Committee Report: Sheila Klem reported that most brunches will be held on Saturday, April 16. The committee will meet next on April 29 and discuss feedback from the brunches. Sheila will be leaving as co-chair at the end of this year and the committee will have a nomination for her replacement at the Council meeting in May. Larry reminded her that the name should be brought before the Executive Committee prior to Council. [The Executive Committee meets one week before Council.]

Special Programs Committee Report: Lise Armstrong referred Council to the written report of the committee (on file with these minutes). She also reported that Bobbie Reitt is planning a new special program on genealogy as a follow-up to her seminar and workshop on that subject. Joan Wofford's workshop on technology has been so successful that the committee is discussing a possible special program with Joan to continue work in this area in the fall.

Office Manager's Report: Callie referred Council to her written report, which is on file with these minutes.

Great Decisions Committee Report: Peter Ferber reported that the first two programs were very successful by most measures but that attendance was low (40 and 65 respectively). The first speaker did not show because he was confused about the date so a panel of 5CLIR people who were there and who had first-hand knowledge of Haiti led a very good discussion. The low attendance on that date may have been related to the snowy conditions. The second speaker was excellent.

Development Committee: No report at this time.

Old Business:

1. Sara Wright reported that arrangements for the Fall Preview on May 1 are going along well. The annual meeting will be held at 3 pm as an interval in the preview. The refreshments will be refreshed after the meeting. In order to keep the meeting short, committee chairs will not be introduced individually. It was suggested that a list of the committees and the chairs be projected during the preview.

Joan Laird asked how the annual report would be made available. Sara will talk to Janet Price about putting it on the web site.

2. Larry reported that plans for the Civil War Symposium are going forward. He is working with Neal Abraham to firm up the location for the presentations and hopes to have that in place soon. The committee is still waiting to hear about some of the funding requests. In the meantime, they are requesting contributions from other places, such as the colleges and area businesses. A letter of invitation has been sent to Governor Deval Patrick.

New Business:

1. Lise Armstrong discussed the situation with the French Conversation Group, which has informed her that they would not accept any new members even if some present members were to drop out. This is not consistent with 5CLIR practice in which all groups are open unless there is a restriction on numbers or there is some requirement, such as level of fluency in a language. Jim Scott proposed that 5CLIR needs a written policy on how to handle such situations. Larry asked the Special Programs Committee to draft such a policy and present it at the next Council meeting. Larry mentioned that groups that act as part of 5CLIR but do not communicate with Council on planned activities could present liability issues. Lise said that the French Conversation Group will not be included in the forthcoming catalog because it is not open to new people so there is no point in advertising it.

2. Larry suggested that it might be helpful to the visibility of our organization to have a Facebook page. In addition, some links to other sites, such as the Five Colleges Library site, might be helpful to our members.

The meeting was adjourned 4:08 p.m.

Dorothy Rosenthal, Secretary

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 12, 2011
*****2:30-4:30 PM*****
FIVE COLLEGES OFFICE**