

**FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 2011**

The regular meeting of the council was held at the Five College Center at 2:15.

Present Council: Larry Ambs, John Armstrong, Laura Cranshaw, Arnold Friedman, Jim Harvey, Carol Jolly, Joan Laird, Betsy Loughran, Sandy Muspratt, Ellen Peck, Joan Wofford, Gordon Wyse

Absent Council: Marybeth Bridegam, Dave Cramer, Michael Wolff

Committee Chairs Present: Peter Ferber, Mary Franks, Frieda Howards, Janet Price, Honore David, Sara Wright, Callie Orszak

Minutes: The minutes of November 10 were approved as presented.

Civil War Symposium Follow-up: Larry Ambs gave an update on the continuing uses of the Civil War Symposium.

- Letters of thanks have gone out.
- Finances are in good shape.
- Educational rights for the DVD have been secured. 100 copies are on order with boxes and good labels.
- We continue to need ideas about where to send the DVD's and who can use them: senior centers, local libraries, symposium speakers and presenters, academics in the Valley, high school history teachers, new college presidents at MHC and Hampshire, LIR seminars
- Amherst Media will show it but cannot put it on the Web site.
- April 16 is Abolition Day. Bob Romer and Chuck Gilles are working on a program about local people like H.W. Beecher.

Office Space Requirements: Jim Harvey has been meeting with representatives of Smith and 5C Inc. to work out our requirements for new office space. Smith has agreed to house 5CLIR and the Far East program, but we must have enough space for office machines, storage, and a conference table. We also need parking that will give volunteers easy access to the office.

Membership Committee: Frieda Howards reported that this committee wants to change its name to "Member Support Committee"—a change that will more closely reflect what the committee actually does. The Council voted to approve this change. Henny Lewin was also approved as a new member.

Thursday, January 26 from 10 to 12 in Lathrop Northampton, there will be a coffee for new members. There are at least 39 new people on record. Council members and committee chairs are invited to attend since this is a good occasion to recruit.

There will also be an **all-member luncheon**, probably on March 31 (Sat.) or April 22. The committee is still juggling dates since there will be a **moderators' meeting** on March 29 and **the Preview** on April 29. (Easter is April 8).

Tech Committee: Janet Price asked that Roger Beer be approved as a new committee member.

The December workshop on ipads, nooks, and other devices was enormously popular with over 40 people showing up. The next workshop on Skype on Jan. 4 can be a demonstration rather than a

hands on event if an equal number of people come. They are also contemplating a “smart phone” session on January 11 at the “Computer Circle.”

Curriculum Committee: Carol Jolly described a problem this term when moderators wanted to extend their seminars beyond the scheduled 11 weeks (10 and one snow day). Since space is only reserved for 11 weeks; any extensions must be arranged by the moderators themselves.

General Discussion on space needs and the relationship to the growth of LIR:

Current situation: 279 members; 12 seminars in colleges, 13 seminars elsewhere; one office with one full-time administrator (Callie); financially, we run with a small profit each year but we need to keep up memberships because of natural attrition.

We seem to be at a point of equilibrium: replacement growth is necessary but if we increase in membership much beyond say 300, we will have to change the structure of the organization and the costs will increase for more office help and more rented spaces.

Issues:

1. To what extent do we need to be on college campuses? Colleges are free but some colleges are now pressed for space and MHC and Hampshire won't let us know of space availability until the last minute. Is there a minimum level of college participation?
2. Getting space elsewhere. There are other spaces but some places like churches charge rent or at least expect a donation. Retirement communities have been generous but there is a limit to how much we can impose on them.
3. Growth would require more seminar spaces. Some seminars could expand in numbers, some could be given twice or as a second session. But more seminars would require more spaces.
4. Are we filling a niche in the Valley with peer-led seminars as our standard offering? Is this a self-limiting structure since not everyone likes to make presentations? Is this niche larger than what we can offer?
5. Some of our members do not like the seminars but come to other programs. Can this part of our structure expand without additional office help?
6. Seminar places are limited by space, by moderators' schedules, and by the number of moderators we can recruit. 18 seems to be the maximum number of places for most subjects. We could try a year-end evaluation of how many seminar places were actually filled and how many people were left waiting.
7. Each year we place ads in the *Gazette* for \$400-500. These produce recruits especially at the Previews. We could recruit by going to Rotary meetings, meetings of retired faculty members, retired alums of the 5 colleges. We could send out notices and develop a mailing list of possibilities. But to do very aggressive recruiting, we would have to be sure we want to expand beyond the replacement level.
8. The question of having seminars in members' homes was brought up again, but because of insurance considerations, this puts us in a grey area of accountability. Non-college facilities like senior centers have their own insurance riders from 5CInc. Individual homes do not.

Next Council Meeting will be January 12 at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Peck, Secretary