

**FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2013**

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

Present Council: Susan Beer, Dorothy Gilbert, Michael Greenebaum, Jim Harvey, Carol Jolly, Betsy Loughran, Ellen Peck, Jim Scott, Gordon Wyse

Absent Council: Paul Berman, Chris Hurn, Jim Perot, Dean Poli, Zina Tillona, Fran Volkmann

Present Committees/others: Liz Tiley, Sheila Klem, Betsy Siersma, Sara Wright, Henny Lewin, Naomi Yanis

Minutes: The minutes of Sept. 12 were accepted as presented.

Treasurer:

(see written report and spread sheet for budget)

Betsy reported on a Sept. 26th meeting of the finance committee consisting of Betsy Loughran, Susan Beer, Sandy Belden, Johan Brongers, Chuck Gilles, and Sandy Muspratt.

We ended the year with a surplus of \$2027. We also funded the Future Fund with a deposit of \$38,696. In addition to the Future Fund we keep a cash reserve of \$30,000 for immediate non-budgeted needs. This result means that we are in good financial shape, but we must be planning for increased personnel costs next year because the benefit package has changed.

Betsy explained some of the difficulties we face in sorting out our financials which must go through the books of the 5C Inc. Legally we do not exist independently but as a program of 5C Inc. The **advantages** of this arrangement are

1. We are not charged for financial services.
2. We are not audited separately.
3. We do not pay rent for college rooms.
4. Smith pays the utility bills for our office.
5. Our money is safe and reserved for our own uses.

The **difficulties** of this arrangement are

1. We do not have control of 85% of our budget which goes for salary and benefits.
2. Our financial year begins May 1 when we begin collecting dues. For 5C the financial year is from July1 to June 30. Therefore two sets of books are needed.
3. Under the new computer system, Betsy gets a spread sheet for all of 5C Inc, and needs to convert that sheet into a budget statement for LIR alone. She now has a tab which will allow her to do this more easily.
4. We can't really see how we are doing for the year until the money from the Winter programs is reported in the spring.

5. The fringe benefits for Liz are more than for last year, so we may have to adjust the budget accordingly.

Our current policy for budget matters is that if a committee wants to spend more than \$100, they must let the treasurer know. Next year we may have to consider raising dues to pay for changes in the employee retirement account.

Scholarships for assisting members are listed under “gifts.” This is an in-and-out category, not a regular budget amount.. We now have 250 paid members: 20 are associates and 19 are “trial.” Usually we have about 270 members so this is down a bit.

Committee Reports:

Curriculum: The committee now has 25 proposals for new seminars for the spring. The deadline for proposals was changed since the committee chair had to be out of town. | In the future, if more than 25 proposals are submitted, the committee needs to sort out priorities to get a balanced program.

Great Decisions: From the members’ survey, the committee has selected five topics: Islamic Awakening, China’s Foreign Policy, Turkey, Energy Independence, and Food and Climate. Committee members are now looking for speakers on these topics.

Special Programs: (see written report) Sara Wright asked the Council to approve Ina Luadtke as the new co-chair to replace Sara Wright who has served beyond her appointed term. The Council approved.

The committee is looking for new members and new volunteers to coordinate the non-LIR events announcements and the opera prep. The new program “Write Your Own Obituary” will be advertized by Lise and John Armstrong.

Winter/Summer: The programs are still in flux. Catalogue copy will be ready for the preview.

Preview: Jim reported that arrangements with MHC are going forward. The room rent has increased, but the food will be less. More handicapped parking spaces will be set aside; instructions will be sent out to members. Joan Wofford is doing publicity. There has been discussion about having a smaller but bolder ad.

Remember that the Preview will be on Saturday Nov. 23, not Sunday.

Member Services: Henny talked to her committee about taking over the organization of the fall picnic. They agreed to try it since details have already been worked out with Gail Gaustad. The budget for this event will need to be sorted out more clearly since traditionally profits from Winter/Summer programs have paid for it. A regular budget amount is needed to provide the \$500 for tent, chairs, and table rental. Sept. 16 (17) will be the date for next year.

Since this is our 25th anniversary year and Sheila is planning a special event, the committee agreed to drop the spring luncheon and concentrate on the anniversary celebration.

Office Manager: Although Great Decisions would like to apply for a grant to help with the expenses of the program, they cannot do it this year. We must apply for grants through 5CInc. since we are under their umbrella.

Liz continues to look for spaces for holding our seminars.

Old Business:

Naomi Yanis recounted a history of our scholarship program which has gone through several phases. When LIR started, some potential members found that they could not afford to pay full dues. An informal process started in which those who could afford it donated money to help those who could not. The policy evolved into a way for those whose income was under a certain limit to pay half the dues. But currently, for some, even half is too much. In her letter to Council Naomi had asked if we could use money from a recent \$10,000 bequest to fund some full scholarships.

Jim Harvey explained that this money has already been allocated to the Future Fund so that we can build a capital base whose income can then be used to fund things like scholarships. Perhaps we could expand the present system.

Henny suggested that we stress bequests which people could put in their wills.

Betsy reported that the scholarship fund, which is now one of our three accounts, has extra money since the Gettysburg trip group donated \$600 to the fund. We can put an announcement in the newsletter alerting members to the possibility of increased giving.

One problem with donations is that we cannot take credit cards since we do not have a system for processing them.

Several people suggested that we need to get out the word that scholarships are available—through senior centers, social workers, seminars, and word of mouth.

We now have associate memberships that allow members to go on trips and participate in events, but right now that policy makes associate memberships available only to those who have been full members in the past.

Betsy suggested that we need a “softer” process for evaluating need. We don’t want people applying for scholarships to feel demeaned.

After much discussion, it was agreed that we need a task force to make anything happen. We need to consider transportation as well as scholarships. PVRTA does honor our card in giving free rides.

Naomi agreed to head up a task force to work out the details of making our economic base broader. **A motion to create such a task force passed unanimously.**

25th Anniversary Celebration:

Sheila Klem has agreed to organize our anniversary celebration. She presented an idea of a gala dinner, beginning at around 5 or 6 for cocktails. It could be scheduled when the light has come back for those who do not like to drive at night. Hadley Farms Meeting House is a new possible venue. It is next to the Hampton Inn and so has ample ground-level parking. We could charge \$25 for 25 years, but to get decent food we may need to go as high as \$35. The caterer would be Log Cabin Catering. It is \$400 rent for the facility with a \$200 deposit. We would have the option of a sit down dinner or a buffet. A cash bar would be included.

Jim suggested that for such a special occasion, which is beyond our budget, we could justifiably dip into our reserves. This would be a one-off event. We could also solicit gifts or run other money-making schemes. Spouses and important others would be included.

Sheila wants to meet with the 16 past presidents to gain ideas about our history and an appropriate program. Sara Wright has historical material. We could use such an event to get publicity for the organization.

The sense of the meeting was that it is worth pursuing this venue.

Naomi suggested that for this special year we could bring back interesting encore presentations that are still relevant. These could be additional events during the year.

Reminder: A Memorial for Elaine Barkin will be held at 1:30 on Sunday, November 24 at the former faculty Club at Smith.

Next month's meeting will be on **November 14**. We will look at revisions for the Operating Manual which will be sent out ahead of time.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Peck, Secretary