

**FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 19.2014**

The regular but postponed meeting of the Council was held at the Five College Office, Spring St., Amherst, from 10:30 am to 12:45 pm.

Present Council: Susan Beer, Dorothy Gilbert, Michael Greenebaum, Jim Harvey, Chris Hurn, Carol Jolly, Betsy Loughran, Ellen Peck, Jim Perot, Dean Poli, Jim Scott, Zina Tiltona, Gordon Wyse

Absent Council: Paul Berman, Fran Volkmann

Present Committees/other: Liz Tiley, Marybeth Bridegam, Joan Wofford, Sheila Klem, Chuck Gillies, Hy Edelstein

Minutes: the minutes from December 2013 were accepted as presented.

Treasurer: Betsy reported that the finance committee met to discuss this year's and next year's budgets. We are running a small deficit this year. The expenses for the 25th anniversary celebration and its special activities will be taken out of our reserves since these are one-time expenses. For next year we have two choices—raise the dues or run a larger deficit. The finance committee favors a dues increase since we have not had one for several years. Next year's budget will be discussed at the March and April Council meetings and presented to the entire membership at the April preview.

The number of members we have affects our dues. Right now we have 281 full members. Each year we need 20 new members just to stay even. We have 13 associate members. Right now we have 45 trial members; many of these may switch to full membership.

Office Manager: Liz has found a program which will let members pay by the month or quarterly. This may help if we increase the dues. People can register on the web site and set up for the kind of payments. If we use Pay Pal, there will be a transaction charge of 2.5% for non-profits. One of the questions related to partial payments is how we would handle the situation if someone dropped out part way through the year.

Liz alerted us to the role Nancy Eckhart plays in arranging our meeting schedules and the refreshments that go with it. We need to make her feel appreciated for what she does.

The LIR office will move to Neilson Library, hopefully sometime in March. The biggest problem will be the parking. We can host several open houses to acquaint people with the new space and the parking possibilities.

Jim Perot reminded us that there are now several movie screens and other bits of equipment stored in the back room of our present office. Do we really use all of these things? If not, can we offer them to members? In the next newsletter there will be a list of the stuff so that members can decide who wants them.

Liz noted that keeping announcements and mailing lists up to date is difficult. She is going to put a bulletin board for announcements up on the web site since that can cut down on mailings and can be updated more easily.

Committee Reports: Winter/Summer—Marybeth described the summer trip proposed for June 9-11. It will include two nights in Burlington, Vt., with visits to a cheese factory, Ben and Jerry's, the Shelburne Museums, and Fort Ticonderoga. In all, eight activities are planned for the summer—the overnight to Vermont, two theater performances, Tanglewood with two house museums, the de Cordova Museum in Boston, the Russian Icon museum in Clinton, a Connecticut River boat trip, and a visit to the Applewood Arboritum. All of these will be listed in the Preview Catalogue

Marybeth also reported for **the Curriculum Committee** (see revised written report). The registration for the Spring is now 232 with 13 associates and 45 trial members. Those registered for seminars: 201 registered for places, with 121 taking one seminar, 75 taking two, 14 taking three, and one taking four. Eighteen seminars are offered; five were cancelled for lack of registrants and health reasons.

For next fall it is possible to find more than 25 venues. The deadline for new proposals is April first. Mention in seminars that we are now open for new proposals. This time eleven seminars were lotteried. Betsy suggested that after the lottery it might help to tell people which seminars are still available. Liz does notify moderators of seminars that have waiting lists; seminars with open places are also listed on the web site. One of the determining factors for registrations is place and accessibility. Perhaps a special note can be added to the catalogue showing which venues are really accessible.

At the committee meeting there was a proposal to change the wording in the Operations Manual for appendix E. (see separate sheet for the 2/18/14 version) The wording of the **Guidelines for Participants** has been changed to reflect more flexibility. The Special Status category will be eliminated. These changes will need a special announcement and a reminder that the whole manual can be found on the web site under the heading “documents.” After a motion to accept the new wording, there was more discussion about the continual need to train moderators to be more flexible. This can happen at the regular moderators’ workshops and when proposals are made. **The motion to accept the new wording was accepted unanimously.**

Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration: Chuck Gillies and Hy Edelstein have been working on a statistical update of “Who Are We?” They need \$263 for printing 300 copies of a four-page colored booklet. These will be given to members, Five Colleges, and libraries for publicity. We can update this every five years or so. If we get a new color printer, we may be able to print additional copies ourselves. Surveys can now be done on-line. **It was moved and accepted unanimously that we allow this printing cost.**

Publicity Committee: Joan Wofford passed out our old brochure which has to be upgraded since we will have a new address. Some of the images are also outdated. Can we ask 5 Colleges Inc. to share the cost of printing a new one? Joan asked the Council to look at the brochure and to offer any suggestions about wording. We were started as an “academic” institution, but over the years we have expanded our offerings with special programs and the

Great Decisions series. Our publicity needs to reflect this balance while affirming our history. Nina Scott's articles have recently helped give us publicity. The Great Decisions Committee has recently put an ad for Great Decisions into the trailers for the Amherst Cinema.

25th Anniversary Celebration: Sheila reminded us that the celebration will be on April 23 at the Hadley Farms Meeting House which is part of the Hampton Inn at the junction of Bay Road and Rt. 9. This is as close to The Bridge as we can get! Food per person will cost \$33 with a cash bar. There was much discussion about how much we should charge for the tickets. If we go to \$35 we will cover expenses but may price out some people. If we go to \$25, our treasury will have to subsidize the rest of the cost. Finally, the consensus was that we should charge \$25 but allow some who wish to be patrons to pay more. We will have to decide whether to call them patrons or sponsors, whether to have several levels of giving, and whether to print names of givers in the program. Several people thought establishing the precedent of giving to the organization was a good idea. Neal from 5C and our past office managers would be invited guests with free dinners. **The final motion which carried by a majority was to charge \$25 with the options for giving as a sponsor.**

Road Scholar Conference: At a pre-arranged time, the Council participated in a conference phone call with Steve Lembke of Road Scholar. Their organization is holding a New England regional conference from June 1 to 3 at the U.Mass hotel. They will have speakers and panels and workshops on the general topic of "Learning and Social Engagement." They would like our LIR group to act as a welcoming committee—welcoming the participants to Amherst and perhaps telling them about our group which is a unique model of peer learning. There would be no labor or financial commitment from us. They would send us a written memorandum of understanding about our role in the conference. Individual members of our group might like to volunteer for panels or workshops. This might be good publicity for our group. Since there are 75 groups in New England, Road Scholar expects about 150 people.

After the phone call, we discussed what we should do. With one abstention, we agreed to participate as a welcoming committee provided we got a written agreement about what was involved. There was a question about free registration for those helping. Carol agreed to reply after the meeting. (see later letter)

Using retirement community facilities: Joan Wofford who is a resident of Lathrop, Northampton, brought up a problem that has been increasing lately. LIR began by using facilities at the five colleges. Recently more and more of our activities have been at the local retirement communities. Do we need a change of policy about inviting residents of these communities to our special programs which are held there? **There was a motion that we open our special programs to the residents of the communities where they are being held. The motion was carried unanimously.**

Reminder: Carol asked that all committee chairs notify the office when meetings are being held so that Liz can place them on the web calendar. Recently, we ran into problems when meetings had to be rescheduled due to snow.

Carol announced that Jim Perot has agreed to serve as chair of the Nominating Committee which includes Gordon Wyse, Fran Volkmann, Diane Liebert and Lise Armstrong; they are now working to identify officer candidates.

The next Council Meeting, if there is no snow, will be on Thursday, March 13 at 2:15.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Peck, Secretary