

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING****MARCH 13, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Council was held at the Five College Office, Spring St, Amherst, from 2:15 to 4:00 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 Tillona, Fran Volkmann, Gordon Wyse

Absent Council: Paul Berman

Present Committees/Other: Ina Luadtke, Marybeth Bridegam, Henny Lewin, Liz Tiley, Joan Wofford

Introduction: Ina Luadtke was introduced to the Council as the new co-chair of Special Programs.

Minutes: The minutes of Feb. 19 were approved with the addendum which was sent out to all.

Preview: Jim Harvey reported that the Preview is all set with Smith College for April 27. There will be less food than last year since we have a smaller budget and food was left over the last time.

Treasurer: (see draft budget document which is considered part of the minutes.) Betsy explained that she is still sorting out our fiscal year from that of 5CInc. We will end our year with a small deficit. The 25th anniversary dinner will be taken out of our reserves since it is a one-shot occurrence, but it will be listed as part of the budget for accounting purposes.

Along with the finance committee, she has agreed that our main financial operating principle should be **that the operating budget needs to break even each year.** It is a bad idea for any organization to run deficits year after year. One-time expenses are an exception. In accordance with this principle, the finance committee has recommended a dues increase to \$250 for next year. This will be pro-rated for other than full membership categories. Our dues have not been raised for four years. In checking our past history, Betsy found that in 1989 when we began, the dues were \$150. Over the years our dues increases have been less than inflation (which would have made dues \$295 by now).

Marybeth informed us that other LIR groups, like the one in the Berkshires, pay separately for each event. For those on financial aid, it is usually one half the regular dues which is our policy now.

The finance committee recommended that in future years we might be better raising dues more often by smaller amounts than waiting several years to make a large jump.

Installment payments will now be possible with Pay Pal. We have put \$120 in the budget to pay for the Pay Pal transactions. If our enrollment increases, this will increase

our revenue, but this budget plans for the numbers we have now. The graph prepared by Chuck Gilles shows that our membership is down a bit this year.

Jim Harvey moved that we accept the rise in dues to \$250. This motion was seconded by Gordon Wyse. The vote to accept it was unanimous.

In looking at the rest of the budget, Betsy has asked the chairs of the various committees to confirm the budget amounts given to them as line items. If the committee needs more, the chair must call Betsy to let her know of the additional expense. Each committee will be responsible for its own line item. Changes in the way the budget is written include moving the cost for the opening picnic tent to the Membership Services Committee. Winter/Summer and Great Decisions often have surpluses. The Council needs to decide how to deal with such surpluses. The category of postage has been increased to \$1000 since costs in this area have increased.

Other items in the discussion of the budget:

- We need to keep clarifying who is responsible for what.
- Our fiscal year must be from May 1 to April 30 of the next year since we get most of our income in May and June; we must prepare a budget beginning with income. Five Colleges has a fiscal year of June 30-July 1, so we must adjust our reporting when using their figures.

Zina moved and Jim Harvey seconded **a motion that we accept the 2015 budget as presented.** The motion was passed unanimously with much thanks to Betsy and the Finance Committee.

Office Manager's Report: (see written report for details) Liz informed us that the new office in Neilson Library is being painted. There are new cabinets and files as well as a closet for technical equipment and extra shelves. We may have a few cabinets left to give away.

Parking permits will be available for those staying more than two hours. Visitors' spaces can be used for under two hours. Handicapped spaces are next to Neilson. Only Liz has keys for the office. Volunteers must ask the library staff to let them in. There will be signs and a map at the library desk showing how to get to the LIR office. Maps of the parking options will be sent out to LIR members.

For our anniversary party, Neil Abramson cannot come but Callie and her husband can. We now have 18 members signed up so far. Ten have contributed more than the \$25 and one person even contributed \$500, so we are in good shape financially.

Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee: Jim Perot passed out a written report listing the new slate of officers for 2014-5.

President—Michael Greenebaum

Vice President—Sheila Klem

Secretary—Ellen Peck

Treasurer—Betsy Loughran

Assistant Treasurer—Susan Beer

Member Services: Henny Lewin reported that the new member coffee was a success with 32 people attending. The committee had called all new members to invite them. There are pictures of this event in the March newsletter.

Henny is also working to get a vocal group called the Green Street Brew to sing for our gala dinner. Members of the Council suggested that a performance be limited to 20 minutes.

Great Decisions: Fran showed us the new brochure which has been sent out. All the speakers are lined up for this series. Coffee will again be served with a small contribution collected. Hopefully, this will keep people there for the discussion. March 28 will be the first presentation on the topic “Food and Climate.”

Special Programs: Ina proposed two new members for the committee—Bev Von Kries and Robert Erwin. They will serve for three year terms. It was moved, seconded and approved that we accept these two new members. There are now eleven special programs. A new event on May 21 from 2 to 4 in Lathrop, Northampton, is a Valley Poets Afternoon. Anyone who has a poem can come and read.

25th Anniversary Celebration: All five college presidents have been invited. Several people wondered if we could have a running picture show. Jim Perot said he would check on the equipment to do this. Zina warned that we be careful of background noise during dinner since this a good occasion for conversations can be drowned out by music or other noises.

Old Business:

Carol reported that the memorandum of understanding had been signed with the Road Scholar Conference. Eight people have already volunteered to be on the welcoming committee. Sandy Belden is on the Road Scholar Board.

There was discussion about how we should present our peer led program since it is different from most of the other LIR groups.

- We could present a panel on our structure.
- We could have a hand-out about our program.
- Our catalogue could be available for those interested.
- We could have our new brochure ready by June 1-3.
- We could make a shorten version of our catalogue.
- People wishing to attend will be charged \$75 without room and board. We get one free admission.

Publicity: Joan needs more suggestions for the brochure. We will need to change our address at least but more could be added.

New Business: Memo on relations of LIR and the Retirement communities (see written memo)

Joan Wofford called to our attention how much we are using the facilities of the various retirement communities in our area, particularly Lathrop, Northampton. Of our 18 seminars this term, only 7 are being held at the colleges. When we began, most of our seminars and programs were held at the colleges, but now space is at a premium in many colleges and parking has become a problem, especially when members have to walk a long way. The facilities in the retirement communities are often more comfortable and provide better parking. But as our use increases, we need to think about our relations with the residents of these communities.

- Should we give a donation to the residents' association to compensate for our use?
- Should we compensate the staff of residences for extra work in putting up chairs, tables, etc.?
- Should we invite residents to programs other than seminars as we are starting to do at Lathrop and Applewood?
- Could we try to scale back our use of the communities, especially for one-shot events?
- Could we ask the college presidents for more space?
- Could we alert members via the newsletter and a special email that we need be courteous citizens when using the community facilities, especially being careful not to park on the grass at Lathrop?
- Could we write a special invitation to all the residents of the various communities, welcoming them to the Great Decisions programs?

Gordon moved that we pay \$100 to Lathrop, Northampton, residents' associations and that the president appoint an ad hoc committee to explore our relationship with these places.

The motion was carried unanimously.

After the meeting ended, Carol appointed an ad hoc committee chaired by Joan Wofford and including Michael Greenebaum and Dorothy Rosenthal to explore further the issues concerned with the retirement communities.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2014

Ellen Peck, Secretary