

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

May 11, 2017

Five College Office, 97 Spring St., Amherst, MA

(Final draft - distributed June 5, 2017)

Council Members Present: Gordon Wyse (President), Marybeth Bridegam (Vice President), Sheila Klem (Past President), Kathy Campbell (Treasurer), Mike Brooks (Secretary), Jim Averill, Joanne Creighton, Jake Greenburg, Ann Hartman, Jonathan Jay, Terry Rosenfeld, Tyll van Geel

Committee Chairs and Others Present: Gail Gaustad, Chuck Gillies, Kay Klausewitz, Peter Reitt, Nina Scott, Sara Wright, Tisha Ferguson (Office Manager)

Council Members Absent: Chris Hurn, Bobbie Reitt

The meeting was called to order by President Gordon Wyse at 2:17 p.m.

Minutes of the April 13 Council meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Officers' Reports:

President

Gordon reported that the annual membership social event, held April 19 at the Hadley Meeting House, went very well. The Member Services and Development Committees were thanked for their roles in making it a successful event. The Annual Meeting and Preview, held at the Smith Campus Center on May 7, also proceeded smoothly. Registrations for fall and summer programs are already being received. (May 30 is the deadline for the summer programs.)

Gordon, Kathy, and Larry Ambs met recently with Neal Abraham to discuss several aspects of LIR's relationship to Five College Inc. financial procedures.

Gordon suggested that a bylaws change be made next year to establish a reading committee to review the minutes of the Annual Meeting. As currently handled, they are voted upon a year later and few people have had an opportunity to read them.

Past President

Sheila thanked the Curriculum Committee and Tisha Ferguson for their roles in making the Preview so successful.

Chuck Gillies noted the obituary, in today's Daily Hampshire Gazette, of Eleanor Reid, a long-time member who died recently at the age of 95. She was originally our second Office Manager, then joined the organization and ultimately became its sixth president. LIR was mentioned in her obituary, and listed (among others) as an appropriate recipient of donations in her memory.

Treasurer

Prior to the meeting, Kathy emailed information to us regarding the balances in our four accounts. The differing fiscal years employed by Five Colleges Inc. (July 1-June 30) and LIR (May 1-April 30) were discussed. A previous LIR treasurer had preferred the latter because of its relationship to our program year, but Kathy said her work would be simplified somewhat if the two fiscal years were aligned. Gordon asked the Finance Committee to examine this matter, and to bring a recommendation to Council if appropriate.

LIR's Investment Fund is our only interest-bearing account, and we pay a fee for its management. Consistent with Council decisions, we have been transferring Campaign for the Future funds to the Investment Fund in increments; an additional \$50,000 will be transferred at the end of June.

Old Business:

Comments and suggestions were solicited regarding the May 7 Annual Meeting and Preview. Tyll noted that the seminar and workshop tables had been organized by day rather than alphabetically, and felt this worked well. Sara applauded the use of a screen, complete with helpful graphics. Tisha said that approximately 140 members picked up their packets, and about 65 unlabeled packets were picked up by guests.

Mike reported that three versions of the Operations Manual had been emailed to Council members and committee chairs a week or so earlier: the original, unedited version; one showing red-line edits; and the edited version without the red lines. He also noted, however, that some additional changes and corrections had been submitted as recently as the previous evening, and that some formatting problems remain to be resolved (related particularly to excessive blank spaces and pagination). He therefore suggested that (1) those who have not yet reviewed it should do so, and submit their comments as soon as possible; (2) he will work with Tisha on resolving the format issues; and (3) he will send out a final, cleaned-up version prior to the June 8 Council meeting.

Sara has been concerned with ensuring continuity in the manner in which new items are inserted into the Manual, and she asked those present to review her new text in this regard (approximately pages 8, 9, and especially 30).

Gordon asked if there are any new committee chairs or members. Kay said that the Special Programs Committee is in flux; Ilene Rosenfeld will become the new chair next year. New leadership for the Encore program must be found as well. Other committees: Joan Davis has joined the Public Relations Committee, and Jim Perot has returned to the Tech Committee.

New Business:

Gordon introduced a major issue: how we want to utilize the income from our "quasi-endowment"--approximately \$8000 per year at present. Extensive discussion ensued. One benefit will be that of keeping dues at their current level. Terry asked if committees can make recommendations for using the funds; the answer is yes. Gail asked if we could continue to use these funds for LIR's April social event. No definitive answer was given, but the general response was positive. Marybeth noted that the Survey Committee had asked committees to suggest survey topics, and that one emerging theme has been an interest in more opportunities for socializing. The Curriculum Committee was invited to suggest ways in which seminars might include larger socialization components (though we should be

careful not to dictate specific activities for all seminars). Sheila noted that we've had numerous social events in recent years--restaurant dinners, brunches at members' homes, etc.--and that they need not be costly. Tyll asked whether some of the money could be used to create a pot available to members who submit proposals requiring some extra funding? The answer: yes.

Tisha pointed out that we have been growing recently, and are close to being "maxed out" on venues. She suggested a need to re-examine our structure to determine how many seminars and workshops we can offer, how many people we can accommodate, etc. Rents may increase in the future, and we might need to use some of our funds for seminar venues. Chuck responded that we have always resisted any thought of capping our membership; when we need new places, we seem to be able to find them. The search for new spaces imposes a heavy workload on our Office Manager, however. Chuck said this was one of our motives in providing funds for an Intern. Sheila said that we should all be on the lookout for new meeting spaces. She has identified some recently (e.g., the new Retirement Center at Village Hill). Jake said we should consider the area's various senior centers. Tisha reminded us that we need to match facilities with the timing of our seminars; ten weeks is sometimes longer than an outside organization is willing to accommodate us. Joanne suggested that for some activities, meeting at members' homes is a workable option (e.g. book groups); Marybeth responded that we need to be careful in this regard because of liability laws. Sheila said that we should urge the five colleges to provide additional space. Chuck noted that the new Five College building in Hatfield will have space, but we don't yet know whether we will be charged for it when we use it. Terry: what about the new South Hadley Library? Tisha: we're looking into it.

Marybeth: the Northampton Senior Center wants visitors to sign in, since a higher volume increases their level of financial support. Could we perhaps investigate whether they have days with minimal use and would therefore welcome our presence? Tyll asked whether we might consider evening programs. Answer: our members have tended to shy away from these in the past.

Committee Reports:

Curriculum. The Committee is pleased with its line-up of summer short seminars, with one each in science, the arts, and literature.

Development. Campaign figures are unchanged from the previous month. The Committee is "retiring" at the end of the year, but is still working on a Legacy Campaign. A brochure describing this program is nearing completion.

Great Decisions. Jake reported positive results from this year's series. Attendance averaged 75-80, about the same as last year. Feedback sheets are still being reviewed, and most speakers appear to have been well received. The speaker whose presentation was cancelled due to a "non-weather event" was sent an Atkins Farms basket, plus a check for the contracted amount (\$250); he has graciously said that he will return the check. The Great Decisions budget is ending about \$1000 in the black. Jake plans to co-chair for one more year, and is working on identifying a new co-chair. Jake received a round of applause for his fine work with this year's series.

Member Services.

Gail reported that about 85 people attended the April social event. The speaker was informative and entertaining. The Committee's next task is to plan the members picnic scheduled for September.

Public Relations.

Nina noted that two announcements of the Preview were published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette. Channel 22 was contacted, but had other priorities on that day. The Tasting Circle had a reunion recently; numerous recipes were swapped. Our relationships with the Daily Hampshire Gazette and Hampshire Life continue to be very good.

Special Programs.

Kay noted that the Committee had 1 1/2 tables at the Preview, focusing on Photography and Salon Music. New chairs are being sought for the Encore program and for Opera; Peg Bedell has handled the latter for 16 years, and is ready to hand it off to someone else.

Technology. Pete reported that the wireless microphone that we've been using for 17 years in the Great Decisions program has finally died, and has been replaced. The Committee will soon announce a program of one-on-one technical assistance to our members. Several people have signed up to provide this assistance.

Office Manager:

Tisha reported that we now have 307 members. She'll be emailing us soon regarding how we should communicate with her during the upcoming office move. We have a cabinet-full of old technology equipment; anybody who might have an interest in any of it should make an appointment with her. Once the move is over, Tisha plans to examine and redo many of our printed materials. Finally, the new lottery program appears to be in good shape.

Gordon said that he would not be here next month due to anticipated travels, so he passed the Council gavel to Marybeth, who will run the June meeting.

In appreciation for Gordon's excellent service as our president for the past year, Marybeth presented him with a gift card to a local restaurant, accompanied by an enthusiastic round of applause.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Mike Brooks, Secretary
May 15, 2017