

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

September 14, 2017

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

(First draft - for review and comment)

Council Members Present: Marybeth Bridegam (President), Mike Brooks (Vice President), Gordon Wyse (Past President), Kathy Campbell (Treasurer), Chuck Aulino (Assistant Treasurer), Joanne Creighton, Pam Daniels, Jake Greenburg, Ann Hartman, Chris Hurn, Jonathan Jay, Barbara Reitt

Committee Chairs and Others Present: Gail Gaustad, Nina Scott, Miriam Whitney, Sara Wright, Tisha Ferguson (Office Manager)

Council Members Absent: Cynthia Barker, Terry Rosenfeld, Jay Russell

The meeting was called to order by President Marybeth Bridegam at 2:15 p.m.

Minutes of the August 10 Council meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Officers' Reports:

President

Marybeth described as "excellent" the Event Planning session conducted by Tisha Ferguson at Smith on the previous Monday, and suggested that all in attendance should review Tisha's checklist.

We have been reminded by Five Colleges Inc. personnel that we are subject to their insurance policy, and that we are insured only for events held in public places; events held in private homes and involving the use of private cars are not covered. We cannot advertise that we will attend events by carpooling, though it is permissible to distribute lists of attendees and let them arrange their own car transportation. Miriam noted that some of our seminars are currently held in members' homes, and that 5CI's liability concerns could conceivably eliminate an entire category of seminars. It was suggested that we

might use "location TBA" as a way around this problem, but Jonathan warned against locating seminars "on the sly." Tisha urged that we search for locations that meet 5CI's criteria; cooking courses, for example, might seek locations with kitchens.

Marybeth encouraged those in seminars to take photos for inclusion in our Newsletter, and to provide anecdotes. Tisha has arranged for our intern to take some "staged" photos.

Council members were urged to wear their nametags at the member picnic scheduled for September 19, and should mark their nametags to indicate their Council membership.

September 25 is the deadline for proposals for spring semester seminars. This date is somewhat earlier than usual.

Past President

Gordon echoed Marybeth's praise for the Event Planning session held the previous Monday.

Treasurer

Kathy presented an overview of LIR's budgeting process (see Attachment A, "Budget 101"). The Finance Committee will be asking committee chairs and officers to identify "what's working for them and what isn't."

Brief discussion ensued regarding whether seminars should have budgets. At present they do not. Miriam noted an Operations Manual item stating that moderators can ask participants to contribute \$2 toward expenses (copying, etc.). Do we want to revisit this? Marybeth urged those present to think about this matter and offer their comments.

Committee Reports:

Curriculum Committee:

The Committee's report was emailed to Council members prior to the meeting. Miriam noted that 18 proposals have been received thus far, with

one additional proposal "in the pipeline"; four or five more are needed. Thus far there is a heavy emphasis on history topics. One "Writing to Remember" moderator is looking for a co-moderator for a spring seminar. Chris Hurn asked whether people could submit partial proposals in order to meet the September 25 deadline; Miriam identified the critical pieces of information that would be needed in order for a proposal to be considered.

Great Decisions:

Jake reported that the Northampton Senior Center has been lined up for five Fridays, April 6 through May 4. The Foreign Policy Association has distributed materials regarding eight potential topics; our members will be surveyed regarding their top five choices. Once the topics have been selected, the search for appropriate speakers will begin.

Member Services:

Gail reminded us of the Member Picnic scheduled for Tuesday, September 19, with the following day as a "rain date." Unfortunately, the current forecast calls for rain on both days, so there may be a problem. If rain indeed forces a cancellation, Tisha will notify the membership to that effect.

The annual New Member Coffee will be held at Northampton Lathrop on February 15. An additional social event will be planned in the future.

Public Relations/Publicity:

Nina reported that she and Katy Van Geel have obtained the Gazette's willingness to publish four articles on the Don Quixote seminar. The Ancient Grains seminar will be covered as well.

On September 13 Nina spoke at a meeting of UMass retired faculty, describing our program to an audience of 45-50 people. It went well.

Summer/Winter:

The Committee held its winter planning meeting on September 8. Mary Franks has agreed to serve as co-chair with Nancy. The preliminary schedule for winter programs includes the following:

- (1) Memorial Service, to be organized by Gordon Wyse and held on January 4, 2018;
- (2) Rock Voices Concert, to be organized by Nancy Denig and held at the Academy of Music on January 13, 2018, at 7 p.m.;
- (3) Hampshire Gazette Tour, to be organized by Bob Barker in consultation with Nina Scott, and tentatively scheduled for January 16, 2018;
- (4) Winter Farming, a presentation and field trip to be organized by Mary Franks, date TBA;
- (5) Legislators' Forum, to be organized by Nancy Denig and held at Forbes Library, tentatively scheduled for February 2, 2018; and
- (6) Old Deerfield--a visit to the Flynt Center for Early New England Life, to be organized by Karen Tatro, date TBA.

Other possibilities discussed for future visits included the geological museum at Amherst College, a Chester Theatre performance, dance at Jacob's Pillow, and the Springfield Quadrangle museums.

Technology:

Marybeth noted that we still have a Technology Committee, but are in need of someone to serve as its chair. Some of its members, moreover, would like to "step back" and be replaced. Names of potential members are urgently requested.

Office Manager:

Progress is being made on a new LIR brochure, and on a brochure for our proposed legacy program.

Event planning resources are available on the website; this includes a form that should be filled out early in the process of planning any new event or activity.

Should we post Council minutes on our website? This question should be resolved soon.

Tisha suggested that we should have a Facebook page. Doing this, however, will require a group of people willing to monitor it on a daily basis. We may

need a committee to look into this. Jonathan asked how people would know that we're on Facebook? Tisha responded that Facebook has "algorithms" that would enable us to promote our presence. Marybeth said that we will pursue this at a later meeting

The parking situation at our new office is not good; there are an insufficient number of spaces for the number of offices. Visitors should plan accordingly.

Miriam re-raised the liability issue, concerned because we have seminars about to begin that might be in violation of the recently-articulated policy. Chuck asked whether individual home owners' policies might be adequate to resolve the matter; no definitive answer was provided, and more information will be sought.

Old business:

Mike noted that the most recent version of the revised Operations Manual was emailed to Council members about a week in advance of the meeting. **Joanne moved that the Operations Manual be approved as revised; the motion was seconded.** Miriam distributed some additional changes requested by the Curriculum Committee. **Kathy moved that we amend the Operations Manual as proposed by the Curriculum Committee; the motion was seconded, and passed unanimously. Joanne's original motion then passed unanimously.**

Marybeth then demonstrated use of a sample audio system sent to us by the Vox Company (which provides similar products for the Road Scholar program). Its purpose would be to improve seminar and event experiences for those of our members who have hearing difficulties. A number of questions regarding the system's logistics were raised and discussed. The major issue appears to be their use during periods of discussion, since passing the equipment around could be quite cumbersome. The general consensus was that we should create a committee to examine all aspects of this matter, including the collection of more information about the facilities we most often use for our programs, the appropriate distribution of costs, etc. Chris Hurn and Sara Wright volunteered to be on the committee, and Terry and Ilene Rosenfeld have expressed interest in participating. Chuck Gillies will be contacted as well. The Curriculum Committee should be represented.

Chuck Aulino suggested that we acquire a limited number of systems-- perhaps two--and experiment with them. **Gordon moved that we acquire two sets; the motion was seconded.** Kathy suggested that we acquire only one set, since we'll be doing this as a pilot program. **Gordon accepted this suggestion as a "friendly amendment," and his motion was passed unanimously. Bobbie moved that Marybeth ask the Rosenfelds to chair and assemble a committee to examine the issue. The motion was seconded, and passed unanimously.** They will be given the names of those who have volunteered, along with a charge for the work of their committee. Marybeth will be involved in additional appointments to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Mike Brooks
Substitute Secretary

Attachment A:

Budget 101

What is a budget?

1. A planning tool: a document that lays out anticipated sources of income and categories of expense with best guesses (upper limits?) as to what these will amount to in the coming year.
2. A policy document, specifying how Council wants to allocate LIR resources.

What is Council's role?

1. Council and others such as Committee Chairs provide input during budget preparation by the Finance Committee.
2. Council must approve the proposed budget (usually in March), which is then placed before the annual meeting.
3. Council sometimes approves additional categories of expense or significant changes to budget during the year.

In practice, this happens *post facto*, if at all.

Sources of income (FY 2018 budget)

Dues

Gifts

Program fees

Expense categories (FY 2018 budget)

Personnel (mostly office manager; also intern; should this cover contractors?)

Programs: program expenses should be roughly in balance with program fees

Line items for regular LIR events:

Fall social event (picnic) *currently budgeted under Member Services*

Committee

Previews (2)

Memorial Event

Office expenses

Copying

Catalog

Newsletter

Postage & phone

Supplies (consumables)

Equipment (durables) *needed*

"Web" (fees for services such as Jotforms, Paypal, Constant Contact)

Committee operations

Miscellaneous

Publicity

Space rental

Currently this line item includes space rental for seminars and programs, but space for events is budgeted as part of the event

President's discretionary fund

Membership rebates

Issues for Council

Questions that have come before Council since 2018 budget was adopted:

1. We approved a special event in October. We did not specify a budget for that event. Who should have requested a budget, and when?
2. Do we want to add a catered spring social event to our regular events calendar? We have enough experience to estimate its cost at this point.

New budget categories:

Should we have a budget category for seminar expenses such as photocopying or supplies for workshops? Should it cover something like a field trip? How should it be administered?

We do not have, but we probably need, a policy on when supplementary budget requests should be presented, and to whom:

- Any time budget is going to be exceeded by any amount? (Implies budgeted amounts are upper limits.)
- When the budget is exceeded by 10% or more? (More consistent with budgeted amounts being "best guesses".)
- To the whole Council? to the Executive Committee? to the President only?

Should committees have budgets? or should expenses that they oversee or propose, like the fall picnic or the purchase of paid advertising, be budgeted elsewhere? Should general LIR publicity be budgeted as an "office expense", while publicity for a special event is budgeted as part of that event?