

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

February 14, 2019

The Council met at the Applewood Retirement Community in Amherst because Internet service was out at Amherst College, including at the Five Colleges, Inc. offices.

Council members present: Ellen Kosmer (President), Jake Greenburg (Vice President), Gordon Wyse (Past President) Kathy Campbell (Treasurer), Cynthia Barker (Secretary), Jay Russell, Margaret Russell, Bob Cohen, Jonathan Jay, Linda Honan, Kip Fonsh, Rick Parrish and Gene Fisher. Absent: Terry Rosenfeld and Christopher Hurn.

Ellen Kosmer called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

The Council accepted the minutes, as written, of the December 13, 2018 meeting.

Officers' Reports

President. After thanking Applewood for allowing the Council to use the meeting room and setting it up for the Council, at late notice, Ellen suggested that committee chairmen meet with the Executive Committee for an hour or so before the next Council meeting to facilitate communication and discuss any issues the committee chairs would like to raise.

Vice President. Jake said he would wait to give his report when old business came up on the agenda.

Past President. The memorial service for late LIR members on January 3 went well, Gordon reported, but to his regret no refreshments were available because, unbeknownst to him, that aspect of the room reservation at Amherst College was handled by a different arm of the college and had to be contacted separately.

Treasurer. Kathy reported that LIR is halfway through the fiscal year and, as expected this time of year, funding is down by \$20,000. The coffers will be replenished in May when members pay their dues for the coming year.

Secretary. Cynthia was late to the meeting. Margaret offered to take the minutes.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee. Betsy Siersma reported the committee had a great moderators' meeting. Members have submitted 11 seminar proposals for the fall and one for summer. There's a good range of topics, from jazz to gender equity to the peace process after World War 1. The committee is working on a peek preview of seminars being developed that will be put on the website.

Finance. The committee met prior to the council meeting and will be preparing a budget.

Great Decisions. Prunella Fiddian-Green reported that with three speakers lined up for 2019, the committee is now in the second phase, which involves publicity. She handed out a few copies of a mockup of a brochure, describing the speakers and their topics, that will be mailed in early March. She asked council members to submit their suggestions or corrections to the brochure as soon as possible. The group is developing a poster announcing the series that will

be posted on bulletin boards as a way to reach out beyond the LIR membership. Information about the programs and ticket information will soon be posted online.

Member Events. The traditional coffee for new members will be held at the Lathrop Retirement Community in Northampton on February 21, starting at 10 a.m. Invitations will be mailed to all members for the 30th anniversary celebration on April 4 at Hadley Farms. The amount of \$4,000 has been budgeted for the event. Entertainment has been lined up. The one “wild card” is the amount of alcohol needed.

Public Relations. Nina Scott is working on a series of four articles on 5CLIR members who were not born in the US. Two have already been published in the Gazette. They appeared in the Home section, rather than Hampshire Life, with a large amount of space and several photos devoted to each article. Unfortunately, the editor edited out references to LIR. Kathy suggested the council consider running an ad in the Gazette to promote, directly, LIR.

Special Programs. Wendy Parrish, the new chairman of the committee, reported on the several groups that continue to hold meetings and events, including the Book Interest Group, Encore presentations, Opera Prep and Viewpoints. The Theater Group is hoping to arrange a play to attend. Gordon asked if there was interest in reviving the annual meeting with area legislators, which stopped a few years ago. The session had been held at Forbes Library. Tisha said the forum had been arranged by the Summer/Winter Programs Committee. Nancy Mihevc is willing to contact the legislators.

Summer/Winter Programs. With this committee next on the agenda, Mary Franks said that the committee had tried to arrange a meeting with legislators but that some felt it was too early this year with several of our legislators having just been elected for the first time in November. The committee has seven bus trips and two local events scheduled, one in May 4 and another in October.

Technology Committee. The group doesn't meet but members are willing to help any LIR member who needs their expertise.

Special Projects/Events. A new proposal in this category was covered under new business.

Officer Manager's Report

The U Mass Bach Festival will take place on four days around the weekend of April 13 and 14. There will be a free pre-concert lecture in Amherst for LIR members. The office plans to buy a block of tickets (which members will pay for) so that LIR attendees can sit together.

Seminars will start at the end of the month. An intern is revising the LIR website. Tisha pointed out that there will be “a lot of ticketing” for upcoming events for the office to manage.

Old Business

Jake led the discussion on the changes to the committee descriptions that appear in the Operations Manual and on the creation of a new membership committee.

Committee Descriptions. The Council reviewed a draft of the suggested changes at its last meeting. Some of the changes made since then, Jake reported, were grammatical changes. He offered three suggestions for a new name for the Summer/Winter Programs: Summer/Winter/Plus Activities Committee, Activities Committee (formerly Summer/Winter Programs Committee) and Non-Seminar Activities Committee. A new name is suggested to avoid confusion with

the Special Programs Committee and Special Projects and Events Committee. Moreover, the committee has scheduled events during the fall and spring semesters. Not just during the summer and winter.

Jake broke the tie between Activities and Non-Seminar Activities. The new name will be the Activities Committee, using the old name in parentheses for a short while.

The Council voted unanimously to accept the description changes to the Operations Manual, as presented.

Creation of a Membership/Development Committee. Serving on the Ad Hoc Committee to review this concept were Jake (chairman), Jay Russell, Robert Cohen, and Chris Hurn. The purpose is to establish a new committee “that will provide to the 5CLIR membership with non-administrative functions, services and communications.” The suggested name of the new committee is Member Services and Outreach Committee. Its role is to act as a resource for non-administrative information and communication for members and potential members, to periodically review and modify member communications on the website, establish a “suggestion box” as a link to the website for suggestions and comments about the organization, establish outreach strategies to attract new members, come up with ideas to encourage more participation by members, and establish initial contact with new members through letters or phone calls.

Jake pointed out that some of the committee’s role was made general on purpose so that its members could devise its own strategies. He also said, in response to a question, that no data has been collated on who serves on committees. Two often-cited reasons why more members don’t volunteer for committee assignments are that they are recently retired and volunteered before retirement and, for long-time LIR members, they have already served on numerous committees.

The motion to establish the committee was approved unanimously. The description provided by the Ad Hoc Committee will be added to the Operations Manual. The Council will be searching for a committee chair and members.

New Business

Proposal for a Special Event. Council member Linda Honan presented her proposal for “Edith Wharton in the Berkshires: Life and Work at The Mount,” comprised of three lectures in this area and a bus trip to The Mount, which was Wharton’s home in the Berkshires that she designed with Ogden Codman. The total estimated cost of the event is \$2,262 plus any shortfall on the cost of the bus. Participants will pay \$82 for the bus, lunch and Mount tour. The Executive Committee and Special Projects Committee both support the proposal.

After Ellen raised the idea of supporting LIR members by giving participants a \$10 subsidy for the trip, the Council discussed the need for a policy on giving LIR members priority on trips such as this, which some Council members think will be very popular, and how to prioritize members versus non-members. It was suggested that the Special Projects Committee address the questions of subsidy for members and establishing a priority for members/nonmembers and report back to the Council at its next meeting on March 14.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Russell