

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

August 1, 2019

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

Council Members Present: Jake Greenburg (President), Ellen Kosmer (Past President), Nancy Mihevc (Treasurer), Linda Honan, Gene Fisher, Kip Fonsh, Laura Price, James Lee, Pat Jorczak

Committee Chairs and Others Present: Larry Ambs, Gail Gausted, Mary Franks, Norma Johnson, Richard Parrish, Wendy Parrish, Betsy Siersma, Gordon Wyse, Tisha Ferguson

Council Members Absent: Nancy Denig (Vice-President), Bev von Kries (Secretary), Bob Cohen (Assistant Treasurer), Jay Russell, Margaret Russell, Terry Rosenfeld

The meeting called to order by Jake Greenburg at 2:15

Wendy Parrish volunteered to take minutes.

Quorum checked. 8 members of Council and officers were present, making a quorum.

Approval of minutes from June 13 Council meeting: one correction, 3 new at large members, Mike Lee should be corrected to James Lee. Council then approved Minutes as corrected.

President's report: welcome back to 2019-2020 Council. New council members were introduced: Laura Price, Pat Jorczak and James Lee.

Summer efforts: get-together held with outgoing and incoming executive committees, very effective way to transition the Council.

No Vice President report (Nancy Denig Absent).

Past President report: in accord with effectiveness of transition meeting.

Treasurer Nancy Mihevc – learning the system, wanting to make the Treasurer’s position more of a management rather than purely reporting tool.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum:

Betsy Siersma report: Edits to moderator’s manual to work with hearing issues among students, along with other disabilities. Similar edits made to participants’ handbook. Participants should feel free to communicate with moderators to make needs known. Motion to approve edits, Kip Fonsh moved, Laura Price seconded, motion approved.

Finance:

Nancy Mihevc report: Nothing new to report until numbers are finalized and reviewed by Executive Committee.

Great Decisions:

Richard Parrish report: Finalizing plans for 2020. Plans to have four programs on four consecutive Fridays (as is usual). Committee considering moderate increase in price, also eliminating the color brochure, in order to amortize the cost of the increased venue. Recommend that we return to Hadley Farms meeting room; excellent problem-free venue. Alternative to consider to Loomis Village in S. Hadley. Issue with parking, they may require valet parking to offset their limited parking. Discussion, motion by Laura Price, seconded Gene Fisher. Motion passed, one abstention.

Member Events:

Gail Gaustad report: Committee has no chair, but they are seeking. Picnic will be on September 17th as announced in the newsletter.

Public Relations/Publicity:

No report

Special Programs:

Wendy Parrish report: New book group, legislative roundup will be held this year, other special interest groups are ongoing. Thoughts on when the new book group will meet – make sure it doesn't overlap when a class won't interfere.

Activities (Formerly Summer/Winter Committee):

Mary Franks report: Three programs this summer – Boston art Museum, Tanglewood, visit to conservation lab at Clark Museum campus, Porter/Phelps farm tour, Lyra concert. Need to consider using a smaller bus or a van, so that we can guarantee filling it. Transportation costs need to be considered seriously as an ongoing expense, as they have been a drain with some consistency. One more tour, slave sites in Deerfield, that one might need to be split into two.

Technology:

Gordon Wyse report: No meetings since re-formation. Jim Harvey will be leading four days of PowerPoint , September 16-19. Both sessions are pretty full, sessions in mornings, at the Smith Dewey Common Room. We will be done before the picnic starts on the 17th. Other consideration is a tutorial on Google Docs and file management.

Special Projects and Events:

Ellen Kosmer report: Will rename the committee to “Projects and Events”; will drop the “special” from the name. No meeting held with that committee yet; Gordon Wyse interested in conducting another event. The Edith Wharton Event was very successful last year. 65 average attendance at the lectures. Note that deficits for this type of event comes, as designed, from the Endowment fund.

Office Manager:

Tisha Ferguson report: The October 12th Council meeting will be at Applewood. Facebook page has been set up, there is a conflict with another 5CLIR page that was set up and not activated. We need to find who set up that page so that they can be merged. Thanks to Tisha, we have permission to park on-campus, even with a Smith Parking re-alignment.

OLD BUSINESS:

Condolences notification proposal, tabled until next month.

Election modifications to bylaws, tabled until next month.

Ballot counting modifications to operations manual, tabled until next month.

5CLIR Facebook Page update: Has been set up, designed to be a new face to both our members and the outside.

Member services and Outreach committee: Wendy Parrish and Pat Jorczak to be co-chairs. Motion was approved for the new chairs. This committee will now have primary responsibility for communications and non-administrative information for current and potential members. The committee will work with the Office Manager, and will amplify the efforts of the (former) Public Relations Committee. Public Relations will be rolled into this committee. Nina Scott is in accord with this. She will continue to perform her public relations functions as she has been. The maintenance of the newly established Facebook page will also be the responsibility of this committee. Motion to approve the new chairs – Nancy Mihevc moved, Ellen Kosmer seconded, approved by council.

NEW BUSINESS:

Operations Manual Section IV, Appendix H (Schedule Guidelines for 5CLIR) requires modifications needed to provide more flexibility to moderators and office manager. Currently, there are very specific times mentioned in the operations manual. Proposed recommendations is to ensure that seminar times remain flexible for all morning and afternoon seminars. Also, explicitly state that there will be no seminars scheduled for Thursday afternoons due to conflicts with the Executive Committee meetings, Council meetings and other activities. Tisha volunteered to make the specific changes.

LIR Brochure: The current brochure needs updating. Ellen and Jake have made some revisions; Executive Committee would like to add more revisions. Version 1 of updates to be ready for the Preview. However, the brochure needs a major overhaul, with better photos and to make it a better marketing tool. That's a longer-term goal, with volunteers to help in the effort being sought. Redesigned brochure should be consistent with website. Betsy Siersma volunteers for major redesign.

Membership statistics:

Prior to 6/30/19 – 285 active members

1-1 to 6/30 – 15 new members, 8 moved or passed away.

As of today, 219 of those nearly 300 members have renewed for the year. Current paid-up membership is 234. 15 members are enrolled in seminars, and are expected to renew. Anticipate 246 members paid up for next year, a 13% decrease. Tisha can break these numbers down some – people who can't continue due to health, moves, etc. Contacting people who joined and didn't renew, and people who haven't renewed. New members are down about 50% -- that's where we need the most effort.

Nancy Mihevc will help to design and conduct a survey. Kip Fonsh brought up that presentation fear is a big driver of reluctance to join. Lots of discussion about things that might be done, including allowing new members to audit one class in one semester. Also, better publicity for the preview, or maybe an open house day, so that people can see the kinds of classes we offer. Increase the number of interactive sessions, rather than presentation/Q&A.

Propositions – 15 members who have enrolled in seminars have not paid their dues, as yet. Emails will be sent to them ASAP. If no response, they will be contacted by phone. If no response from phone call, they will be removed from the seminar, so people on the waiting list can be notified. Payment must be due by August 15.

Motion to adjourn by Gene Fischer, Seconded by Ellen Kosmer.

Meeting adjourned 4:07.

Next Meeting Thursday 09/12/2019 from 2:15 – 4:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Parrish