



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

September 17, 2020

The MU Retirees Association (MURA) Board of Directors was called to order via Zoom at 2:20 p.m.

Those in attendance were president Ruth Tofle; past president Betsy Garrett; secretary Mary Licklider; treasurer Donna Johanning; at-large members Mark Banks, Bill Fisch, Mary Jo Herde, Art Jago, and Nancy Johnson (joined 2:30 p.m.); committee chairs Clyde and Cecile Bentley, Tom Henderson, Mary Anne McCollum Dick Otto, Tim Parshall, and Jo Turner; co-ombud Marty Townsend; University liaison Cecil Moore; ex officio members Ina Linville, Linda Lorenz, Libby Miederhoff, Barbara Schneider, and Maggie Walter (joined 2:26 p.m.) Participants responded to roll call by reporting something positive that has resulted from pandemic isolation this year.

Minutes

Mary Jo Herde moved approval of the minutes of the July 15, 2020, meeting. The motion was seconded by Dick Otto and unanimously approved.

President's Report

The president's report included the following items:

1. Review MURA strategies in the time of Covid-19 by doing things differently and finding creative solutions. The Along the Boone's Lick Road program had 90 participants, and the Osher partnership is strengthening MURA programming. There are no in-person events scheduled for the remainder of 2020. The first virtual social will be held September 18, and the holiday event will also be virtual. President Tofle acknowledged the passing of several individuals important to MURA and reminded Board members to encourage MURA membership among retirees.
2. President Tofle nominated Barbara Schneider to fill the vacancy created by Linda Cook's resignation as president elect due to a combination of personal, family and health issues. Ms. Schneider introduced herself. Art Jago moved approval of the nomination, and Cecile Bentley seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's and Finance Committee Reports

The treasurer's statement of cash flows reported a cash balance on August 31, 2020, of \$6,362.99 and an investment account balance of \$94,065.52. Betsy Garrett moved approval of the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded by Marty Townsend and approved unanimously.

Standing Committees

Membership Committee. Co-chairs Dick Otto and Jo Turner reported consistent membership numbers: 904 members since the July Board meeting: 48 members paid for 2020, 9 annual members paid beyond 2020, and 847 life members. Membership chairs are monitoring obituaries to help with keeping membership rolls current. Discussion followed regarding the need to communicate with those planning to retire and the need to update the MURA brochure.

Ombuds. Marty Townsend reported that the ombuds were approached by a member who asked MURA to take an advocacy stance regarding the Jefferson statue on campus. The ombuds explained that this kind of advocacy was not in keeping with MURA's role and recommended the member communicate with Chancellor Choi.

Government Affairs Committee. Chair Mary Anne McCollum reported working on the upcoming election forum. Discussion followed about providing members with information about absentee and mail-in balloting. Ms. McCollum will provide information links for inclusion in the next MURA update.

Education and Program Committees. Program chair Barbara Schneider reiterated that all in-person events for fall 2020 have been cancelled and that the fall social will take place via Zoom. The holiday social on December 11 at 1:30 p.m. will replicate as many of the holiday social's traditions as possible. Discussion followed about giveaway gifts and how to manage those virtually.

Program co-chairs Clyde and Cecile Bentley reported that the November program will focus on the 150th anniversary of the College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. The December breakfast will feature the reference librarians. Planning is underway for 2021 spring programs, including Columbia's African American trail, researchers comparing Covid-19 with the Spanish flu, and a musical program. The fall social is planned as a Zoom meeting, and participants were invited to compare Zoom and webinar formats. Presentations are being recorded, and the committee is considering venues for storage of and member access to the recordings.

Scholarship Committee. Committee chair Tim Parshall reported very little participation in and income from assisting the book store with opening of the semester because of Covid-19, and that the same can be expected for January. A reminder of the 30 for 30 campaign was posted in the newsletter. Dr. Parshall is meeting with campus personnel regarding how much and how scholarship funds should be distributed. Discussion followed regarding other campus volunteer needs the MURA might fulfill.

Past Presidents Committee. Chair Tom Henderson and member Jo Turner presented recommendations of the past president's work group on policy regarding advocacy requests of MURA, incorporated here by reference. In summary, as a 501c4 social welfare organization, MURA generally refrains from taking positions regarding political candidates or specific bills, legislation, referenda, or other matters coming before a public vote. However, the MURA Board may issue a policy statement if it is consistent with the MURA constitution and bylaws, and if it benefits the collective welfare of MU/UM retirees.

Special Committees and Liaisons

Awards Committee. Betsy Garrett asked about reaching out to organizations to nominate individuals for the Chancellor's awards. Committee chair Mary Jo Herde will follow up on this.

University Liaison – Administration. Because liaison Cecil Moore experienced connectivity issues, President Tofle reported working with the UM System on the October 2 webinar on retiree health benefits and that changes are anticipated in those benefits. She recommended sending questions ahead of the webinar as requested in the webinar announcement to allow staff to better prepare to provide answers. Dr. Moore thanked Linda Cook, Betsy Garrett, and Ruth Tofle for their coaching in the liaison position. He noted that the webinar will include opportunities to encourage MURA membership and panelists representing the UM System, United Healthcare, and ExpressScripts.

Dr. Moore also reported work on the 4-campus retiree leadership meeting on October 14 and a MURA leadership meeting with President Choi sometime after the 4-campus meeting.

MU Engagement Council Representative. Ina Linville reported nothing new to report.

Communications. Special thanks were extended to Ginny Booker who finished the September newsletter despite Covid-19 symptoms.

United Way Representative. Linda Lorenz reported gearing up for opening the MU United Way campaign on September 21. United Way used language arts test scores and free and reduced lunch numbers to choose five schools in which students received packages of books with individual letters from an MU football player.

Total Rewards Advisory Committee. MURA representative Betsy Garrett reported diligent work by UM System personnel on the Medicare Advantage plan. She also reported participating on the subcommittee reviewing finalist vendors for development of a new retirement calculator.

Unfinished Business

Policy and Procedures Manual. Jo Turner reported on the past president committee's consideration of a MURA policy and procedure manual, including research by Tom Henderson as to what other retiree organizations have in place. The most complete was at Michigan State University, which Jo Turner adapted to create a template for MURA, incorporated here by reference. The committee recommended that each officer and chair provide the following items to Secretary Licklider for initial compilation: Board title/role; term of appointment; constitution and bylaws language regarding the position and responsibilities; ongoing/year-round duties; annual or as-needed duties; important dates and calendar of activities; key contacts and relationships (including name, organization, email, phone, and mailing address); and other notes. Discussion followed regarding managing access to the resulting manual, and a deadline of October 17 was established for sending initial materials to Secretary Mary Licklider.

New Business

Event Planning for 2021. President Tofle noted that MURA is at this point a virtual organization and will likely continue so through 2020-21 and use Survey Monkey again for election of officers this spring. Discussion at the 4-campus retiree leadership meeting is expected to include focusing the spring webinar on pensions. Board members congratulated President Tofle on her handling of Covid-19 circumstances. Betsy Garrett noted MURA may need to do something just for its membership in the spring rather than just the 4-campus webinar.

Announcements

Announcements included reminders of the fall social, October 2 webinar, and October 6 legislative forum. Dick Otto expressed thanks for including the estate planning session in the MURA update. Jo Turner suggested using the Friendly Voices group again to reach out to members that don't use the web and perhaps offering a Zoom meeting with new members. President Tofle mentioned that working with Osher may generate enthusiasm for MURA. Clyde Bentley noted that MURA's 900 members is a powerful number that we should tout. Board members were encouraged to follow MURA on Facebook. Barbara Schneider was thanked for stepping up as president elect.

Jo Turner moved adjournment, and the motion was seconded and passed at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Licklider
Secretary

Approved January 20, 2021