



# Retirees Association

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES April 2, 2022

The MU Retirees Association (MURA) Board of Directors was called to order via Zoom at 9:00 a.m.

Those present included president Ruth Tofle; past president Betsy Garrett; president-elect Ina Linville; secretary Mary Licklider; treasurer Donna Johanning; at-large members Mark Banks, Mary Jo Herde, Art Jago, Judy Nolke, Donna Otto and Frank Schmidt; committee chairs and co-chairs Barbara Harris, Mary Anne McCollum, Dick Otto, and Jo Turner; co-ombud Marty Townsend; University liaison Cecil Moore; and *ex officio* member Karma Metzgar.

### Letter to University Curators

President Tofle provided a brief overview of the handful of times MURA has taken official positions, emphasizing that survey results demonstrate the importance of advocacy to MURA members. She explained that the meeting's agenda would include a request for approval of a letter/position statement to the University Curators encouraging disapproval of a proposal to change the University's *Collected Rules and Regulations* to disallow any future cost of living increase to retiree benefits. Following action on this letter, the floor will be opened to discussion of any next steps for the MURA Board on this issue.

Ina Linville moved and Frank Schmidt seconded a motion to approve the president's letter. The president expressed gratitude to Art Jago for bringing the issue to Board attention and noted that this represents a critical moment for many retirees. Following brief discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

### Next Steps for MURA Board

President Tofle reported on communications from UM Chief Investment Officer and Senior Associate Vice President for Finance Tom Richards offering to meet with MURA representatives regarding the proposals potentially affecting retirees that will go before the Board of Curators in April. The president appointed Ken Hutchinson, Art Jago, Mary Ann McCollum, Tom Henderson, Ken Dean, Ina Linville and Ruth Tofle to an ad hoc committee to address this issue.

Art Jago moved and Ina Linville seconded a motion to appoint Art Jago to seek Faculty Council endorsement of the MURA Board position. Following discussion, Dick Otto offered to contact Staff Council to seek endorsement and involvement. The motion was approved unanimously. Betsy Garrett moved and Mary Jo Herde seconded a motion to appoint Dick Otto to reach out to Staff Council to encourage endorsement of the MURA Board position and forwarding of such endorsement to the Curators. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made and seconded to solicit endorsements from the other UM campus retiree associations. A discussion followed regarding communications with other campus retiree association presidents. They will be copied on the letter to the Curators and will also receive a second letter inviting them to officially endorse the MURA position. Frank Schmidt moved the motion be amended to communicate with the other UM retiree associations to inform them of the MURA position, noting that MURA would appreciate their support in whatever way they choose, and that the MURA Board believes their support would

strengthen the MURA position. Betsy Garrett seconded the amendment, which was unanimously approved. The motion was unanimously approved as amended.

Distribution of the MURA position will include posting the president's letter to the MURA website, copying to the executive teams of the other UM campus retiree associations, emailing the MURA membership, sending blind copies to the private emails of individual Curators in addition to their official email address, copying President Choi, and contacting mid-Missouri newspapers.

Discussion included the number of times in the last 20 or 30 years that COLAs were approved, the source of the proposed changes to the *Collected Rules and Regulations*, timing that open seats on the Board of Curators will likely be filled, and Flagship Council involvement.

During discussion of strategies for coordinating press contacts, Art Jago was asked to contact St. Louis newspapers and Dick Otto to contact the Missouri Press Association. Marty Townsend suggested contacting the Missouri Independent. The Board unofficially agreed that any inquiries from the press will be referred to President Tofle, who will prepare a small number of talking points. President will refer questions about the history of COLAs offered to UM retirees to Art Jago. The president will seek help in developing talking points from Jo Turner, Ina Linville, Betsy Garrett, and Dick Otto. Discussion included strategies for humanizing the effects of the proposed changes.

As the meeting came to a close, President Tofle summarized immediate next steps to include distributing the final version of the letter and developing her talking points regarding the issue. Ina Linville expressed gratitude to President Tofle for her efficient, timely, and effective handling of this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lickliger  
Secretary