University of Arizona Retirees Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2019 -- 10:00 am – Noon

UARA Board Members: Kenny Hoagland, Jane Dugas, Gail Hanson, Dotty Sherwood-Cooney, Mike Krebbs, Robert Casler, Jim Barrett

UAAA representatives: Denise Shorbe, Melinda Burke, Ricky Hernandez, Nancy Daru Yaeli

Guest: Armando Vargas

Presentation:
[This meeting was primarily devoted to a web conference with representatives of the Iowa State University Retirees Association.]

Presenters: Jeffrey Johnson, President and CEO, and Jeriln Logue, ISU Retirees Director

Iowa State’s former dean spearheaded the ISU Retirees Association, originally part of Human Resources. Focus was primarily on benefits (parking, athletics, performances) which were threatened by funding cuts. It developed a curriculum program called “College for Seniors” and the classes became a revenue source. The focus was more on lifelong learning than protecting benefits, and Human Resources discontinued support.

They saw the group as a resource for alumni events, speakers. There are senior living communities in the area, including one started by the university. They also operated a program on Memorial Day honoring those who passed, as well as the university’s cemetery.

In 2006 the Alumni office began overseeing the retirees’ group with an initial programming budget of $10K, with expectation that it would become self-supporting. One Alumni person does sponsorships, staff does design and editing. Has full access to all services of Alumni Association, contingent on losing independent status. They feel this is the perfect arrangement, unique and unexpected.

A staff member finds sponsorships, advertising OLLI programs connected, but separate. There is one large event: “Rock On.” There are three presentations per session, funded by sponsorships ($11K), free to the public. The majority of participants in the OLLI program are retirees, funded by Osher. OLLI members are invited to all retiree events, six programs per year. “College for Seniors” was taken over by OLLI. There is no space given to retirees in the Alumni building, they are treated like all other clubs and student groups.

There are representatives for each college, designated by the dean, along with three other major units. The Board has representatives from seven colleges, three appointed, three from HR, about
17 in total. There are two representatives to the benefits committee, which is very important. It is a challenge to find people to serve. Social programs are run by the program committee. The May picnic is the only program with a fee, it is catered. The OLLI program has become the social network instead of the retirees’ association. It combines socialization with intellectual stimulation.

There are five newsletters per year. They are seen as a source for finding subjects for research projects. The first issue is the largest, it contains the names in the memorial program. Newsletters are designed by the Alumni Association design staff, and they include vendor ads. About 285 copies are printed. There are over 4700 retirees. Colleges are motivated to maintain connection with previous employees, seen as a stewardship source. The colleges know best who the individuals are, what their areas of expertise are. Members do not have to join, they are automatically included upon retirement. Dues are seen as not a benefit worth pursuing. Funding from OLLI is sufficient. Alumni programs, such as travel, have a higher rate of retiree participation. There was a one-year transition from paper to electronic delivery, and issues are always available on the website. One printed piece is mailed per household. Spouses and friends are welcome.

With campus efforts, such as strategic planning, retirees are treated as constituents, not as an organization. Alumni Association manages the finances as they do with other clubs. The staff has two people in the finance area. The administrator is an employee of the Alumni Association and manages programs and communication. Another employee manages business relationships, sponsors and advertisers. The tax status is 501c3. The administrator acts as a facilitator, board members have to serve on committees, and she meets with them, empowers them and serves as a reality check, encouraging them to start small and grow. Members are supporting upgrades to the facility, leaving funds in their wills. Members become part of the university rather than of the retirees’ association. Political candidates often come to speak.

They have no scholarship programs apart from the university foundation, also endowments. They are one entity.

The Memorial Day ceremony includes staff members as well as retirees. It is well attended., an opportunity for families to share stories. A flower bouquet is set at each table, and a booklet is distributed and posted online, as well as video and obituaries.

Goal: How to make employees feel as part of the university family.

Alumni association makes sure the organization works, retirees focus on making the programs work.

Liability insurance is part of the alumni association.

They expressed interest in our tri-university events, as well as a future visit (here or there).

Reports:
Robert presented a chart of our current membership and the financial lost we’ll incur if we do not find funding soon.

Gail presented the budget which reflected our need to seek more funds. We will run out within the next two years.

Jane presented a newsletter report: Newsletter was mailed to 580 members. $600 to print, $91 to verify addresses, $78 postage, $100 design. Spring issue to go out in March. Spring luncheon at AZ Inn. Reminded us of newsletter naming contest idea. Need to promote electronic option. New editor begins in June. Upcoming seminar April 2nd by Dr. Kelly Reynolds on germs.
Dotty announced that Robert Casler had accepted the position as newsletter editor starting July 1st, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at noon.