UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA RETIREES ASSOCIATION
LEADERSHIP MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 22, 2020—Held through Zoom (Approved 05/20/20)

Attendance: Susan Anderson, Jim Barrett, David Earnest, Kenney Hegland, Gail Hanson, Alison Hughes, Bob Perrill, and Denise Shorbe. Meeting format by Zoom videoconference.

Meeting was called to order by David Earnest at 11:00 a.m.

Fiscal Report, covering the period through March 31, 2020, was submitted by Gail Hansen, Treasurer. Total income $9,046. Total expenses $9,389.46. Account balances available for targeted activities: Sparks Gerontology endowment $2,130; UARA Program Endowment $722.36; UARA Outreach & Strategic Communications $2,130. Motion Hughes/Second Hegland to accept fiscal report as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Luncheon Schedule: David expressed appreciation to Jane Dugas who was able to cancel the April 2 luncheon at Hacienda del Sol. The hotel was unable to return the UARA deposit of $300. The speaker, Dr. Mindy Fain of the UA Department of Gerontology and her colleague Dr. Janko Nikolich-Gugich, were notified by Jane of the cancellation. Discussion ensued regarding a future luncheon date, and there was agreement to delay until January. David noted that UARA will need a luncheon coordinator to replace Jane. David agreed to again contact these speakers if the Board decides we want the same program in January.

Resignation: David announced that Jane Dugas has resigned from the board effective April 2020, and also wanted to be relieved of her Webmaster duties no later than this June. She indicated a willingness to continue her involvement in UARA but not as a board member.

Board Membership: Motion Perrill/Second Hughes that current Board members extend their Board participation until September 30, 2020. Passed unanimously with all members agreeing, except Gail Hansen who indicated she will leave on June 30 and will be pleased to work with the new treasurer to handover duties.

Activity Report: Jim Barrett reported on the successful Biosphere tour which included 23 attendees. He has written an article, and has photographs ready to post on the UARA Website and in our next Newsletter. David suggested that we disseminate the article through email also. Jim noted that he is delaying making
plans for Fall activities due to COVID-19, and is waiting until we know the UA’s status. Kenney suggested that a poetry group might be of interest to members. David suggested further communications with our members might be useful to elicit their input and ideas for activities. During this discussion, Susan Anderson announced that she is in the process of selling her house in order to move to New York, hopefully by September or October. She added that she is willing to assist with ideas, luncheons, etc., while she remains in Tucson. David indicated that Robert Casler hopes to continue working with us once his health improves.

There was some discussion about needed frequency email communications with URA members. Denise indicated that UAAA policy is to disseminate one email per month on behalf of its Clubs. She shared that when she prepared the invitation to the President’s Reception in 2019, she compiled a list of 500 invitees, but that the event’s main purpose was fund-raising. At that time she worked with UA Access to get retiree contact information. Denise complimented Gail for her work updating the UARA member list and identifying non-members. Bounce-back notices from the previous e-mail have been removed from the list. Denise also shared that UAAA had volunteered to help UARA with communications and our website owing to Jane’s retirement and that she will be the person who will assist us as an interim Webmaster. She is meeting with a UITS representative to receive a tutorial on being the UARA Webmaster and should be ready for the task soon. During this period of working remotely, she added that timing is good for planning modifications to the format of our publications so that they will be in line with UAAA policies.

David suggested that a skeleton or outline of current and potential future activities for UARA in behalf of our membership be started (i.e. such as those listed in a handout he prepared). He asked the board to consider a list of possible activities that potentially could be shared with membership as a way of launching “The New UARA.” Jim agreed to take the leadership of a planning committee, and will call a meeting to draft ideas. Kenney suggested the committee also examine the UARA future, given the impact of CVID-19, i.e., how it will change our lives, how it will change medicine, how people’s lives have changed and Bob indicated he thought this would be a good topic for our January luncheon. Kenney suggested that UARA become involved in making members aware of various service groups, such as Lend-A-Hand, a group that helps elders with shopping and the like, and that we post links to such groups on our Website. It was noted by Denise that should UARA create a Facebook page, our members would need to take full responsibility for the page as UAAA does not provide such assistance.
Meeting with UAAA to discuss UARA Marketing Campaign. David and Alison reported on a meeting held with UAAA leadership to discuss how they can help with UARA marketing. Alison drafted a letter for UARA members regarding COVID-19 which was ready to be edited and shaped to meet UAAA publishing standards. UAAA team agreed they will follow up with the letter. They also emphasized that prior to a major marketing campaign, UARA needs to develop a clear mission and purpose statement.

Progress on the Future of UARA: David provided a handout with some proposed updates for UARA Mission and Goals and asked for input. There was unanimous agreement that the word “benefits” be replaced throughout the handout with the word “resources.” It was also recommended that the document be simplified, and could include a briefer Mission statement, a vision statement, and goals. An update of this document will be placed on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

Further discussion ensued on plans to conduct a retiree survey. David is working on letter(s) to newly/recently retired U of A staff/faculty which may include a survey of what services they would like to have from UARA. A draft document was shared. There was agreement that Alison try to arrange a Zoom meeting with the two UA professors who earlier indicated having an interest in working on a study which would assess opinions about retirement and issues faced by U of A retirees. David, Denise, Susan and Alison agreed to participate. Alison agreed to try to set up a meeting in collaboration with Denise and the professors.

There was unanimous agreement that new retirees being invited to join UARA will be offered membership at no cost for one year after joining, at which time they will be invited to advance full membership and pay annual dues. Annual dues of $20.00 per year will be re-considered at a future Board meeting. Those who joined as lifetime members in the past will retain this status.

Next Meeting Date: May 20 at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom.
The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Alison Hughes