

Board Members Present: Gary Anderson, Jim Fordemwalt, Elmer Gooding, Jo Madonna, Connie McNeill, Carolyn Minner, Robert Muscari (Ex-officio), Val Peterson, Eric Sloan (Ex-officio) Bill Stasi, Mary Stevens

Excused Absentees: Joyce Hartman Diaz, Rose Minetti, William Moor, Lonnie Ostrom, Rojann Alpers, Lou Weschler; **Absent:** Bob Barnhill, Sheree Barron (Ex-officio)

Committee Chairs Present: Jerry Aronson, Sue Blumer, Alan Johnson, Wilma Mathews, Dick Murra, Linda Van Scoy

Committee Members and Guests: Doug Johnson, Dave Scheatzle, Stan Brown

I. Call to Order

President Mary Stevens called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

II. President's Report and Welcome to Guests

Some members are excused today due to travel plans and scheduling conflicts. Members present were asked to introduce themselves.

III. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the May 13, 2009 Meeting

Val Peterson motioned that the minutes be approved and Connie McNeill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Ex-Officio Reports

Emeritus College - Lou Weschler

No report.

Human Resources - Sheree Barron

No report.

University Club - Jim Fordemwalt

In the recent past, the Club has experienced a decline in memberships so they have embarked on a membership drive. Currently, there is a net loss of only 1 member but the Club remains committed to increasing membership. To that end they have established a special rate for retirees of \$8.00 per month. This is half of the normal rate. Right now they are also waiving the initiation fee. The University Club is also interested in hosting an ASURA Board meeting. They would provide coffee and

munchies. They have free parking in their parking lot which holds 50 cars. Jim indicated that in exchange the University Club would like to give a brief presentation about their organization. The ASURA Board indicated an interest in having a Board meeting there this fall and Jim said that he would relay this information. Mary asked Jim to bring back a specific proposal at the ASURA October meeting. The University Club also plans to hold some special events with Gammage Auditorium.

University Liaison - Eric Sloan

Eric reported that he is now doing State relations as well as County relations for ASU Public Affairs. He reported that the Governor has signed most of the bills from the Legislative Session. However, she is withholding her signature from Bill 1025, the Equalization Tax bill because she is hoping to get a tax referral on the ballot. The federal stimulus funding of about \$149 million that we expect to receive has begun to come in. The concern is the time beyond this year. Cuts have been made and funding has been backfilled with the federal money. When that runs out after this year, the cuts will still exist and money to backfill will no longer exist. Right now ASU continues to try to get what is best for the university.

Mary asked about the State current debt. Eric explained that we are currently \$1 billion in debt. They did \$650 million dollars in cuts and he also explained that by not getting rid of the equalization tax there is \$250 million dollars in new revenue. A one cent sales tax referral for the next three years is proposed. It is a constitutional question. This means that the voters of Arizona would have to put it in the constitution but after the three years expires, the sales tax increase could not be extended. The 3 largest items that people spend money on are their mortgage, food and their credit card bills. Currently, there is no sales tax on these items. There are other proposals being talked about also. Additional funding is necessary. Eric was asked if the legislature agreed to have a sales tax question put on the ballot would the governor then agree to the elimination of the equalization tax. He said that is his understanding. He went on to say that the problem is that some Republicans have said that they will not support this because it is a tax increase and that Democrats in both the House and the Senate do not support this either for various reasons. The Governor needs 16 and 31 votes and so far she has been unable obtains sufficient votes.

Elmer Gooding asked Eric if Public Affairs will be able to provide additional support for ASURA. Elmer said the Emeritus College receives more support from the university and is able to have paid staff while ASURA is a completely volunteer organization. Eric said that he has been an advocate for ASURA and others have been also. This year Public Affairs provided \$7000 in in-kind support for such items as printing, and Eric understands that there is no intention to cut back on that support. He said that the Emeritus College is a different situation. He knows that Emeritus College members get a parking benefit that ASURA members do not. He believes that Parking Services is preparing a presentation for ASURA that will explain why there is a difference. Mary Stevens said that the costs of the Emeritus College Gold Parking Decal are paid for by the Provost Office as a result of commitments made by then Provost Milt Glick when the Emeritus College was established. Elmer Gooding said that he raised this question

because ASURA serves so many people, including retired staff, and there seems to be some inequity. He also said that ASURA has recently raised the annual membership donation in order to help the organization.

Sue Blumer asked Eric if he knew why there hasn't been an attempt to get a citizen-initiated sales tax proposition on the ballot. Eric said he doesn't know why that hasn't happened other than perhaps it is because of the number of voter signatures required to get a proposition on the ballot.

Elmer Gooding expressed his appreciation for Eric's advocacy on behalf of ASURA. Carolyn Minner expressed appreciation for Public Affairs' Business Office assistance, especially by Renee and Windy who are helping to streamline processes and have been very responsive. She asked Eric to relay that feedback to Virgil Renzuli. Eric expressed recognition of ASURA's work.

University Senate - Rojann Alpers

Mary announced that due to a scheduling conflict Rojann Alpers was unable to attend this meeting but plans to be at future ASURA meetings.

University Staff Council - Robert Muscari

Robert Muscari explained the structure of the University Staff Council. Each of the four ASU campuses has a staff council and the presidents of each of these make up the University Staff Council. Robert is the president of the Tempe Campus Staff Council. The University Staff Council meets every other month to discuss common issues and interests. This enables each campus staff council to focus on their local issues and interests. There will also be University Staff Council Town Hall Meetings at each campus over the next two months. Robert also invited ASURA to staff a table at the Employee Appreciation Day Barbeque on October 7th to promote our organization.

V. Standing Committee Reports

A. Community Outreach Committee - Sub-Committee Reports

Adopt-A-Family - Joan Leard

No report.

Golf Tournament - Dave Scheatzle

Dave found out that Karsten is already booked for Veterans Day this year. He also said that based on his conversations with a number of people regarding sponsorships and financial support for a golf tournament fund raising event, a golf tournament with the past sponsorships will not occur this year. He recommends that ASURA think about waiting until next year to host another golf tournament.

Scholarship - Sue Blumer

This year's recipient of the ASURA scholarship is Elizabeth Clark. She is a psychology and pre-med major. She was a professional ballet dancer after high school but her career was cut short by injury. She has written a letter of thanks to ASURA. There were 30 applications this year, representing an increase over previous years. Due to the increase in the number of applicants, the screening committee may need to change the screening process in the future.

Video History Project - Linda Van Scoy

The equipment approved for purchase in the Spring has been acquired. Three interviews were done in the Spring and more will be done this Fall. There is a need to train more editors and transcribers. The latter may need to be outsourced because it is difficult. Agave has transcriptions of the previous interviews and we need to continue to do this now that ASURA is doing the recordings. These transcriptions are needed for the University Archives. The question of whether or not the office staff could do some of the transcriptions or editing was raised. Mary indicated that she would talk to Carol Moore about this possibility.

Dave Scheatzle mentioned an idea about editing clips of these interviews that might be able to be shown at a luncheon or perhaps put on-line with a link to the ASURA website. Also, some people might like to have clips available for memorials. Dave also asked about printers that could print labels directly on the DVD's rather than using the stick-on labels. Connie McNeill said that these printers are very expensive.

Mary asked Linda to prepare an estimate of what the interviews will cost this coming year.

Linda also indicated that she hopes there will be some fundraising for Video History Project, even though the Golf Tournament is not going to be held this year.

B. Events Committee - Sub-Committee Reports

Luncheons - Jo Madonna

Luncheon dates have not yet been identified and the committee has not yet met. The first luncheon will likely be the Holiday Potluck in December. Mary has forwarded the names of prospective committee members based on information from the ASURA membership applications.

Connie McNeill indicated that she can easily produce rosters of those who indicated interest in volunteering on the membership applications. She will forward rosters for each committee to committee chairs.

Retirees Day - Val Peterson

Retirees Day will be February 20, 2010 at the Memorial Union. It looks like it will be a full program but the keynote speaker has not yet been identified. This committee is looking for a secretary.

Travel - Bill Stasi/Gary Anderson

There are 12 members on this committee. Bill reported that the Verde Canyon Railroad overnight trip is sold out and there are a few on the waiting list. Their records show that 50% of those going have not been on previous ASURA trips. So far 17 people have indicated that they plan to go on the China Trip. There are 2 additional info sessions on this trip scheduled for 9/10 and 10/11. The committee has spent \$212.00 on mailings about these trips and this is half of what was spent on mailings for previous trips.

The committee is planning day trips for the Spring. Being considered are a Dolly Steamboat Ride at Canyon Lake and a theater outing in conjunction with Gammage and the University Club.

C. Finance Committee/Treasurer Report - Joyce Hartman Diaz

No report. Joyce is out of town but will be at the meeting in October. Doug Johnson is also on this committee.

D. Government Liaison Council

ASRS - Alan Johnson

The ASRS investments are recovering at about the same rate as the economy. The Financial Horizons Report is a year behind because it reports on the previous year. ASRS has initiated some effective cost saving initiatives and is considering using web-based communication for much of what is currently sent by US mail.

In February a request was sent to Prime Times by Prof. Alvin Swimmer. He asked that a notice be published inviting readers to contact him if they, like him, felt that the ASRS would be violating the US IRS Code if ASRS reduced System members' benefits at the end of 2009. This notice was not published in Prime Times but was published in the Emeritus College Newsletter. Alan did further research and concluded that his opinion about the legality was unchanged but did note that System members were not adequately informed about the distinction between guaranteed and non-guaranteed benefits. Alan then forwarded the questions to ASRS Director Paul Matson at the end of July. That same day Director Matson showed that the ASRS archives showed System members were adequately informed, and he referred Prof. Swimmer's contention to the ASRS legal department. The Arizona Attorney General has been asked for a ruling on the legality of the possible reduction in benefits. Alan will report back to ASURA when more information is available.

Legislature - Jerry Aronson

Representatives from the equivalent of ASURA from all 3 state universities belong to a Government Liaison Council. In October this council will hold a tri-university meeting at ASU and ASURA will host. Jerry said that when the other two universities host the retirees' organization that president takes the lead, but in the past ASURA's Government Liaison has fulfilled that role. Jerry asked Mary's preference and she responded that she'd prefer that Jerry assume the leadership for this but that she would be happy to give a welcoming to the group. Mary also suggested that the ASURA office volunteers could help with some of the preparation if needed.

E. Health Insurance Liaison Committee - Dick Murra

Dick reported that approximately 60 people attended each of the health insurance discussion groups that he held in preparation for the ADOA insurance open enrollment. He said that his experience is that many retirees don't know if they have their insurance through ASRS or ADOA. He suggested that we might try to capture this information in our database so that ASURA could target communication and it might help with the confusion. Jerry Aronson said that ASRS might be able to tell us which retirees are in which plan. Dick said that he would ask Paul Matson about getting this information.

Wilma Mathews reminded everyone that we have events, such as the health insurance discussion groups, where we should take photos that could be included in Prime Times and on our Web site.

F. Membership and Communications Committee

Membership - Elmer Gooding

ASURA currently has 585 members. In March of 2009 there were 660 members. The membership drive is still in progress so it is difficult to predict the final number of memberships we will have for this year.

Elmer opened a discussion about notifying members of obituaries in a timelier manner. Currently, obituaries are included in Prime Times and occasionally e-mail notices are sent to members by Becky Reiss. Connie McNeill suggested that all obits get sent out on the listserv. Connie will ask Becky to do this as part of her routine of reading the obituaries and reporting of members' deaths. Val Peterson suggested that we no longer include the full obituaries in Prime Times because they take up a great deal of space. He recommends that just a list of names be included and the address for the ASURA webpage where more detail could be included. Connie said that she will put the notices on the webpage as soon as she receives them from Becky.

Newsletter/Prime Times - Mary Stevens

Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.

Obituaries - Mary Stevens

Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.

Web site and Database - Connie McNeill

Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.

VI. Old Business

A. 2010 Membership Drive status - Connie McNeill

Dues (aka "Membership Donation")

We have collected \$11,300 in membership dues donations. We are still in a membership drive and each quarter new retirees will be invited to join. She reported that 163 still-living members from last year have not yet renewed their memberships. A discussion began about whether renewal reminder notices should be sent out again. Mary asked that the Board talk about this again in October.

Additional Donations made with Membership Enrollment

To date, members have donated an additional \$1,432 for operations and \$940 for special projects.

B. Projected Revenue and Expenditures FY 2009-2010 - Carolyn Minner, Connie McNeill

As evidenced by the current budget spreadsheets, ASURA is taking in more money than we are currently spending in operations. In the Special Projects we are spending down our balance and if we do not do any fundraising we will come up short and will have to re-evaluate our options and plans.

After Sue Blumer mentioned at the May meeting that she thought ASURA had a Foundation Endowment Account, Carolyn Minner did subsequently find that one was established in 1997. The current principal is about \$24,000 and \$9,211 can be spent.

VII. New Business

A. Jay Spradling, Assistant Police Chief, ASU Police Department: Volunteers in Police Service Programs

Chief Spradling and the head of the Volunteers in Police Serve Programs spoke to the group about their program. They are recruiting volunteers for all positions and areas. The positions and hours are varied and determined by the volunteer's interest and abilities. Volunteers enjoy free parking during their volunteer shifts.

B. ASURA Scholarship Endowment - Future of Fund - Mary Stevens

Mary informed the Board that although an Endowment Account was established in 1997, an Endowment Agreement was never signed. If ASURA wants to continue the endowment, an agreement must be signed.

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be continued at a future meeting.

C. Additional Revenue Generation Ideas

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

Increased use of e-mail

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

Paid advertising

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

Memorial Gifts

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

Further discussion with Public Affairs

Due to time constraints, this topic will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

VIII. Next Meeting October 14, 2009

IX. Meeting Adjournment

Val Peterson motioned that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Bill Stasi. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.