

## UGARA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wray Nicholson House Conference Room

Monday, November 9, 2015

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

**Present:** Simon Aderibigbe, Tommy Altman, Mark Eason, Freda Scott Giles, Sharron Hannon, Travis Jackson, Ed Kanemasu, Marcus Jennings, Tom Landrum, Tom Lauth, and Sharron Thompson.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Lauth.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the October 12 meeting were approved with one exception—Pat Allen has already retired from UGA.

### **Committee Reports**

- **Treasurer's Report.** The current balance (\$15,183.61) is unchanged from our October meeting. Treasurer Tommy Altman will verify that all web design invoices have been paid.

### **Old Business**

**Retiree Reception.** Pat Allen has agreed to be our speaker. The location site and catering have been reserved and further planning will take place after the first of the year.

### **New Business**

- **Update on UGA HR Retiree Health Enrollment Process and Retiree Insurance Information Center.**

Jackson, from UGA Human Resources, had a conflict and arrived at the meeting late. In his absence, Lauth gave the benefits report update based on information received from Jackson. For the week of November 9, there are 2,109 USG system phone appointments scheduled, 2,169 for the week of November 16, and 500 for the week of Thanksgiving, 112 for the week of November 30, and 4 for the week of December 7. Aon has given UGA a representative to work at the Retiree Insurance Information Center through December 23 due to complaints of poor customer service. USG is continuing to put pressure on Aon because of dissatisfaction thus far with Aon's performance. Phone wait times have been lengthy in respect to when retirees called Aon back after making their initial selection. Altman shared his own personal experience with phone calls to Aon and long wait times while being left on hold and Aon being unable to handle problems or issues that were out of the ordinary. Jackson's report stated that USG is getting a client's scorecard that gives them a snapshot of Aon's performance with data regarding number of retirees contacted and so forth. The report concluded with the statement that the majority of retirees have been satisfied with their initial phone calls when they spoke with a representative, but it is the calls and wait times for retiree calls to Aon's main number that have been the problem. This was one of retirees' concerns upfront that the volume of calls would be an issue to the system. At this point in the UGARA Council meeting Jackson arrived and he further elaborated that there was great USG dissatisfaction with the AON Customer Service phone number and that it had not been staffed appropriately. Aon was not prepared for the large number of calls in to this number. There was no contract nor money exchanged between USG and Aon and USG has been limited in what can be done. Nonetheless, UGS continually brought these issues to AON's attention. Aon has responded with more staffing and customer phone wait times have now been reduced. In response to a question about the future, Jackson stated that future years should be less problematic since only new retirees or retirees wanting to make changes will need to contact AON. One thing that has been brought up is that as a retiree goes through the enrollment process, a full legal disclaimer is read along with the information about a potential price change mid-year. A potential price change in premiums was not clear to Human

Resources nor USG at the beginning of this process. However, there is likely to be a modest increase in insurance premiums once a year and that may occur mid-year. Vendors under AON have variable dates when they may increase their prices while USG insurance was via a contract where employees and retirees were locked into a rate for an entire year. Jackson was also asked how new retirees (for instance, those retiring December 1 or later) will be handled. The Human Resources Office is sending files monthly to AON for those employees who “intend to retire”. Those individuals were not included in the first wave of phone calls from AON, but will be contacted soon. There is a 90-day window outside this initial enrollment period for new retirees to enroll before being dropped out of the system. As a reminder, as Medicare eligible employees begin to retire, the employee should give HR 90 days notice of their pending retirement to make sure their file is forwarded to AON. This information is also being shared with departmental businesspersons so that it can be shared with departmental employees. A question was brought up about the quality of the insurance companies. Scott Giles said she inquired about the quality of the five companies she was offered and was told by the AON representative that information could not be told to her. Jackson pointed out that if a retiree goes to the Centers for Medicare Services (CMS) website, further information about companies can be found there. Also, how their company payments will coordinate with Medicare is also shown on this website.

- UGARA Facebook Page. Hannon reported that people are 164 who “like” the UGARA Facebook page, which means these people are getting all UGARA Facebook posts in their newsfeed. UGARA posts likely reach many more people than that. UGARA Facebook posts are not exclusive to insurance issues, but those get the most attention. If you are not using Facebook, it is worth taking a look, since not all information is provided by UGARA. Individuals can also post links and make comments on the page.
- President’s Report. Lauth had two things to report.
  - (1) University System Retirees Council meeting of October 23. Lauth was asked by Brahm Verma to attend the October 23 meeting. Lauth attended the four-hour meeting via phone. The first part of the meeting was largely informational and consisted of two sets of reports—one from the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources in which she essentially presented to the Retiree Council her PowerPoint which she had previously presented to the Board of Regents and which Lauth had seen previously. This was followed by a presentation by Karen Elliott who is also from the Board of Regents. Her presentation was essentially an update of the current process which has been covered here earlier this morning in our meeting changing the procedure when retirees call back to Aon. While she was fairly critical of the problem, she was also optimistic that the problem had been addressed and resolved. The second part of the meeting (after lunch) was a report from the committee that Verma chairs on the University System Retirees Council on Communications. Verma and two of his colleagues had put together an in-depth report on ways in which the University System could improve communications. In Verma’s absence, the report was presented by two other committee members on how communications could be improved using technology. The other element of the report outlined how the University System should encourage institutions to establish their own Retiree Council that would, in turn, become part of a network of Retiree Councils. The underlying theme of that recommendation was to improve communication throughout the University System. The Council discussed this report and will come back to it in the future. We will wait for further word from Verma what the final disposition of this report recommendation might be.
  - (2) Report on the Three Tasks Given to Lauth by the UGARA Council at our Last Meeting.
    - The first task was to get a speaker for the Retiree’s Reception and, as noted earlier, Pat Allen has agreed to be our speaker. Thanks to Sharron Hannon for making this suggestion at our October meeting. The topic of Allen’s talk will be discussed later between Lauth and Allen.

- The second thing asked was to explore the possibilities with the Gerontology Center about any interest the Center might have in conducting research regarding issues related to the impact of insurance changes on UGA retirees. That task has not yet been done because of Lauth's travel schedule. That contact will be made in the future.
  - The third assignment was to draft a letter to the University System as a result of our UGARA meeting on October 12 with the group of retirees. That task is partially completed. Lauth shared that draft with the Council that is written to Chancellor Huckaby (copy to Marion Fedrick, USG, and Juan Jarrett, UGA) and noted the letter will include some modifications after further input from the group.
- Other New Business:
    - (1) Monitoring Board of Regents Minutes. A suggestion or recommendation was made that the Council monitor the Board of Regents minutes. Mark Eason volunteered to do that since he is also monitoring TRS minutes.
    - (2) Posting UGARA minutes. Hannon followed up on the topic of posting an electronic version of our UGARA minutes on our website. This was initially discussed at our October meeting. There was a discussion that the Council should have the ability to go into Executive session should that be deemed necessary, with the provision that the results of that discussion would then be made public. Scott Giles moved that we post our minutes. The motion was seconded and approved. Hannon and Thompson will work together to get the minutes posted beginning with the 2015 academic year.

**Next Meeting: Monday, January 11, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Sharron C. Thompson, Secretary