Tom Landrum, Council Vice Chair, called the meeting to order and distributed the agenda. The minutes were approved. The order of the agenda was then suspended to allow time for a presentation by Karin Elliott and Jennifer C. Kerrington from the Human Resources offices of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents.

Ms. Elliott and Ms. Kerrington presented information on the One USG Initiative, a new benefits administration system that will impact all USG retirees. This new system will change the way we are billed for our benefits. The most significant change for us is that the UGA debit will change to a vendor debit. Those who are still actively employed will still pay in pre-tax dollars. The switchover will take place on June 26, 2017. A print-out of a power point presentation was distributed.

Individual HR offices will help with the transition. USG will be the repository of retiree information. There will be a grace period. If needed, paper bills will be sent for July payments. At present, billing needs institutional approval and that is still being worked out. Only a small portion of retirees have retained paper billing. Travis stated that issues connected with this transition will be similar to those of the original benefit change. Automatic draft information must be recollected. The guests were given a copy of the retiree survey report and a suggestion was made that multiple means of communication be used to inform retirees of these changes.

A question was raised as to how this new development would complicate the relationship between the retirees and AON. The guests responded that USG administration is working on streamlining communication. They are moving toward a single sign-on system. UGA My Benefits will be eliminated.

Letters will be sent to retirees in March. Nancy suggested that an announcement be placed on our web site and Facebook account. She also suggested communication with Mary Ann Johnson; Tom Landrum will get in touch with her.

Travis stated that our administration has been briefed. After the switchover, all USG retirees will be on one platform and our HR will no longer keep retiree information. Taxation liabilities are one reason for the change.

This change comes at the same time as concern over the Affordable Care Act. It is a broad based move for all employees. The vendor for UGA is not certain; at present it remains AON. HR will help with the process of going into retirement, but USG will be in charge after. System HR’s are trying to arrange access to retiree information once the changeover happens.

The guests were thanked for their presentation; they had to leave for another meeting. We returned to our agenda.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer’s report: $2000 was paid for the retirees survey. The current treasury balance is $12,876.01.

Benefits: Nancy McDuff reported that the Board of Regents is still behind in posting meeting minutes and attachments. The new administrative change was discussed by the BOR in October 2016 but the
discussion goes back to September 2013. Agendas for November and December 2016 and January 2017 are posted, but minutes for these meetings are not. Nancy has had difficulty getting information. Travis noted that the new benefits initiative may include a spousal surcharge for spouses with insurance outside USG.

Communications: Nancy stated that there is still no information on soft benefits on our website. Travis stated that he will get updated information.

Tom Lauth stated that the next USG UGARA council meeting will be held in April.

Old Business:

Tom Landrum reported that the meeting with Pres. Morehead was beneficial and productive, and that he and Mark Eason expressed appreciation for the President’s support. He also stated that the plans for the retirees reception are proceeding well.

The Nominating Committee consists of Laura, Tom Landrum and Mark. The slate of prospective officers and new members is as follows:

Officers: Vice Chair, Nancy McDuff; Treasurer, Paul Kurtz; Secretary, Tom Eaton.
New Members: Marilyn Huff-Waller (College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences); Ruhanna Neal (Franklin College of Arts and Sciences); Henry Hibbs (College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences).

All have agreed to serve if elected. Voting will take place at the March meeting. Prospective new council members will be asked for brief bios.

Tom Lauth stated that the UGA representative to the USG council is the past president of the UGARA Council. The USG should be informed of the incoming past president member.

Announcement: The UGA chapter of UGAREA is dissolving.

Save the date: New Retirees Reception: April 27.

The next meeting will be March 13.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Freda Scott Giles, Secretary