Minutes
UGARA Meeting
October 9, 2018

In attendance: Ken Schroder, Jim Cobb, Henry Hibbs, Hugh Ruppersburg, Travis Jackson, Tom Jackson, Tom Landrum, Nancy McDuff and guests, Patrice Masterson, Sarah Covert

Nancy McDuff called the meeting to order at 1:00pm in the Conference Room of Human Resources and asked for the indulgence of the Board to adjust the agenda as Associate Provost Sarah Covert had asked to address the group. Since the minutes of the last meeting were not available, that was dispensed with and the agenda was adjusted to provide an opportunity for Dr. Covert to speak at the beginning of the meeting.

Dr. Covert explained that the Office of Faculty Affairs is seeking feedback from retired faculty to assist the office in planning programming to assist faculty in pre-retirement planning as well as continued engagement post-retirement. She was hoping to partner with UGARA in obtaining faculty feedback. It was decided that initially UGARA could post on the Facebook and website information about opportunities to meet with staff from Faculty Affairs to share information and then perhaps later to send an email to retired faculty from UGARA.

After Dr. Covert left the meeting, a further discussion was held that since UGARA represents both faculty and staff, that if only faculty feedback was sought, that there may be some concern from staff. Nancy McDuff agreed to contact Dr. Covert with this concern.

Committee reports:

Treasurer’s report. Tom Eaton was not present, but Nancy McDuff explained that the balance in the fund had not changed as there had been no funds used and currently stands at $12,190.41.

Benefits report. Hugh Ruppersburg noted that the next Board of Regents meeting is in October and nothing is posted on the BOR website regarding any changes to retiree benefits. Travis Jackson concurred and noted that open enrollment for pre-65 retirees is approaching with a guide book which was distributed to the board. It was recommended that this information could be communicated on the Facebook and website.

Communications report. Jim Cobb reported that it is best to post information on the Facebook with links to elsewhere rather than requiring a comment back from the person monitoring the Facebook. His most often asked questions regard photos from the Retiree Reception. He also noted that most of the followers on Facebook are staff. Tom Jackson noted that he often posts parallel information between the Facebook and website.

Reception report. Lacy Wilholt was not able to attend the meeting but Nancy McDuff informed the board that there are recommendations in play to make changes to the location, format and who is invited to the New Retirees reception. It is hoped that with some changes, the attendance might improve for this event. Currently we are waiting on feedback from President Morehead.
USG Retiree Council report. Tom Landrum noted that the next meeting will be on October 25th and that neither he, nor Nancy McDuff (alternate), will be able to attend, but that he is sending his proxy to Mark Eason, currently an officer with the USG Council and former UGA representative to the council.

Old Business:

Nancy McDuff gave a brief overview of the AROHE (Association of Retiree Organizations in Higher Education) meeting just attended and promised to bring some suggestions to the board for additional engagement of retirees at a future meeting.

Travis Jackson and Patrice Masterson noted that they have placed the electronic version of the BOR new Planning for Retirement Guide on the website for use by individuals. It can be found on the USG website at https://www.usg.edu/assets/hr/benefits_docs/USG_Retirement_Planning_9_21_18FINAL.pdf Currently there are no plans to print or distribute the brochure.

Travis had to leave, but Patrice helped walk through the process by which an employee makes plans to retire. Usually the employee will meet with an advisor in HR and with a financial plan advisor (if on ORP) and when they decide to retire should notify their supervisor in writing who then accepts the retirement. The department can then fill out the paperwork to terminate the employee and HR can make changes so that benefits change. With the new One Source this process may be revised. Patrice noted that it is in the employees’ best interest to complete this notification 60 days prior to retiring so that all paperwork is complete in a timely manner. This led to a discussion of the need for regular workshops for employees considering retirement so that they have the best information in hand for decision making. It was suggested that this could be a regular training and development offering for any faculty or staff member.

There being no further business, after reminders of the next meeting on November 13th and New Retiree Reception on April 25th, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22pm.