Towson University Retired Faculty Association Executive Committee Minutes from Tuesday, October 15, 2019, Enrollment Services Rm 207

Attending: Tracy Miller, Fran Bond, Martha Siegel, Ron Matlon, Don Forester, Florence Newman, Peg Benner, Jim Paulsen, Patricia Alt, Dave Larkin, Jane Wolfson, Ray Castaldi and Committee member Robert Hanson

Absent: Ellie Hofstetter, Annette Chappell

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 by President Miller.

1. President Miller Introduced guests Helen Dunne and Isoken Awodipe (aka “Yore”) from the Department of Human Resources. Ms. Dunne announced that Ms. Awodipe, a Senior Benefits Specialist, has assumed responsibilities for guiding future retirees through the retirement process. Our discussion focused on potential changes to the retiree prescription drug benefits. We were told that proposed changes remained in limbo pending the outcome of the court case challenging the changes. There would be no change for current retirees until January 2021 at the earliest. Human Resources is committed to keeping us up to date as best they can. Current information on retiree benefits is available on the State’s DBM website. At the current time, retirees who wish to retain their current health benefits need to do nothing. Changes can be processed by paper as always.

There will be a benefits fair on October 25 in the Chesapeake Rooms of the University Union. Retirees are welcome to attend and learn about employee discount benefits that we can use.

2. The minutes from the September 17, 2019, meeting were reviewed and accepted with minor corrections.

3. President’s report (Miller)
   a. Michele Frazier from the Provost’s Office, who has been helping with various TURFA tasks, will be leaving the University towards the end of October. It is anticipated that the new TURFA liaison will be hired before Michele leaves. We have also received considerable help from Jerri Sumwalt and Amy Rinnier over the past month.

   b. President Miller will be sending out a “Presidents Letter” to the membership in the next few days. We have quite a few things to share, and there is no reason to wait to inform the membership of these events.
c. The Tech Tune-up will be held on November 15 from 1-4 p.m. at 7800 York Road, Room 302. One topic to discuss is the Share Point Drive.

d. The scheduled meeting between several members of the Executive Committee and the President of the University to discuss the Oral History Project has been rescheduled to November 5. The exact time of the meeting is being confirmed.

e. Activities or speakers associated with the Retiree Brunch, to be held on June 12, 2020, need planning now. Similarly, we need to start to plan early for next year’s fall event.

f. Members of the UMBC Wisdom Institute are excited to join us for the TU vs. UMBC basketball game on 12/10 in the SECU arena. We need to promote this to our membership. President Miller has secured a suite for us at SECU and has the support of Athletics and Development, who will presumably provide refreshments.

g. The TURFA fall lecture by Jacqui Hedberg was a success! Attendance was good, and our speaker sold all the books she had brought with her. There was poor participating in the planned “after-the-lecture hosting for cocktails,” and President Miller will be reimbursed for hosting the speaker and her husband on her own.

h. Dr. Jack Fruchtman, a new TURFA member and recent retiree from Political Science, has agreed to present the first talk in our new seminar series. It is scheduled for November 1 at 3:15 p.m., and the topic is “Presidential Power and the Impeachment Process.” It is scheduled for CLA 4310, and Osher members have been invited. We need to inform our membership ASAP.

i. As the result of their successful meeting with Associate Provost Maggie Reitz, J. Topping, D. Larkin and President Miller were able to resolve the financial restrictions on the Research and Scholarship Funds. New language has been added to the language used by the Research and Scholarship application materials stating that ‘the grant process encourages current and past student participation where possible.’ The committee is waiting for approval from the Associate Provost of this change in language.

j. Matlon has the list of new emeriti. Once we get a list of who is missing from departmental listings, he will ask the Provost to ask the Department
 Chairs to add the missing names to their faculty rosters on the on-line catalog.

k. Our next meeting is November 19 at 1:00 p.m., and President Miller will ask Assistant Provost, Patricia Westerman, head of FACET, to attend our meeting.

4. Treasurer’s Report (Castaldi)
   a. To date, the number of new members is 23. Total membership stands at 111 of which 28 (~25%) are lifetime members. At the current time, 32 members have not paid for the current year. An updated Member Retention and Recruitment List has been furnished to President Miller for follow up.
   b. TURFA Cash Account Balance = $7,305.39; TURFA Oral History Project Fund Balance = $4,248.38; TURFA Research and Scholarship Fund = $585.00.

5. Provost’s Office
   a. Bond reported that as of right now, there is no named TURFA liaison with the Provost’s Office but that could be resolved in the next few weeks. She also reported that Michele Frazier is leaving, and the hope is that the new person will be appointed before Michele leaves.

   b. Bond indicated that the FACET Office on the fourth floor of the library, is excellent space. The goal is to assist faculty with research, scholarship, publications and teaching. Westerman will be invited to our next meeting.

   c. Because of scheduling conflicts, Larkin has agreed to replace Bond on the Graduate Dean Search committee. He reports that 13 applications have been received and that quite a few candidates seem very interesting. Applications are still being accepted.

6. Committee Reports
   a. Website: Matlon has reviewed the current TURFA Website and sent a list of 24 changes to Amy Rinnier who began to make them immediately. He asked that we review the changes once they are completed. The addition of a second Share Point site was also discussed, and a request was made that Share Point be added as a topic to the Tech Tune-up.
b. Program and Events: Paulsen reported that a trip to AVAM is being organized for 10/25 to start at 1:00 p.m. Those who wish to carpool should meet at Osher at 12:10 p.m. Miller is organizing a trip to the Newseum in Washington DC for Dec 7.

c. Research and Scholarship: Larkin is waiting for the Associate Provost to give an OK for the changes in the Research and Scholarship application

d. Oral History: Forester reported that the next three interviews are scheduled for 10/25. There was discussion about the increased interest on campus for interviews with retired faculty and how we might link to these efforts.

e. Senate: Siegel reported that at the current time, the business of the Senate is not relevant to TURFA. TURFA does have a vote and at some point, we might have important insights to share. Our presence reflects that we remain a part of the academic community

f. Legislative Issues: Alt had nothing to report since the legislature will not meet until January but said she will check to see whether there is a relationship between Kirwan funding and Pimlico funding and if these new initiatives could impact prescription drug benefits for retirees.

g. The Advocate: Newman reported that The Advocate went out in early October as scheduled. She received high praise from the committee for her excellent work.

h. Emeriti Search and Recognition: Matlon reported that the list of all emeriti faculty is not yet completed.

i. Financial Planning: Castaldi had no report at this time.

7. New Business
   a. A list of non-renewing members and non-joining new retirees will be shared with the Executive Committee who will select individuals to contact and attempt to recruit.

   b. We now have two Share Point sites and Benner, Matlon and Miller will meet and decide what materials should be public and which materials should be accessible only to the Executive Committee.

   c. We received a request to use the TURFA space for tutoring by a lapsed TURFA member. It was decided that the calendar on the website needs to be used to schedule the TURFA space and that the requested use would be permitted once the former member renewed membership and
added the requested time to the calendar. The Executive Committee agreed that TURFA committee meetings would always take precedence over individual meetings.

The meeting was adjourned by President Miller at 3:40.

Respectfully submitted by Jane L. Wolfson, Secretary of TURFA