

The Association of The University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting February 27, 2025 Minutes
Held in person and Zoom

I. Call to order. The Board meeting was called to order on February 27, 2025 by President Harvey Sterns at 10:08 am.

II. Welcome & Announcements:

Members attending: Harvey Sterns, Mary Verstraete, Linda Sugarman, Diane Vukovich, Tom Vukovich, Dan Sheffer, Kathy DuBose, Ali Hajjafar, Bob Huff (Zoom), Tom Nichols, Richard Milford, Doug Hausknecht

Absent: Mel Vye, Martha Vye, Carl Leiberman, Richard Steiner, George Haritos, Rita Klein

Harvey announced that many things are happening on campus related to DEI, including the non-funding of Rethinking Race.

III. Approval of Minutes: The Minutes from January were presented for approval. Two minor corrections were identified and corrected. The minutes were approved with corrections.

IV. Treasurer's Report:

January 2025

UA Account income: Membership dues \$ 15.00

	UA Account	Petty Cash	Totals
Initial Balance	\$13855.44	\$304.18	\$14159.62
Income	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$15.00
Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Final Balance	\$13870.44	\$304.18	\$14174.62*
Final Balance			
Jan. 2024	\$12148.62	\$322.48	\$12471.10*

* These include dues payments for future years.

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V. Corresponding Secretary. Linda Sugarman reported that she saw Kent Marsden's Obituary in the Akron Beacon Journal, but there was no current address to send a card to.

VI. Committee Reports.

A. Programs: Tom Vukovich thanked Mel Vye for presenting at the last luncheon.

The Spring schedule is set and Dr. David Licate will be our next speaker. Mary will handle the finances for the Lunch.

On April 16th, Dr. Douglas Hausknecht will be the speaker. Tom and Diane are looking into a road trip to Mercer County, PA. Tentative date is April 25th.

Lobster and Suds has been confirmed at Hampton Ridge on May 16th.

Harvey announced that a celebration of Age Friendly Akron will occur as a part of the Akron Bicentennial. A meeting is planned for May 13th. Harvey asked if the AUAR Board would be willing to co-sponsor the event. Mary moved that we co-sponsor the event and Doug seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

B. Membership: Dan Sheffer reported for Mel Vye that we have 150 paid members, including 53 Life members. 47 members are in arrears from 2024 and we need another push to get these previous members and other to join.

C. Political Action: Dan Sheffer reported that the Windfall Elimination Provision passed and the Social Security Windfall bill be retroactive to January 2024. This will allow retirees to recoup the losses from Social Security. Linda reported that spouses will need to apply for Social Security benefits to take advantage of this.

Dan reported that Senate Bill 1 passed and is now in Committee as House Bill 6 and it is likely to pass. Numerous reports will be required in the future related to Course syllabi, course evaluations, etc. Post-tenure review will also become required each five years, a reporting system will be developed for improper topics being discussed in class and faculty unions will not be allowed to strike, as well as other provisions are included.

OCHER has not met since November. The next meeting is scheduled in March. One big issue is increasing employers contributions to STRS.

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- D. Benefits:** Linda's report was included in the previous discussion.
- E. Faculty Senate:** Doug's summary notes are included at the end of these minutes.
- F. University & Community Service/Website:** Dan Sheffer reported that the website is up to date.
- G. Scholarship:** Interim Chair Rita Klein had no report. A reminder to ask Life Members for scholarship donations during membership renewal.
- H. Newsletter:** Harvey thanked Martha for her continued hard work on the Newsletter.

VII. Old Business.

Ad Hoc Reference Committee on By-Laws: Harvey Sterns, Dan Sheffer, Rita Klein, Linda Sugarman and Carl Leiberman. The Committee will meet in March to review the By-Laws and to discuss the need/responsibilities of a Vice President.

VIII. New Business.

Dan reminded the Board that we need to have a slate of officers for the March Board meeting. Mary will e-mail the Board with the procedures and the list of positions to be filled.

IX. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 am.

Respectfully Submitted: Mary C. Verstraete, Recording Secretary

The next meeting of the 2023-2024 year is scheduled for March 27, 2025 at 10:00 am in the Infocision Board Room.

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NOTES FROM FACULTY SENATE 6 February 2025

- **Chair remarks:**
 - The new version of the Higher Education Reform Senate Bill 1 (SB1). And House Bill 6 (HB6) is moving quickly through the legislature. Senators and faculty encouraged to weigh in.
 - Rethinking Race to be discussed later
 - ICE protocols were distributed for consistent response on campus
 - Search committee for Provost was being formed
- **In the absence of the president we heard only from the provost**
 - The publicized cancellation of Rethinking Race (RR) was discussed at some length. There was no event scheduled for spring and the 2025-2026 budget is not yet created. There was no plan to include RR in the upcoming budget. The decision was made prior recent news out of Washington. Best described as in transition. (NB: Public letters from the Trustees Chair and the President were not available as of the meeting.)
- **Committees**
 - Discussion from the prior meeting regarding “interim grades” was followed up with a proposal to simplify the process to simply assigning NC (No Credit) to those students who were not making adequate progress by roughly 1/3 of a term. That grade would ultimately be replaced by the course grade. Students would be notified to consult instructor and/or advisor.
 - The recommendations for General Education revision are to be voted on in March. In general: a First Year Seminar that can be discipline-specific would be included; Arts/Humanities requirement to drop from 9 to 5 credits; Speech to be recommended rather than required.
- **Other**
 - AAUP is working through retrenchment with administration. Also recommended speaking up regarding SB1.
 - USG and GSG reported activities. USG hosted Ohio Student Governments on campus.
- **New business**
 - The Senate voted in favor of a resolution to bring back Rethinking Race in calendar 2025, subject to legal considerations.