

**The Association of The University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)  
Executive Board Meeting January 28, 2021 Minutes  
Held via Zoom**

**I. Call to order.** The Board meeting was called to order on January 28, 2021 at 10:02 am by President Dan Sheffer.

**II. Welcome & Announcements:**

Members attending via Zoom or phone: Jo Ann Collier, Ali Hajjafar, John Heminger, Rita Klein, Ed Lasher, Tom Nichols, Neal Raber, Dan Sheffer, Linda Sugarman, Mel Vye, Martha Vye, Diane Vukovich, Tom Vukovich, Richard Steiner, Carl Lieberman, Laura Moss-Spitler

Absent with notice: Cathy Edwards, Bob Gandee, Tim Lillie

**III. Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the December 3, 2020 Board meeting were approved as written.

**IV. Treasurer's Report.**

John Heminger reported budget data for November and December:

**November 2020**

UA account income: dues \$36.00

UA account expenses: \$0.00

Petty Cash income: \$0.00

Petty Cash expenses: \$0.00

	UA Account	Petty Cash	Totals
Initial balance	\$10,830.78	\$79.40	\$10,910.18
Income	\$36.00	\$0.00	\$36.00
Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Final balance	\$10,866.78	\$79.40	\$10,946.18
November 2019			
Final balance	\$10,589.66	\$237.49	\$10,827.15

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**December 2020**

UA account income: dues \$36.00

UA account expenses: Print Services Dept. \$1137.58

Petty Cash income: \$0.00

Petty Cash expenses: \$0.00

	UA Account	Petty Cash	Totals
Initial balance	\$10,866.78	\$79.40	\$10,946.18
Income	\$36.00	\$0.00	\$36.00
Expenses	\$1,137.58	\$0.00	\$1,137.58
Final balance	\$9,765.20	\$79.40	\$9,844.60
December 2019			
Final balance	\$10,554.51	\$245.51	\$10,800.02

The report was approved subject to audit.

**V. Corresponding Secretary.** Linda Sugarman reported sympathy cards had been sent to the wife and family of Donald Jenkins, former dean of the law school and to Charmane Streharsky upon the passing of her husband.

**VI. Committee Reports.**

**A. Programs:** Tom & Diane Vukovich reported that the program dates and topics planned for Spring 2021 programs are:

February 17, 2021 Dr. Paul Weinstein – The Swinging (back & forth)  
Generations: The Pendulum Theory of American Political History

March 17, 2021 Mr. Victor Fleischer – Goodyear Tire and Rubber  
Company: A Photographic History

April 21, 2021 Dr. Harvey Sterns – The City of Akron – Is it an Age-  
Friendly City?

All speakers have been contacted and program topics have been confirmed. The usual Lobster & Suds and Road Trip events which occur in the spring have been suspended pending changes in the restrictions due to the Covid pandemic

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**B. Membership:** Mel Vye reported a total of 68 new members, total of 223 active members, total on book of 301. Scholarship contributions for December of \$45.

**C. Political Action.** No report. Dan Sheffer noted that OCHER has not met since last fall.

**D. Benefits.** Linda Sugarman reported:

**AUAR**

**Benefits Report  
January 2021**

As of January 1, 2021, most of the valuable benefits that retirees had are gone. You can find the remainder of the retiree benefits in the rules and regulations of the University and when updated on the AUAR website.

The University arbitrarily and unilaterally eliminated both Retiree Dependent Health Benefits and life insurance benefits as of 12/31/2020 for non-bargaining unit members. All who retired before there were unions in their area were considered non bargaining unit members.

At the December 9, 2020 University of Akron Board meeting a resolution was passed eliminating Retiree Dependent insurance for AAUP bargaining unit members as of January 31, 2021.

At the December 9, 2020 University of Akron Board meeting a resolution was passed eliminating Life Insurance for those Retirees who still had it.

Both of these benefits were promises made to retirees either at the time they were hired or a little later on. The retiree health benefit was supposedly grandfathered in during the 1990's for employees who were hired before a certain date and the retiree life insurance for many was a signed agreement between the University and the employee in the 1970's

One of the rationales the University has used is that no other University in Ohio offered this benefit. the present administration ignored the fact that for many these benefits were in lieu of higher salaries offered by other Universities at the time. The University also ignored what were contractual agreements that were reaffirmed at time of retirement. The University disavowed letters that had been sent to some retiree dependents that they had lifetime Retiree Dependent Health Insurance.

The University of Akron's new motto as printed in the Beacon Journal "keeping our Promises" is not true in regard to retirees as promises were broken. **THE UNIVERSITY MOTTO SHOULD BE "PROMISES ARE MEANT TO BE BROKEN".**

For your information

Drug benefits were provided to retiree dependents through CAREMARK ( a pharmaceutical benefits manager). Caremark covered several drugs that had become over the counter at low prices. At least two of these drugs were offered at no cost. Other pharmaceutical drug managers do not do this.

A former retiree dependent found that his no cost drug with Caremark was unbelievably costly under his new pharmaceutical drug manager.

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The solution in many cases for over-the-counter-drugs is to buy them at retail. The best prices appear to be at Sam's Club and Costco. Check out other retailers for possible lower prices.

Remember your benefits under new insurance may be different than your retiree dependent insurance.

**E. Faculty Senate.** Ali Hajjafar reported:

Faculty Senate Meeting December 3, 2020

Chair Saliga called the meeting to order. In her remarks, she mentioned items that would be covered during the meeting. She said that the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Senate has accepted an administrative position and therefore a new secretary has to be elected. The new secretary was elected after special announcements.

President Miller in his remark encouraged the campus community to be as careful as possible during the holiday. He said testing is still available. Make appointment if you need to be tested. He commented on November elections and some work in progress in lame duck session. In Federal level he said we don't know who the secretary of education will be and some of our alumni may be tapped for other positions. Compromised version of COVID relief is in progress but we don't know how much universities will receive. In State level, he said Republicans have super majority in both Senate and House. Summit County delegation stayed the same and they help the university a lot. He said Chair of BOT Gingo and I are asking for Bill 404, which will have BOT meeting virtually. He said we are lobbying for Capital Bill. The University has a large project on the original Capital Bill and that is the rebuild of Ayer Hall, Crouse Hall, and McLain Gallery. He mentioned as part of CARE Act, the University received \$600,000 in support of mental health and temporary subvert costs related to Police Department who are interacting with City Police. He said State budget conversations have just started. There are possibilities that economy might take another dip if we don't get relief and that would affect state budget. We are instructed to create our budget with static or 10% shortfall. He talked about Senate Bill 40, which is a campus free speech Bill. He said it is an interesting legislation requiring ways that we manage free speech by making the whole campus a free speech zone. He said we don't know the details of how it affects our policies. It does require us to prevent Heckler's veto and we'll be looking at that. At the end he said that the University Council Executive Committee has urged the administration to move forward for diversity and inclusion. He said we ask them to wait for report from workgroup on inclusion coming at the end of the year.

Provost Weincek in his remark mentioned that Capital Bill has a good chance to move forward. He also mentioned that we are continuing to move forward with searches for leadership positions. The search for BCAS Dean is finished. It is in referencing phase and would like to make announcement before Christmas or right after. College of Business' search is ongoing. College of polymer Science and Engineering's will be launched in spring. Heather Howley has accepted the interim position for Director of Branch Campuses. Search for a permanent Director will begin in spring. He said Steve Ash is chairing a group to develop permanent planning process for campus and committee will make recommendation to do that. He talked about the

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indicator of students applying to universities. According to Crain's they are significantly down. Also noted a decline in admission applications. On reasons for the decline he explained because of COVID issues, some students are thinking of taking a gap year. Also some High Schools are still virtual and students are not seeing their advisors to receive help for filling applications and being motivated for early applications. He said we have seen some uptick in application after a reminder was sent. Applications are coming and we are going to extend that incentive through January 4<sup>th</sup>. Regarding students who have dropped below 12 credits and that have impacted their financial aid, he said we have made it clear to those students that we want them and we are allowing them to continue with our financial aid. We are doing everything we can to retain our students.

After provost's remark Eric Green the Director of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety Department gave an update on COVID and answered questions regarding how the University is dealing with it.

In Committee reports, APC brought three motions to the floor. The first motion was regarding changing four-digit course code from numbers to alpha codes (for example the code for English Department changes from 3300 to ENGL). The second motion was regarding name changes for the College of Health Profession (CHP) and schools within the college,

Summary of name changes are:

- Department of Social Work to School of Social Work and Family Sciences
- Department of Disaster Sciences and Emergency Services to the School of Disaster Science and Emergency Services
- School of Sports Science and Wellness Education and the School of Nutrition and Dietetics merged to School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
- CHP to College of Health and Human Sciences

The third motion was regarding the creation of a center for intelligence and security studies submitted by Karl Klatenthaler. Although APC had approved the request, since it had not been forwarded to the senators one week in advance the approval was postponed until February meeting.

CRC brought course and program proposals to the floor.

CCTC reported that they would bring a resolution to Faculty Senate regarding web conferencing in February.

Part-Time Faculty Committee submitted a written report.

AAUP representative reported that they are still in negotiation.

Graduate Council representative reported that they have voted on the restructure of the council based on colleges restructuring.

University Council representative reported of an alarming result found in a GSG survey of grad students that 77% could be considered clinically depressed. It was suggested to pay more attention to grad students.

In the New Business USG brought a resolution to the floor regarding endorsing the adoption of Credit/No Credit offerings to students for the Fall 2020 semester. According to this, students could petition to have their final grade converted to a Credit / No Credit. The process for this petition involved the student submitting a request outlining the reasons for their request and being submitted to the faculty member and chair of department.

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**F. University & Community Service/Website.** Dan reported he is updating information posted on the site. He has been summarizing responses to the questionnaire sent to members about the cancellation of life and health insurance. Several nonmembers of AUAR have expressed an interest in joining the organization after seeing its coverage of the issues affecting retirees and dependents.

**G. Scholarship.** No report

**H. Newsletter.** Chair Martha Vye reported that the newsletter was completed and sent to printing services for mailing. Members should be receiving them soon. She said she needed some guideline for which people were appropriate to include in the "In Memoriam" section of the newsletter. For example, is it to be restricted to AUAR members only. Diane Lazzarini scans obituaries in the newspaper and also has expressed the need for some criteria for selection. Martha introduced a motion to address this.

**Motion:** Entries in the "In Memoriam" section of the newsletter may include anyone employed by the University of Akron. A person does not necessarily have to be an AUAR member.

Motion passed by voice vote, no negative votes or abstentions.

**VII. Old Business.** None.

**VIII. New Business.**

**A. Nominating Committee** – Dan Sheffer noted that the Nominating Committee is charged with presenting a slate of nominees for open positions on the board for 2021 / 2022 elections. According to the bylaws, there shall be three members consisting of the three at-large members whose terms do not expire until 2022. Dan reminded the group that since Jaci Wilbanks position has not been filled, a third person is needed. The membership of the committee will be returning members Dick Steiner, and Tim Lillie, with Ali Hajiifar volunteering to serve as well. The group will confer about procedures, open positions, and possible candidates and appoint a chair. Ed Lasher agreed to send copies of previous ballots and letters to candidates to members of the committee to serve as templates.

**B. Motion** presented by Neal Raber:

Due to the pandemic, we have had to hold our Board meetings using ZOOM and ZOOM has also been necessary for our luncheon meetings. President Dan Sheffer has hosted these meetings and AUAR has successfully continued due to his efforts. Previously, no President of AUAR has had to

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deal with so many member difficulties similar to the ones encountered this past year.

In that we have not had to pay any honorariums, nor any luncheon service costs, I move that President Sheffer be reimbursed for the cost of his ZOOM account to the tune of \$15 a month for the past year which comes to \$180. His personal use of the account should be considered a perk of the position and gratitude from the members of AUAR for his outstanding efforts dealing with the unprecedented duties he has so ably managed during the pandemic. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.

**IX. Adjournment** The meeting adjourned at 11:08 am.

**Respectfully submitted:  
Jo Ann Collier, Recording Secretary**

**Next meeting will be February 25, 2021 via Zoom at 10:00am**

- Meeting Schedule for 2020-21: August 27, 2020; September 24, 2020; October 22, 2020; December 3, 2020; January 28, 2021; February 25, 2021; March 25, 2021; April 22, 2021; May 20, 2021; June 24, 2021 (Photos of the 2021-2022 board will be taken at the June 24, 2021 meeting).