

RETIREE ASSOCIATION BOARD MINUTES
Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024
10 a.m., in-person, MAC Hall Vista Room

Attendance: President Dan Spielmann, Craig Lockard, Pat Przybelski, Curt Heuer, Carol Emmons, Chris Sampson, Frank Madzarevic
Guest: Brian Rammer

Approval of minutes

Emmons/Lockard moved to approve minutes of the September and November meeting minutes, with typo corrections noted by Przybelski. Motion passed.

Update on UW-Green Bay developments

Alumni relations director Rammer updated board members on recent news from campus. He elaborated on the Chancellor Alexander letter to campus that Brian had previously sent to the Board. The letter highlighted the direction of the university in the Chancellor's three years here and noted a substantial increase in enrollment, including a 15% increase in Latino students at UW-Green Bay. Brian mentioned the Council of Trustees dinner on Monday night where UW System President Jay Rothman was in attendance and appeared very supportive of UWGB and its recent direction. In other news, it was noted that Provost Burns continues to lead discussion on changes to several majors and minors. Brian also mentioned the end of in-person classes at UW-Marinette and the upcoming Tommy Thompson Center program on February 22, 2024 at the Weidner Center.

President's report on scheduling of spring 2024 Retiree events

Spielmann said plans are in place for a Retiree Association reception at the Women's Basketball game at the Kress Center on Saturday, Feb. 24. Similar to last year, we will meet at the concourse-level "deck" overlooking the playing court. Unlike last year, there will be an earlier start time, 12 noon, or one hour before tipoff. Light snacks and good conversation. Bring your friends. Athletics will offer discounted \$8 admission for retirees who don't already have season tickets (many do). The estimated food service and refreshments charge to the Retiree association will be under \$250, which is in the budget.

Additionally, Dan said biology professor Dan Meinhardt, curator of the Richter Museum of Natural History, is agreeable to hosting a special Retirees Association tour of the Richter. The date will be finalized and announced soon. It is likely to take place during the month of April.

Discussion of possible new 'Conversations' or 'Issues' series

Chris Sampson and Brian Rammer shared a summary of their late-December planning meeting (which included fellow Retirees board member Christine Style) on the concept of the Retiree Association organizing periodic, topical programs on issues of interest. Among the ideas mentioned:

- Programs would be on-campus and in-person, with discussions/presentations that would best involve co-presenters/speakers, likely with a current

practitioner/professor joining forces with a veteran (retiree) voice for added historical perspective; ideally, these would also have a virtual option or podcast archive.

- Might combine with a Retiree reception afterward and perhaps also a regularly scheduled board meeting (beforehand?).
- Would cross-market and try to attract audiences via Alumni and current-students/current-department channels; also, open to community at large.
- Realistically, might begin with one program during the fall semester, and another during the spring semester; the series would launch no sooner than September or October 2024.
- Format might be similar to the “Phoenix Forum Speaker Series” of a few years ago that then-alumni director Kari Moody found success with, before participation lagged post-COVID. (Sampson said he has talked to Moody to gain her opinions on whether there’s a niche today for this type of campus programming and, if so, how much time and effort would be involved.)
- Best advice is to look to partner with potential co-sponsors on campus to share workload and any expense and also aid with publicity. Rammer said the Alumni Relations Office would likely have interest. The Lifelong Learning Institute is potentially a very good initial contact because of their history with adult learners and learning-in-retirement programming.
- It was agreed that the first year’s or first semester’s program topic(s) will need to be audience-pleasers to get the series off on the right foot. It was agreed that Style, Sampson and Rammer should meet soon, develop a proposal and return to the Retiree Board of Directors at the April meeting with full details, in order to decide whether to proceed.

The board weighed potential topics for a kickoff program in a (tentatively titled) Conversations series. Sampson again raised the idea that politics (local, state or national) would certainly be timely in 2024, while others noted that, now more than ever, anything politics-related would be tricky to navigate and off-putting to many. Emmons mentioned the recent successes of the Packers on the field and the UWGB-sponsored course on Packers history in the classroom, and suggested we couldn’t go wrong if we can identify a faculty/institutional/historic hook for our first program. The group agreed. Other possibilities to explore include a then-and-now look at Cofrin Biodiversity efforts perhaps with Bob Howe and Erin Giese; also a then-now-and-future conversation about libraries, especially with plans progressing to knock down the eight-story UWGB library in coming years and replace it with something shiny, smaller and much different.

Dates for next board meeting, summer cookout

The next meeting of the Retiree Association Board of Directors was set for 9:30 a.m. Thursday, April 25. The tentative date for the summer cookout is July 25.

Adjournment was moved and seconded and approved at about 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sampson, Recording secretary