

Council of University of California Retiree Associations (CUCRA)

April 27, 2023

8:00 a.m. – 12noon

Spring Meeting

Zoom meeting hosted by Santa Barbara

ATTENDEES:

UC Berkeley: Marian Gade, Camille Koue, Patti Owen, Cary Sweeney

UC Davis: Jo Anne Boorkman, Juliane Crowley, Emily Galindo, Dianne Gregory, John Meyer, Pam Solano, Larry Thao

UC Irvine: Cindy Fern, Jill Halvaks, Emil Nguyen, Pat Price, Marianne Schnaubelt

UC Los Angeles: Sue Abeles, Sue Barnes, John Dahl, Ayesha Dixon, Elaine Fox, Adrian Harris, Jack Powazek, Judith Tuch

UC Merced:

UC Riverside: Bob Daly, Cristina Otegui, Andy Plumley, Karim Zahedi

UC San Diego: Vania Bailon

UC San Francisco: E. Eastman, Gail Harden, Eric Vermillion

UC Santa Barbara: Robert Mann, Ellen Pasternack, Kim Summerfield

UC Santa Cruz: Christy Dawley, Frank Trueba

LANL:

LBNL: Robert Cahn, Nancy Brown

LLNL: Jeff Garberson

UCOP: Jim Dolgonas, Bernadette Green, David Olson, Connie Williams

Welcome

John Meyer called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed the attendees. During introductions, he introduced the honorary members, Marian Gade and Adrian Harris.

He then reviewed the agenda, as well as, the conversation with Cheryl Lloyd. He also advised that the order of the agenda would change to allow for David Olsen to present the audit report and to have the treasurer's report. The order was changed to allow for a discussion of the financials and revenue sharing before the later discussion on meeting formats.

Approval of Minutes

Patti Owen presented the minutes from the October 27, 2022, meeting. She noted that the minutes referred to the attached amendment to the Standing Rules, which was not included. Bob Daly pointed out the header said Spring Meeting instead of Fall. Jim Dolgonas asked for clarification of the role of UC Health. The minutes were approved with those changes.

Chair's Report

John M. pointed out the report posted to the meeting website which highlighted the last six months. He feels the pain from the RASC issues, and they keep the Centers from doing their work. UCOP spoke about process, and call wait times are extreme. He pointed out the movement of UC Health to Human Resources and noted that, as Chair of the Health Benefits Committee, they had recommended such a consolidation. The retirees' advisory committee might include Roger Anderson, Eric Vermillion, John Meyer, and CUCEA members, but it is still unclear when it will launch. This year for the JBC report, Roger had members write different sections, but it still raises the same issues. The revenue discussion is coming up. Initial allocations have been sent, using the agreed upon formula.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Internal Audit—

John M. introduced David Olson. David gave a brief overview of his background. He spent 30 years working at UCOP in various roles and retired in 2019. As part of the CUCRA audit, he reviewed from John Dahl all financial statements and records; reviewed internal controls; received a certification of fraud statement; reviewed the status of the prior audit and recommendations; and noted all recommendations had been accepted and implemented. He commented on the tax-exempt status, noting that both the IRS and the Franchise Tax Board had certified it. The operations are sound and financial reports accurately present the finances of CUCRA.

Karim Zahedi asked if this were a UC audit and how often it needs to be completed. David noted that under IRs 501 (C) 3, it is every other year. John D. noted under the CUCRA by-laws it is bi-annual unless the treasurer changes.

David thanked John for his cooperation and soundness of records, and John expressed gratitude to David.

Financials—

John D. sent out financial statements on April 22 via email. His Treasurer's Report included the calendar year-end formal statements as of December 31, 2022, the calendar year-end management report, the 2023 Budget, and the management report as of March 31, 2023. He highlighted core and discretionary sections of the statements, noting travel program commissions, minimal operational expenses due to Zoom meetings, and minimal discretionary expenses. The 7-year trend report shows a positive outlook financially in the recent years. The CD is earning 5%.

Revenue Allocations to Associations—

At the last meeting, Sue Abeles's committee recommended, and members agreed to, the following:

- 1) A reserve of two years of costs
- 2) Surplus funds for the benefit of members to:
 - a) Mitigate increase in fees
 - b) Cover in person conference costs
- 3) Distribute remainder as follows:
 - a) 50% distributed evenly to all associations
 - b) 50% distributed on pro rata basis per number of travelers at each campus

As of December 31, 2022, and after accounting for #1 and #2 above, the remainder surplus (#3) will be allocated to the associations. John D. pointed out that this allocation is a reflection of years of deficits and surpluses. Going forward, the allocation will be less because it will only be based on one year of activity after mitigating fees, covering estimated conference costs, and the required reserves. In looking forward to future allocations, keep in mind:

- 1) CUCRA needs to break-even
- 2) Less remaining balances to allocate in the future
- 3) Meetings are expensive to hold
- 4) Challenges re: meeting type needs to be addressed (i.e., in-person, Zoom, hybrid)

Rob Mann asked when the checks would be distributed. John D. responded in May, after the meeting. John D. next walked through financial projection scenarios. The bottom line shows in either scenario that there will be less to allocate to the associations in the future compared to the current allocation. Having two in-person meetings per year would also reduce the allocation further.

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT

Sue Abeles had asked associations to respond about preferred meeting formats, noting that in person meetings are costly. Only four campuses responded. Three wanted hybrid meetings, with the fourth supporting the recommendation of one in person meeting and one Zoom meeting per year. The question is whether we want to go forward with hybrids, which are more expensive being in-person, or possibly reinstate dues and conference registrations. Kim Summerfield sees the value of two in person/hybrid meetings. It is not the same with Zoom. There is value in sitting at a table with others, especially for new members, and it allows for networking.

Dianne Gregory likes the one and one model since it makes for a tighter budget. Andy Plumley doesn't like Zoom and prefers in person. However, he doesn't like to see red in the budget. Maybe we should start with the one and one model and assess how it works. Gail Harden was concerned how to figure out costs with hybrids since hotels require certain guarantees. Sue Barnes noted that AROHE is looking at hybrid meetings and that they are 1.5 times the cost of in person meetings. Marianne Schnaubelt said that you can't arrange hotel blocks, although many hotels offer UC rates. She endorses at least one in person meeting to allow for networking. She also questioned where an in-person meeting should be held since some locations are easier to get to than others. If a meeting is held in Oakland, perhaps there should be some dues relief to the southern campuses. Rob supports Marianne and asks whether we are a high touch or a high-tech organization. He gets value out of meetings—perhaps they should all be held at Davis.

Elaine Fox applauds the board for listening. As a new board member, she likes the meet and greet of in person but can connect off-line if needed. Everything is Zoom at UCLA, so why plan a deficit. Marian Gade sees the benefit of in person, but as a person with mobility issues, Zoom is a life saver. Perhaps we should have a little of each. Judith Tuch notes that hybrids are not very successful. It is hard to have back and forth conversations. She supports the recommended model—Fall in person, Spring via Zoom. Connie Williams agrees. Marianne commented that running a meeting is a challenge, and it would be especially difficult with a hybrid meeting.

Sue B. notes that the travel program will not grow that much, and therefore may not be able to contribute greater revenue to cover greater expenses in meetings. In 2022 there were 9 trips and in 2024 there will be 14. Fourteen is too many, so it will probably level out to 10-12 trips per year since it must stay a volunteer organization. This will generate \$40-45K per year.

Sue A. notes that there is split opinion on plans for 2024. And we need to consult with CUCEA. John D. suggests holding back an additional \$12,000. John M. suggests that we assess the effectiveness of the Fall meeting and plan for a full Zoom in spring without knowing the results of the Davis experience. Perhaps have town halls in the north and the south.

JoAnne Boorkman noted that CUCEA is excited about the hybrid meeting because of mobility issues. Davis can handle it, but it is not ideal. Camaraderie is more effective. She wants to be cognizant of costs and effectiveness. John M. noted that we always will need Zoom access. And instead of an automatic rotation, who might have the appropriate logistics.

Bob Daly said that there will be a burden on San Diego for the Spring meeting. John M. said that Spring 2024 will be Zoom. Frank Trueba noted that if Fall 2024 were in person, Santa Cruz would be the worst location given logistics.

After the break, Sue A. continued with the Vice Chair's report regarding the elections. There are two openings during the next cycle—Treasurer and Information Officer. She asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominations Committee. Andy Plumley, Elaine Fox, and Dianne Gregory volunteered.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Marianne and Sue A. reported that there were three participants, with a good discussion. Because of the number of questions, it reinforces the need to meet in small groups. All three participants had different careers. Marianne asked what was covered. Per Sue, they covered the history of the organization, membership, funding, and list of acronyms. Marianne added representative responsibilities, topics of concern, and relationships with CUCEA and UCOP. They encouraged the participants to speak up and to read the minutes, the JBC report and the By-Laws/Standing Rules.

People get invited via an email from the information officer. Kim found it helpful and that it was well organized.

INFORMATION OFFICER'S UPDATE

Bob thanked everyone for sending in their updated contact information and association reports. He then outlined the responsibilities of the position:

- Maintain mailing lists
- Serve on UCOP committee for open enrollment health benefits publication.
- Prepare and send out a mini newsletter.

He will continue as webmaster.

CONVERSATION WITH ASSOCIATIONS

At the last meeting, Karim asked how each association was organized. He sought out copies of the bylaws from other associations. A summary is posted on the CUCRA website. He found lots of variations and picked out what would strengthen the UCR board. They have 4 designated positions and chairs of committees. They renamed some and redefined duties of board members, as well as, how positions are filled. At UCR, the Vice President's role has been unfilled for a while. People don't want to commit, so the VP is not required to ascend to role of President. They have term limits.

Emily Galindo asked how the board works with communication and/or how it interacts with membership. Per Karim, the Secretary and the Retirement Center share the responsibility. Jill Halvaks noted that UCI implemented by laws in February, and they have trouble filling the secretarial role. They funnel their information into the Retirement Center. Per Elaine Fox, the Corresponding Secretary monitors the email. The Retirement Center staff maintains the website with contact information. They have a quarterly newsletter and a Facebook page.

John M. thanked Karim and asked how CUCRA can best communicate with the associations. Jill responded through meetings, but asked who came up with the agendas. She reiterated the frustration with RASC, but asked who is doing what. She asked how do associations help. She likes the idea of NorCal and SoCal meetings. Or perhaps the presidents could meet monthly. Jim agrees with the agenda development and asked that an early draft be circulated. Rob commented on the quality of the JBC report and frustration that it is like Groundhog Day. Why can't we get a written response? Per John M. , there is agreement for a response, but the JBC report came out too late this time.

There followed a lively discussion on how can we best push on UCOP? Best strategy is to use the Senate. However, people noted that there are some barriers to overcome to make RASC more effective, e.g., hiring and training of staff and software functionality. Bob reiterated the need for retirement counselors back on campus.

John M. commented on status of RASC:

- The news regarding the survivor's program is positive; they are fully staffed and new cases are being handled quickly.
- Retirement counselors are coming but the employment offer to the manager was declined.
- The Call Center is subject to the labor market. They require employees in the office three times/week and need to make the salary competitive.

Dianne asked if Bernadette was using private vs public experience as an excuse. John responded it is complicated. Are the employees represented or not? Are they confidential or not? Should they contract out the work?

Frank noted that new management is better. Their solutions are different than ours. Per Jeff Garberson, the key is that a retiree knows that there is an issue with processing and that they should have money in the bank to account for delays. They put a notice in their newsletter.

Kim stated that as long as there are delay issues with RASC, associations can't recruit new retirees if they have a bad experience. It may be several years before there is a seamless process. She noted the number of consultants and contractors is alarming; this just delays response and change.

Pat Price noted that until staffing is up, we should advocate for more access to ROOTS and the data. What data is needed for the campuses to answer questions? John M. responded that The Regents had information on Redwood/ROOTS. Frank stated that since Redwood was implemented, campuses have been clamoring for more access. It now seems more stable, and more data is/will be available in Roots.

Nancy Brown also noted the large number of consultants, some of whom were from India and who had access to our data. It was suggested that we put together a timeline since Redwood came on line.

Regarding the proposed survey that UCOP intends to send at the end of the year, John M. thinks it will be more targeted to recruitments and new hires, i.e., career trajectory and benefits. He also noted that JBC tried to develop a Redwood timeline. He hopes that face to face meetings might help with Via Benefits.

Marian asked about the Retirement Counselors. Where do we visualize they would operate—in HR; in the Centers; or with the Health Care Facilitators? Would all campuses operate in the same way? Sue A. commented that the two retirement counselors at UCLA were in HR. She also expressed frustration that the retirees' advisory committee is not yet a reality. A proposed charter was sent last August to Cheryl, and we never received a response.

Jill indicated that UCI is willing to host the first SoCal Town Hall. John asked what time frame. Marian asked who would be invited to the smaller groups. John M. thinks it should be limited to leadership and associations. Marianne noted that it is easier to find space and parking in the summer.

Nancy asked how soon can we get the retirees' advisory committee going. John will push Cheryl.

Jill would like monthly meetings with association presidents via Zoom. Rob supports monthly meetings and perhaps breakout sessions. John asked who might organize these monthly meetings. Perhaps we could piggy-back on the meetings of the Retirement Center Directors. It is better to have conversations than reading reports. Emily likes the piggy-back idea. Julianne Crowley asked if the retirement center directors could add the Zoom calls to their agendas.

Rob thanked John for his work as President.

John adjourned the meeting at 11:48.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Owen, Secretary

Approved October 26, 2023