Council of University of California Emeriti Associations (CUCEA)

Minutes of Meeting
April 30, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attending:

CUCEA Officers: William Ashby (SB) Secretary/Campus Representative; Caroline Kane (B) Chair; William Parker (I) Treasurer; Henry Powell (SD) Chair-Elect /Campus Representative; Louise Taylor, Information Officer/Past Chair (B)

Emeriti Association Presidents and Vice Presidents: Amy Block Joy (B), President/Campus Representative; Barry Bowman (SC) President; John Greenspan (SF) President/Campus Representative; MRC Greenwood (D), Vice President and Alternate Campus Representative; Barry Klein (D), President/Campus Representative; Douglas Mitchell (R) President; W. Douglas Morgan (SB) President/Past Chair; Raymond Russell (R) Vice President; Richard Weiss (LA) President

Emeriti Association Representatives and Alternates: Amy Block Joy (B) Campus Representative; Barry Klein (D) Campus Representative; Ronald Mellor (LA) Campus Representative; George Miller (I) Alternate Campus Representative; Dan Mitchell (LA) Campus Representative; William Wara (SF) Alternate Campus Representative; Todd Wipke (SC) Campus Representative

JBC Chair and members: Roger Anderson (SC), JBC Chair/Past Chair; Joel Dimsdale (SD), member

Past Chairs: Richard Attiyeh (SD)

Guests: Jo Anne Boorkman (D); Judith Aissen (SC); Phyllis Mirsky (SD)

Center Directors and Liaisons: Christy Dawley (SC); Emil Nguen (I); Cristina Otegui (R); Carey Sweeney (B); Kyle Urban (D)

Zoom facilitator: Renée Wong (OP)

Call to Order and Welcome:

Chair Caroline Kane called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. She thanked Renée Wong and Myrna Davis (OP) for facilitating our virtual meetings.
Officers’ Reports:

Chair’s Report:

Caroline Kane provided an update on the Regents’ Standing Order changing the eligibility of Emeritus status. Many campuses and the UC Faculty Welfare Committee have written to the Academic Council requesting that the Regents reconsider this action. The Academic Council has supported this request and has sent a letter to Provost Brown. The Regents will presumably reconsider, but Caroline did not know whether this has been included on the Regents’ agenda for May.

Caroline believes that UC is still planning for a 2% COLA on July 1.

Secretary’s Report:

William Ashby presented the minutes of the April 26, 2019 meeting. MRC Greenwood moved to accept the Secretary’s Report, and John Greenspan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report:

William Parker noted that the 2020-21 budget will be presented at the Fall 2020 meeting. He then gave a report on the current status of the budget, which he found to be in good shape. All campuses are current on dues payment and the contribution form the OP has been received. There are currently no expenses associated with this meeting, since it is not being held in person. Assets currently are approximately $11,700.

John Greenspan asked how much CUCEA has saved by holding the virtual meeting instead of an in-person meeting. William Parker responded that the average meeting cost is around $2700. John noted that campuses also incur costs associated with in-person meetings. Bill agreed, but does not receive this information. Louise Taylor stated that in the past, campus costs have been around $5000.

Caroline Kane thanked William Parker for working with the Office of the President in finding a means for transferring their $2000 contribution to CUCEA.

Todd Wipke moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report, and Richard Weiss seconded the motion.

The Treasurer’s report was accepted by unanimous vote.
Information Officer’s Report:

Louise Taylor referenced the spreadsheet she had distributed by email showing projected meeting locations. She thanked Santa Barbara and Riverside for agreeing to the modification in the schedule.

Louise then turned to the report of the Nominating Committee (Henry Powell, William Parker, Caroline Kane, Louise Taylor). The Committee proposed the following slate of officers for 2020-22:

- Chair: Henry Powell (SD)
- Chair-Elect: Jo Anne Boorkman (D)
- Secretary: Phyllis Mirsky (SD)
- Treasurer: William Parker (I)
- Information Officer: Louise Taylor (B)
- Web Manager: Marjorie Caserio (SD)

John Greenspan moved to accept the Report; Doug Mitchell seconded the motion. By voice vote, the above slate of officers was unanimously approved.

Web Manager’s Report:

Web Manager Marjorie Caserio was not present.

Discussion about Joint Meeting:

Caroline Kane asked members for their first impressions of the electronic format of the Joint Meeting, held in the morning of April 30.

Dan Mitchell noted that CUCEA and CUCRA members are all in the age bracket that is particularly susceptible to the effects of Covid-19. It is very likely that next fall’s meetings will also be virtual. Even if campuses are open, some participants would most likely be reluctant to travel.

John Greenspan concurred and recommended that we seriously consider holding at least the Fall 2020 meetings via Zoom.

Henry Powell noted that, unlike in the past, fiscal concerns no longer require consideration of using an electronic format for meetings. He spoke to the advantages of holding in-person meetings on the various campuses. He thus urged that we “keep our options open.”

William Parker expressed hope that the Fall 2020 meeting could be held in person, assuming adequate safety precautions. He recommended that we continue planning
for the Fall meeting and that in mid-summer we make the decision as to whether to hold an in-person or a virtual meeting.

Richard Weiss noted the advantage of in-person meetings particularly for new members of CUCEA.

William Wara expressed “severe reservations” about holding in-person meetings in 2020-21.

Caroline Kane noted that CUCEA has on two occasions formally endorsed holding in-person meetings on a campus twice per year. This should continue to be the norm. The Spring 2020 meeting had to be held virtually, because of the Covid-19 emergency.

Todd Wipke noted that Zoom has proven to be a workable “fall back” solution.

Barry Bowman suggested that those attending the meeting introduce themselves. Introductions followed.

**JBC Draft Report:**

The JBC Draft Report was sent to members via email before the meeting and was discussed at the Joint Meeting earlier in the day. JBC Chair Roger Anderson began by offering some comments relating to the discussion with OP representatives at the morning meeting:

- Roger had not heard any news about the COLA, anticipated on July 1; but he expected that the OP would be carefully monitoring the CPI before determining the amount of the COLA.
- As to the cost of health care going forward, Roger believed that the cost of the United Health Care plan has been fixed for next year. However, there could be a change in how much members pay. Currently, UC pays $325 per month per person enrolled (down from $361 last year). The cost per person is based on the cost of Part B premiums, plus the cost of the various plans in which retirees are enrolled. UC then pays 70% of this cost and retirees pay 30%. If retirees migrate to the lower-cost plans, this lowers the overall cost to the University. Roger was pleased to hear at the Joint Meeting that UC is monitoring the effectiveness and member satisfaction with the new Medicare Advantage plan.
- RASC continues to face challenges.
- The Health Care Benefits Committee seems to be working effectively. If greater utilization of the UC medical centers is desired, it will be a challenge to keep health care costs from going up.

Roger then invited questions. Douglas Mitchell asked about the discrepancy in the amount UC pays for health care for retirees who have moved outside of California, compared to those living in the State. Roger confirmed that UC funds $250 per
month for a health-care reimbursement account for out-of-state Medicare retirees (compared to the $325 per month for in-state Medicare retirees). Furthermore, out-of-state retirees do not receive all the benefits that are accorded to in-state retirees. Most notably, they may not be able to switch plans, should they develop an illness that is determined to be a “preexisting condition.” Roger wondered whether it would be possible to extend the Medicare Advantage plan to out-of-state retirees. Caroline Kane noted that UC has not increased the amount paid for out-of-state benefits since the initial implementation of Via Benefits some years ago.

Caroline Kane noted that Gary Schlimgen (OP) acknowledged in the Joint Meeting that RASC has not yet addressed the concerns that were brought up in the October 2019 JBC Report. Gary seemed to be suggesting that CUCEA and CUCRA take their concerns to the UCRS Advisory Board. Roger Anderson felt that this was indeed what Gary was suggesting. An emeritus or retiree who sits on the Advisory Board could perhaps manage to bring our concerns up as an action item on the agenda.

Barry Bowman inquired about the possible effect of the economic downturn on our pensions. Roger responded that UC bases its assumptions about yield and demographics on a projected five-year horizon. UC has recently had to increase its contribution to the pension plan to make up for a shortfall on assumed yield. If the market continues to drop, there will undoubtedly be stress on the pension plan. Roger anticipates that UC will endeavor to continue making up make for any shortfall. Those enrolled in the Defined Contribution plans are perhaps in a more precarious situation.

Louise Taylor noted that the chairs of CUCEA and CUCRA are on the UCRS Advisory Board. It should be they who take the concerns expressed in the JBC Report to the UCRS Advisory Board.

Joel Dimsdale noted that the issue of out-of-state health benefits has come before the UC Faculty Welfare committee on several occasions. At the committee’s urging, HR has polled out-of-state members about their experience with the health care plan. However, HR has not done such a poll recently; and Joel suggested that CUCEA urge HR to do so. Data generated from such a survey are required before we can argue for more generous benefits for out-of-state retirees.

Louise Taylor noted that, despite obvious disadvantages to the out-of-state plans, previous surveys have been largely positive. Are the right questions being asked?

Todd Wipke asked whether CUCEA and CUCRA could do their own survey.

Caroline called for a motion to accept the JBC Report. Todd Wipke so moved, and Doug Morgan seconded the motion. The Report was unanimously approved and accepted.
Communications Subcommittee Report:

Richard Weiss presented the report. He reminded members that the impetus for establishing the Subcommittee was a proposal from the UCLA Emeriti Association to explore the possibility of securing the appointment of an emeritus faculty member to the Board of Regents. This proposal grew out of frustration with the lack of prior consultation before the change in the Regents Standing Order relating to emeritus status. This proposal was not endorsed at the October 31, 2019 CUCEA meeting. Instead, the Communications Subcommittee was established, with the goal of exploring ways of improving communication between CUCEA and the University. The Subcommittee consisted of Caroline Kane, Louise Taylor, and Richard Weiss (chair).

The Subcommittee has focused on 1) how can CUCEA more effectively learn about planning in the University of California, so that we can be proactive rather than reactive? and 2) how can CUCEA most effectively communicate its concerns? Considerable discussion ensued. Louise Taylor and MRC Greenwood made the point that it is the President who mainly drives the agenda of Regents’ meetings. Roger Anderson suggested that the Academic Council may be aware of the Regents’ agenda in advance and wondered whether there could be emeritus representation on the Council. Henry Powell said that membership on the Academic Council is carefully balanced, and that there is reticence to adding additional members. He pointed out that the faculty representatives to the Regents do know what is on the agenda, but often find out only shortly before the meetings take place. Todd Wipke wondered whether Chancellors know in advance what the Regents are planning. If so, they might be willing to share information that is of interest to emeriti. Todd proposed that each campus explore whether it is the Chancellor or some other official who receives information about the Regents’ agenda. Caroline Kane agreed that Emeriti Association leaders on each campus should endeavor to find out whether the Chancellor and/or others receive this information, and if so, how soon before the Regents’ agenda is set. Caroline will talk to the leadership of the Academic Council to ascertain whether the Council receives timely notice of Regental policy changes. This survey will be useful to CUCEA in determining the most effective conduits of information pertinent to emeriti.

It was agreed that the Communications Subcommittee would continue its work.

Campus Reports:

Campus reports will be posted on the CUCEA website.

Passing the Gavel to Henry Powell:

Caroline Kane noted that this was her last meeting as CUCEA chair, and virtually passed the gavel and a plaque to Chair-Elect Henry Powell.
Louise Taylor thanked Caroline for her service as Chair for the past two years.

**New Business:**

There was no new business, but Louise Taylor reminded us to apprise her of any changes in Association Presidents and Campus Representatives for next year.

Caroline Kane urged us to share with our campus emeriti what transpired at the CUCEA and Joint Meetings.

**Adjournment:**

Caroline Kane adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Ashby,
Secretary