

**FIVE COLLEGES LEARNING IN RETIREMENT
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Council was held at the Five College Center at 2:30 pm.

Present Council: Larry Ambs, John Armstrong, Dave Cramer, Laura Cranshaw, Arnold Friedman, Jim Harvey, Joan Laird, Betsy Loughran, Sandy Muspratt, Ellen Peck, Joan Wofford, Michael Wolff, Gordon Wyse

Absent Council: Marybeth Bridegam, Carol Jolly

Committee Chairs Present: Peter Ferber, Honore David, Mary Franks, Frieda Howards, Callie Orszrak

Guest: Chuck Gilles

Minutes: The minutes of the regular council meeting of August 11 were approved.

Report on the Civil War Symposium: Chuck Gilles, chair of the Symposium, reported that a grant had come in from the Easthampton Savings Bank, so there is now more money than first reported. It will be spent on food for the reception. The budget he described in his written report, was actually inflated to account for the volunteer work contributed as time. (see written report).

He showed us the flyer which has now been printed and sent out. He and his committee are now in the publicity phase of organization. Twelve organizations have agreed to cooperate in publicizing the event.

The reception after the keynote speaker is by invitation only. They have invited local politicians, the governor, and the heads of the colleges. We all must register to attend. Mahar Auditorium can seat up to 470 people. C-span may come to film the talk.

Report on Great Decisions: Peter Ferber presented a written report that listed eight topics which may be presented. At the fall picnic, he had polled members about which topics they preferred. The committee has decided to keep the price for individual events at \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members. The series of 5 will be \$35 for members and \$45 for non-members. Fran Volkmann and Joan Cenedella will continue to survey the members to see which five topics have the most interest. Programs will be Fridays, March 30, and April 6, 13, 20, and 27 in 2012.

Since the committee needs more help, they asked the Council to approve Leo Sartori as a new member. John Armstrong moved that the appointment be approved. It was seconded and voted yes by all attending.

Treasurer: Sandy gave out written reports on the year-to-date actual expenses. The Summer Programs and Great Decisions made a bit of money, so there is a small surplus.

Committee Chairs: Jim Harvey met with the chairs of various committees, and they agreed that guidelines are needed for continuity when jobs pass from one person to another. It would be useful to have short job descriptions to prevent abrupt shifts in procedures. Having co-chairs with staggered terms gives continuity. Each committee might be asked to write a procedure manual and Jim will compile them.

There was also discussion about the need for both committee chairs to attend all meetings of the Council. The room where we meet can get very crowded. Joan encouraged chairs to come, especially if something relevant to their committee is on the agenda, but for space reasons, perhaps co-chairs could alternate in attendance. And we do have written reports when committees have met. The by-laws state that committee chairs are welcome; visitors must ask the president.

Larry pointed out that it is important that we meet at 5C Inc. on the “out of sight, out of mind” principle. Callie agreed that face to face encounters are useful especially when personnel changes. 5C needs to see that we are actively meeting and doing.

Auditors for Special Programs: John Armstrong pointed out that there is a long history of this problem. At a science round-table he once had to throw out uninvited guests with an agenda. Encore presentations allow non-members. It might be a good idea to survey the different committees on their policies about non-members.

Task Forces: In deciding what to tackle first, the **flexibility in seminars** generated the most energy. Frieda commented that reports and presentations always come up as a topic in LIR. Mary reminded us that the newsletter just printed all the various ways in which presentations have been given, but do people read the newsletter? The Moderators’ Manual has just been revised to include more suggestions. Joan remembered endless discussions about presentations. Peter suggested that the Preview would be a good place to illustrate the variety of seminars and their requirements.

John wondered if these complaints are really an excuse for not being interested in what we do in LIR. Frieda asked if the older age of our members is prompting so much discussion. Arnold suggested that 1) some have problems reading now, and 2) transportation becomes difficult when people stop driving.

A related issue is **space**. What is the optimum size for LIR? This question has implications for Callie’s job, for our money needs, and for the kind of institutional support we need. We have competition with the Amherst Senior Center whose programs are expanding, but these are not peer led.

The consensus was that we should work on flexibility and space in the fall and secondarily money, since money needs depend on space needs. The social needs could be put off until spring. This topic is important but less pressing than the other three.

Money needs have to do with space and size. When our current office building is torn down, we may have to rent space. If we have to rent more seminar space, that will cost. If we

grow to the point of needing more staff, even on a part-time basis, that will be a large financial jump.

We agreed that task forces should have 6 or 7 members. Three or four should be from the Council and the rest from members at large. They should write mission statements.

1. **Financial:** Larry will consult. John and Sandy will be members. They will consult with Callie about who else would be good.
2. **Space:** Gordon will work on it. Sarah Wright knows the towns. Callie has many contacts at the colleges. She suggested putting an item in the newsletter asking who knows about possible spaces for seminars.

Suggestions: area churches; Easthampton Treehouse and Baptist church; Lathrop, Acadia, co-housing lounges in Amherst and Noho; college dorm lounges, bank buildings; individual homes for smaller groups.

Some Federal money might be available for "help the elderly" programs.

3. **Flexibility in Seminars:** Carol Jolly, Chair. Ellen, Joan, and Peter volunteered to represent the Council.

All three task forces can use the December meeting as a deadline. We could use the whole January meeting for discussion of these reports.

Applewood Newsletter: Frieda reported that the Applewood newsletter has wrongly suggested that residents who were not members could audit seminars held there. Larry said that the policy was that residents could check out a seminar one time, not the whole semester. Applewood has also canceled the Encore series because of parking problems with the road construction. It has canceled the French group because the space is needed to practice for a show. Arnold agreed to investigate the situation. (He has since sent out an email confirming that he corrected the situation with the newsletter editor.)

Next Council Meeting

13 October 2011

Five College Headquarters, 97 Spring Street, Amherst

Submitted by Ellen Peck, Secretary