

GA-HERO
Georgia Association of Higher Education Retiree Organizations
Executive Committee Meeting/Board of Directors Meeting
2:00-3:40 pm
Held remotely on Zoom
Minutes
March 6, 2024

Members Present:

David Boyd (Valdosta State), Mitch Clifton (West Georgia), Missy Cody (Georgia State, co-President), Gray Crouse (Emory, Treasurer), Harry Dangel (Georgia State), Dave Ewert (Georgia State, President Emeritus), Donna McCarty (Clayton State), Marilynne McKay (Emory, co-President), David Muschell (Georgia College & State), Carol Pope (Kennesaw State, Webmaster), Ed Rondeau (Georgia Tech), Ted Wadley (Georgia State, past President), Dorothy Zinsmeister (Kennesaw State).

Marilynne McKay **called the meeting to order** and said she and Missy were pleased to announce that Valdosta State University has stepped up to host the June 7 GA-HERO meet-up. Director David Boyd has been our contact for this event.

Gray Crouse: How long a drive is it from Atlanta to Valdosta?

David Boyd: It's 235 miles from my house to the airport and it might take 4 to 6 hours, depending on who's driving, traffic, and road construction.

Gray Crouse: I don't think many people would want to drive from Atlanta to Valdosta and back the same day. I'd think people would be interested in what's there and exploring the area.

Missy Cody: In Cartersville, the evening after our meeting we enjoyed choosing restaurants and eating with people we hadn't seen in a long time.

Marilynne McKay: David, go ahead and tell us what you know so far.

David Boyd: I heard from Michael Black, who's our administrative liaison and an ex officio member of our Retiree Council. He has confirmed the availability of a meeting room for June 7. He says Zoom capability will cost us \$50. He said we could have catering for \$25-30 per person and I said we might just want box lunches. We could have a box lunch catered from campus or a downtown restaurant. Michael told me the VSU President will not be here June 7, but the Academic Vice President could welcome 25-30 members of GA-HERO.

Missy Cody: How about parking?

David Boyd: I think we would be meeting in the University Center, and there is plenty of parking there. It will be summer session, which is not as populated with students.

Missy Cody: All this sounds good, David. I'm hoping to visit Valdosta in early April to see the surrounding area for non-meeting activities in the area for people who don't get that far south very often. I've gotten information from the Valdosta Visitors Center, and I'd also like to meet with them in person. They were very nice and had good information for visitors.

David Boyd: There will be hotels for those who wish to stay overnight. Valdosta has a "First Friday" tradition of restaurants and stores being open the first Friday evening of each month, which would coincide with our June 7 date. June 8 is the opening of the VSU Peach State Summer Theatre. [NOTE: here is the link for ticket and musical program info, which won't be available until May. <https://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/arts/communication-arts/psst/2024-season.php>]

Marilynne McKay: I understand that VSU has a Retiree Center.

David Boyd: We have an office, but no staff people. We do have a computer and a printer, and officers have keys. The office was recently moved, though, and I'm not sure where it is now.

Dorothy Zinsmeister: The impression I get from talking to Dennis Marks is that they have always had incredible institutional support. He has always appreciated the attention the RO at VSU has received from the Administration and HR.

Marilynne McKay: Perhaps someone from Administration or HR or one of the RO officers might be willing to give a brief summary of the history of the support given the Valdosta RO at the meet-up. Dorothy supplied us with a list of ROs in the state that are not members of GA-HERO and we'd like to invite them. I'm sure they'd be interested in the Valdosta story.

Missy Cody: David and I will continue to talk about the meet-up and events available in the area. We've never been to that part of the state, and I'm hoping that it will engage more people.

Mitch Clifton: I haven't been to Valdosta for 30 years and I'd like to know what else we could do there. I wouldn't even mind paying \$20 or \$25 for lunch.

Donna McCarty: I think it's great that we can have a meeting in person and also have Zoom for those who can't attend. I'm excited about the meeting and really appreciate the work that's been done. Meeting in person is magical. I think there will be people from Clayton State who would like to come.

Gray Crouse: I hope we can try to invite the spouses, as they enjoy the visits and will make more people in the group.

Missy Cody: I agree that's important, and we'll plan for spouses and friends.

Marilynne McKay: June 7th it is. If you'd like to volunteer to help, let us know. We will have a meeting next month to discuss progress. We'll let you know. If we don't have an April meeting, we'll still be working on the June meet-up and will be sending updates to you. Now is the time to let your organizations know that we're going to Valdosta on June 7.

NEW OFFICERS/DIRECTORS:

Marilynne McKay: I'd like to remind you that we'll be changing co-Presidents in July. Missy and I have been very pleased to serve together in the presidency. It's nice to have someone to bounce ideas off and to review your correspondence on behalf of GA-HERO. We would encourage the organization to keep the co-President format. Directors don't have to change positions within their institutions, but if you want to quit, we hope you have been a mentor to someone in your group who can replace you.

Dorothy Zinsmeister: What if we think the current leadership is doing a wonderful job?

Marilynne McKay: We're so happy to hear it—you can send money! [general laughter] That's very nice, but at this stage I don't think either of us has another two years to give. We would hate to hog the wonderful experience that this has been, and we want to open it up to the group because it has really been very, very rewarding. Two years is good. You get a little tired, but it does give us some continuity. I still don't have an answer to the Columbus State problem. We've been without a director at that institution for two years. Dorothy, do you have a liaison?

Dorothy Zinsmeister: I don't but let me see what I can do about finding a contact person. Columbus State has also disappeared from the University System Retiree Council. It may be that the person who started their RO has stepped back for reasons of health. Their alternate stepped in, but now she is no longer responding. I'm not sure what the issue is, but when you're dealing with people 65 and 70 and older, stuff happens.

Marilynne McKay: Absolutely. That's why it's so important to have a backup ready to come in. Thank you, Dorothy.

AROHE:

I checked to see if the three members who weren't listed as of last month were now on the AROHE.org membership roster and they had not been added. This may be AROHE's fault, but I wanted you to know in case you did reach out to get listed. We do want you to be part of AROHE.

Dorothy: And membership is very worthwhile.

Donna McCarty: I have a question. At Clayton State, we have an institutional membership through our Provost's office, and we've had it a long time. As you know, we had the wrong person listed and we've given our information to the right person, and we'll have to check that again. Can only five people be listed on the AROHE website for each school?

Gray Crouse: No, the real member is the school and any number of individuals can also be listed. It's important to get your name on the list, because you can't access the AROHE website unless you're a member. And you'll get the AROHE newsletter as well as information on the Webinars. You do that through your representative or contact AROHE.org directly. I was on the Board for several years and still volunteer. AROHE is in sore need of a treasurer. Some years ago, our treasurer resigned and Caroline Kane, our ex-president, took it on. She's been doing it for 5 to 7 years and is ready to step down. If anyone is interested or knows someone in your organization who could do that job, let me know. It's much larger than GA-HERO's treasury, and it requires someone who knows their way around budgets and things like that. That person would be on the Executive Committee and would be on the Board of AROHE as well.

Marilynne McKay: GA-HERO has a tradition of serving on the AROHE Board. Gray has done it, and before him, Dave Ewart and John Bugge. It's interesting to be involved with a national organization that has the same goals we do and is, in fact, our parent organization. I know AROHE has been having virtual meetings recently. Gray, do you know if they are going to have an in-person meeting somewhere soon?

Gray Crouse: I am not on the Board anymore, so I don't know current plans. The Board meetings have all been virtual, but I'm not sure about any upcoming Conference plans.

Marilynne McKay: The 2018 Conference at Emory was the last in-person meeting AROHE had before the pandemic.

Gray Crouse: That's right.

GA-HERO MEMBERSHIP:

Marilynne McKay: The last thing on my list is Dorothy's list of USG Institutions with Retiree Organizations (ROs) that are not affiliated with GA-HERO. We do want to invite everyone to our Valdosta meetup and Missy and I talked about assigning a GA-HERO member to welcome those who are not affiliated.

Missy Cody: If you have someone who has never been to one of the meetings before, it would be very friendly to have someone to sit with and answer questions, and perhaps join you for an activity as well as introduce you to our other members. As we plan our meet-up we might begin to find individuals at these institutions we can invite or make connections with.

Marilynne McKay: I'm always surprised to see UGA on the "not a member" list. Surely it has an active retirement organization?

Missy Cody: They have three.

Marilynne McKay: Well, okay. Do we write to all three or what do we do?

Ed Rondeau: I think that, if you write to Nancy McDuff on the USGRC, she'll pass it on to whomever.

Missy Cody: There are several on the list, like College of Coastal Georgia, that would be reasonably close to Valdosta. There may be several people who would be happy to come to this meeting although they wouldn't come to Atlanta, for instance. And there's also Southwestern. We might get someone from Southwestern and we never have before.

Marilynne McKay: We should take this list back to our organizations and let them know we're heading South in June and they're invited.

[Dorothy Zinsmeister asked Gray Crouse about MS Teams vs Zoom. Gray said the early Zoom problems have been resolved. Donna McCarty said Clayton State said Zoom was fine for everything but teaching, which must be on Teams because it's inside the university portal.]

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:40.

Submitted by Marilynne McKay,

for Anne Richards who was unable to attend today's meeting.