Northern Illinois University Annuitants Association

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, January 11, 2012
Human Resources Building 178

President Jerry Meyer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.


Guests: Katie Wernberg, Assistant Director, NIU Alumni Association & Office of Alumni Relations, and Joseph Matty, Assistant Vice President of University Advancement and Executive Director of NIU Alumni Association.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda for January 11, 2012, was submitted for approval. Motion was made by Ralph Wallis and seconded by Jim Lockard to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of October 5, 2011, were submitted for approval. Motion was made by Ralph Wallis and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

President’s Remarks: The Illinois state budget will be reviewed again this spring and Senate Bill 512 may reappear. A number of initiatives are being moved to various constituencies including universities and community colleges. One of them deals with universities accepting more responsibility for the benefits of their employees.

SURS Board and SUAA Foundation: John Engstrom will be attending a SURS Board meeting later in the day. The Board’s Investment Committee will meet in February and the next full meeting will be in March. John will be running for re-election to the Board. He is currently chair of the Audit Committee, and various audits are being undertaken. The NIUAA annual memorial donation is due to the SUAA Foundation. Motion was made by Jerry Meyer to reaffirm that, in memorial to those members who died during the past year, we send $500 to the SUAA Foundation. Motion was seconded and carried.

NIU Legislative Advocacy Program: Joe Matty and Katie Wernberg distributed information to the NIUAA Board and talked about the Legislative Advocacy Program for alumni, faculty, staff, students, and other active supporters of NIU and higher education. Advocates volunteer to learn about the legislative process and issues and to contact legislators in order to advance NIU’s mission and to advocate for funding in higher education. There will be access to a database with geo-coded information, and bills affecting Northern Illinois, for example, can be tracked. The Legislative Advocacy Program also has an office in Chicago.

Motion was made by Doug Moore and seconded by Bennetta Stearnes to have the NIUAA formally listed as supporting the NIU Legislative Advocacy Program. The motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: Doug Moore distributed the Schedule of Cash Receipts and Disbursements, October 5, 2011 – January 10, 2012. Receipts came from SUAA dues and a small amount of interest income. Disbursements were for the holiday party in December 2010, travel expenses, SUAA fall meeting registration fees, and newsletter design. Motion was made by Ralph Wallis and seconded to approve the treasurer’s report. The motion carried.
Standing Committee Reports

Benefits: Jim Lockard reported for Sherie Spear. There is a lot of interest in pre-retirement seminars and numbers are up for retirement requests as well as increased long-term disability applications. It was noted that NIUAA membership information ought to be included with pre-retirement information and elsewhere, such as campus media.

Legislative: Jim Lockard reported that the situation is changing constantly with issues such as pension reform and that Governor Quinn is setting up a new committee. The State Journal Register in Springfield has some of the most complete coverage on such information. There is growing concern over SURS eligibility for non-state employees hired by universities. One of Governor Quinn’s thoughts is to shift more of the retirement funding responsibility back to colleges and universities. Some things to keep in mind are that data are not hard and fast; Illinois constitutional protections came about in 1970 when the pension situation was worse than now; in other states that have passed pension reform, retirements are up 30-40%; and by the end of this year, 26,000 people will be eligible for retirement.

SUAAction: No report.

Membership: No report.

Public Relations/Events: No report.

Holiday Party: Bennetta Stearnes noted that the NIUAA holiday party in December 2011 was a success in spite of slightly lower attendance with all positive feedback while keeping some costs down.

Communications: Jerry Meyer reminded everyone that there would be a newsletter in February for which committee chairs should provide information as usual.

Intergenerational Project: Bennetta Stearnes mentioned that the same activities are in place at the new DeKalb High School as before at the old high school and volunteers are always needed.

Old Business: Elaine Spencer, Ralph Wallis, Jim Lockard, and Jerry Meyer are the Nominating Committee to find a non-faculty replacement (either civil service or supportive professional staff) for Bennetta Stearnes on the board. An individual has been contacted.

New Business: The Nominating Committee will also look for someone to fill the secretary position by the April meeting and would like to have recommendations as soon as possible. Jerry Meyer thanked Lisa Parts for her work on the board.

There was brief discussion about some local chapters providing assistance in the form of loans and a question about providing information packets on survivor benefits.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m. The next NIUAA Board meeting will be Wednesday, April 25.

Lisa Parts
Secretary