Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Advisory Council
Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting on September 14, 2010

The meeting began at 9:30 am. Advisory Council members attending were Bill Bailey, Sheryl DeLeo, Marshall Ervine, Janet Murray, Ann Smoot, Bill Ventura, Tim Williams and Sally Wood. Pat Brown, Jane Dowrick and Debra Guild attended as staff.

Tim Williams opened the meeting with a welcome to everyone and a thank you to the staff for the September 2 Back to School mixer/reception.

The minutes of the June 8 Advisory Council meeting were approved as presented.

Chair’s report: Tim Williams distributed a handout on his trip in July to Furman University for the “Southern Regional Conference for Institutes Learning in Retirement”. Key thoughts outlined on the handout were discussed and suggestions were made to create a catchy tag line for Olli. A suggestion was also made to conduct a satisfaction survey. Jane Dowrick reported she is currently working with a team of VCU graduate students to develop a survey to measure the satisfaction of our active and inactive members. Tim finalized his chair report by challenging the council to observe and be aware of how we can be of specific value to the University of Richmond. He stated it was important to be sensitive, continue to engage in new things and not to lose that attitude within the OLL to launch and learn.

Nominating committee report: New council members, Bill Bailey and Sheryl De Leo, were welcomed. They have been added to fill the unexpired terms of two members who resigned. The succession plan from the Nominating Committee will be emailed to the advisory council by Tim. A nominating committee will be convened to select three new members to replace those whose terms expire in December.

Reporting for the Membership Committee, Sally Wood said the committee has been busy calling members to reach out to those who are no longer active and to welcome our newest members. We are offering a free class to those who are disappointed with a class. Jane and Sally are working together on a handbook for members. Sally said she feels that the practice of having the Class Assistant recognize new members in class has been very good. It was decided to mark future new members on the class roster so that the Class Assistant can welcome them in the first class. Sally also reported that a group has been organized to produce and publish our OLLI newsletter. Jane added that the newsletter will be posted on the UR website, and its contents “repurposed” at other places on the UR website. Marshall asked that we have the “campus walk” noted on every brown bag confirmation, inviting new members and guests to explore our campus and perhaps increase our numbers in membership.

Reporting for the Development Committee, Jane Dowrick announced we will be sending out a letter to all of the Osher members to make a pledge once the Council has arrived at 100% participation in donations. All council members were encouraged to designate their gift under “other” as “OLLI annual fund”. Jane asked that council members notify her when they make their gift. “Osher” will at some point be added to the donor card and listed in the SCS annual report. Sally Wood suggested that we encourage donations through the OLLI newsletter using language such as, “Give to the OLLI, your newest alma mater.”

Reporting for the Marketing and Public Relations Committee, Ann Smoot reported on the success of her recent guest column on the topic of civil discourse, in the Richmond Times Dispatch. Ann received 18 emails related to her article. PBS is planning a nationwide program on civil discourse and she was asked
to be a source for the future program. Ann reported that a group of Osher members met to form and lead the marketing team. They discussed the mission of the team, focusing on increasing the overall membership through the marketing of the program and reviewing strategies to achieve this. Ann reviewed a handout describing the Marketing Committee’s mission and proposed strategies. There was some discussion on whether to refer to ourselves as “Osher Lifelong Learning Institute” or “OLLI.” It was decided by the council to discuss this topic at the retreat in January.

Reporting for the Curriculum Committee, Sheryl De Leo reported that the committee met in early August. They are learning more about the “nuts and bolts” of creating Osher programs from their work to develop the summer 2010 program. Jane mentioned the opportunity to offer one of our courses, Hollywood Cemetery Sleuths, on a contract basis to a corporate group. This experience will serve as a pilot for future possible contracts.

Reporting for the Leader Support Committee, Tim Williams said that he and Jane Dowrick continue to offer classes on being an Osher course leader. We have also enlisted a member volunteer to acquire class assistants for each course leader prior to the beginning of the class start date.

Jane Dowrick began the director’s report by recognizing the Advisory Council for their support of the “member driven/staff led” model for the OLLI. She said that more and more members are becoming increasingly more involved in the operation of the OLLI. The OLLI staff will always be accountable for the overall operation of the OLLI and will continue to provide leadership for OLLI members and serve as liaison between the OLLI and UR. Jane announced that fall memberships and registrations are high and include a growing number of alums. Jane said that she will be working with the various committees to help them organize their work using a project management approach similar to “RACI” which stands for who is responsible; who is accountable, who is consulted and who needs to be kept informed. Important dates listed on the agenda were then reviewed. Jane is working to provide a program similar to “Breakfast with the Constitution.” She feels that the OLLI After Five is going well to serve those who are still in the workforce. “Learning on the Run” will be repackaged for the spring to require Osher membership in order to register. There will be two “events” offered each semester that will be free and open to the public.

New Business:

- Proposed name revisions were reviewed and discussed. The Council unanimously decided to change the name of the OLLI Advisory Council to the OLLI Leadership Council. It was also decided that “team” would be used in place of “committee”.
- Jane has spoken with Bob Draben about overseeing our OLLI archives.
- $1,000 will be available each year for volunteer development, to help defray costs for Osher members who attend conferences or training on behalf of the OLLI in the fiscal year 2011/12. The Leadership Council will oversee a process to distribute these funds.
- The chair of the leadership council usually attends the annual OLLI National Conference. It is hoped that Carl Booberg, incoming chair, will attend this conference in April 2011.
- It was decided after some discussion, that the Persian Music Group, Ensemble Shanbehzadeh, would not be billed as being sponsored by the OLLI at the University of Richmond.

The council roster was distributed. Members of the council were encouraged to email Debra Guild with any changes to the roster.
Next Council Meeting: The last meeting of the year will be December 14, 11:00 am-2:00 pm. It was decided that the meeting will follow lunch.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Guild