Osher Leadership Council Minutes  
December 6, 2016

Council members in attendance: Landon Woody, George Pangburn, Charlie Huffstetler, David Owens, Ruth Blevins, Peter Goodman, Don Miller, Linda Ventura, Peggy Watson, Pat Brown, Debra Guild

A holiday luncheon was enjoyed in the Hartz Dining Room of the Bottomley House.

Chair Landon Woody called the December meeting to order in the Eskandarian Room after lunch.

The minutes from the September 2016 council meeting were approved as emailed. Director, Chair, and Team reports followed.

Director’s Report:

- Thank you for all of your advice, knowledge, assistance, and volunteerism throughout the year.
- 767 total memberships reported to Osher yesterday as a part of our annual report; we used for the Osher capacity-building grant also.
- Registrations are coming in, given that the spring catalog went online Nov 29. They have also been mailed to members. Of the 106 course offerings, we have three course cancellations as of today. Don Miller raised a question regarding members signing up and not showing up. Should this be addressed? Decision was made to communicate better on emphasizing attendance. The online software may assist. Don offered to assist with brainstorming this issue. We do need to take a look at it, as the conscientious members are getting aggravated. As membership grows this becomes a more compelling problem. We discussed various options with gold members, but council members cautioned changing the limit with gold members.
- Revenue is well ahead of our budget projections; we are approximately $12,000 ahead. December should be a very good month, and January should also be strong.
- We have budgeted for and requested a third person, but were denied. We are under the SPCS umbrella, and SPCS is not looking to add new positions. We are receiving assistance from a recently retired staff member/new Osher member whom we hired as a temp through January. She will be entering all course registrations into Banner (the university’s large data system). Our hope was to bring in a permanent part-timer, who would be cross-trained (on parts of both current positions) and would further ensure the sustainability of the institute.
- We are scheduled to go live this summer with the online registration software. Some of our SPCS schools will bump to fall. April 6th is the live date for Osher. Training sessions are listed in the spring catalog to help members set up profiles and register for courses. On the front end, we will enter all course data, and Osher staff will now find and reserve all of our classrooms (previously handled by the registrar). Just as in other summers, we will offer classes in June and July only. The new software will create more work for the staff, even after the launch, but the hope is that the user (Osher member) experience will be far better. Peter Goodman noted that Osher contributed $25,000 to secure the registration software; we have a vested interest and should have a say in it.
- Our Osher Institute was awarded a grant for capacity building. This included a part time position, focused on fundraising. This individual will assist us in making appeals for support, while properly working with UR advancement and SPCS staff. Our “annual fund” is already established and currently has $18,000.
- Charlie Huffstetler questioned our plan for securing more help and asked what would it take before Peggy and Deb are tapped out of energy. He expressed concerns regarding our breaking point – where we begin to make big mistakes or walk away.
- Peggy was requested to submit a grant proposal to the Regier Foundation for @$25,000 (ended up being closer to $60,000). This proposal also incorporated a part time position and dovetails well with what we already do.
We have concluded our 2016 Membership Survey. Many thanks to Charlie, Landon and George for creating and implementing the survey, and special thanks to George for his analysis of the findings.

Thank you to David Frimpter for his ongoing assistance with the Osher financials.

Peggy noted that SPCS and the larger University are both developing new strategic plans, and she offered a draft copy for review.

Landon expressed her sincerest appreciation for the staff’s work.

**Team Reports**

**Development:** Peggy noted in her report the Osher Capacity-Building Grant. Marshall Ervine has stepped away for a while and we do not have a new chair, so the committee has not met.

**Leader Support:** Bill Bailey continues to offer his teacher-training class and has good response.

**Marketing:** Lee Ann is in Iceland, but sent an email with her report. Marketing has been quiet this fall, but gathered four new members from the mixer. They will be meeting in early 17 to plan for the next year, but have already decided to continue with the farmers markets.

**Membership:** Landon and Ruth reported that we have about 5 orientation classes a year. These highlight the many added benefits of Osher membership (i.e., UR lecture, Modlin Center performances). We will incorporate the registration software in future classes.

**Newsletter:** George reported that the team has not met since summer, but noted that there is a link to former newsletters and that the team continues to work with the SPCS marketing folks.

**Strategic Plan Update (Landon):**

- Keep core membership happy: Interest groups growing in leaps and bounds; members expanding their horizons by trying new courses, UR lectures
- Diversity initiative: will continue throughout the year and beyond; learning experience (learned what not to do); diversity class was well taught, but the resulting lunch bunch ended up unintentionally alienating and offending some members of color; Landon noted that she is not deterred and plans to work with Amy Howard and perhaps reach out to Virginia Union; we are also considering an African American class that includes a trip to the new African American Museum.
- Don Miller asked if we should expand beyond the African-American population and wondered about the possibility of starting with another group (suggesting that diversity means more than just one group); Landon noted the recommendation to start small and move forward.

**Survey Results**

George Pangburn walked through his analysis of the survey (PowerPoint attached). Highlights included:

- Good response rate (slightly better than 2 years ago)
- Demographics are just about the same (gender, education, race, residence, etc.)
- Increase in brand new members (19% up to 28%)
- Quality of courses critical to renewing membership
- Course subject matter similar to 2014: history, literature, geography/environment, political science, religion
- Travel (day and domestic/abroad) of great interest
- Majority were willing to use the upcoming online registration system
• Half were interested in diversity/race/inclusion classes
• Majority were not interested in online classes
• Mixed reaction to possible Osher fund-raising activities
• Open-ended comments included a push for the online registration system and a gathering space
• Recommendations: attention is needed in the areas of diversity, online registration, fund raising, volunteers
• Summary: healthy, growing membership and number of classes, level membership fees, interest groups important and growing

It was recommended by Don Miller that we share the survey results and what we plan to do with the results. We may want to revise the survey to shorten and add a “prefer not to answer” option.

**All-Member Meeting**

Charlie Huffstetler will chair an “all-member meeting” to communicate to and solicit feedback from our members. The meeting will be Tuesday, January 17, 1:00-3:00 pm in the Keller Hall Reception Room (parking in Modlin Center lot). The agenda will likely include:

• Survey results
• Update on online registration system
• Recently awarded grants
• Update on Osher Strategic Plan
• Volunteerism

We will announce this before the holidays and then again after the first of the year.

**Nominating Committee**

George reported that he and David will step down from the council, and Landon will serve ex officio as past chair at the end of December. Those retiring serve as our Nominating Committee. The group solicited and received about a half dozen suggestions, then met as a group to decide upon three and one alternate. The committee offered Bill Pawelski, Marlene Ebert, and Jeff Keil, with the alternate Lane Kelly. The slate was accepted as presented, and the committee members agreed to contact each and ask them to serve. George noted that a proposal to change procedure was made several years ago, but never voted on or implemented. Currently, the Nominating Committee also selects the vice chair. Lee Ann Pickering was selected and will be asked to serve as vice chair. Peggy presented thank you gifts to David Owen and George Pangburn.

Meeting concluded at 2:08 pm

Respectfully summited,
Peggy Watson and Debra Guild
12-16-16

**12-19-16 ADDENDUM**

The three Osher members (Bill Pawelski, Marlene Ebert, Jeff Keil) nominated for the Council have been contacted and have accepted the positions on the Council. Lee Ann Pickering has agreed to serve as Vice-Chair.