

THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2022 (1:00 to 3:30 p.m.)

1. Opening

- 1.1 **Call to Order:** The meeting was held on Zoom and called to order at 1:00 p.m. by President Ken Cross. In attendance were: President Ken Cross, Past President David Abelson, Vice-President Deborah Seiler; Controller Norv Wellsfry, Secretary Bob Benedetti; Members at Large – Michele Finerty, Pam O’Brien, and Chuck Wiseley; Committee Chairs – Susan Brackenhoff, Laurye Brownfield, Barbara Davis-Lyman Nancy Findeisen, Darryl O. Freeman, Jeff Hendy, Debbie Martinez, Lorraine Murphy, Sarah Ryan-Roberts, Cindy Suchanek, and Tom Suchanek; Staff Lorene Sarne; and Guests Elizabeth Deuso, Jennifer Kerr, Associate Dean Boatamo Ati Mosupyoe; Members not in attendance - Christie Braziel.
- 1.2 **Introductory Remarks:** The Board sent well wishes Bob Benedetti’s wife.
- 1.3 **Announcements (New Information):** None.

2. Agenda

- 2.1 **Additions to Agenda (New/Urgent Business):** None.
- 2.2 **Approval of Agenda:** [ACTION item – VOTE] **Motion/Second - M/S** – Cross/Finerty - **unanimous approval.**

3. Updates/Reports from Officers, Staff, CSUS Liaison

- 3.1 **Secretary’s Report (Bob Benedetti):**
- Approve Draft Minutes for February 14 – March 14, 2022 Meeting as amended. [ACTION item – VOTE] **M/S**– Benedetti/Ryan-Roberts - **unanimous approval.** (Ken mentioned that he would contact Amber Korb to correct various name misspellings.)
 - Condolences: Rick Bettis, Ruth Kletzing, Dennis Kohlmann
- 3.2 **Controller’s Report (Norv Wellsfry):**
Norv Wellsfry deferred his report to the Finance & Administration Committee report.
- 3.3 **Office Manager’s Report (Norv Wellsfry):**
- Norv reported that they are in the process of negotiating a two-year lease for the office.
- 3.4 **CSUS Liaison’s Report:** (Associate Dean Boatamo Ati Mosupyoe joined the meeting at 1:10 pm):
- Her department expected full face-to-face instruction in the fall with no mask requirement.
 - In response to a question from Norv Wellsfry, she did not anticipate that too many classrooms would be used on Friday morning because many professors would be using the hybrid model. Nancy Findeisen asked if professors would be using classrooms to offer the hybrid classes and Ati responded that even if they were on campus, at least in her department, the trend she is seeing that they would not be using classrooms on Friday.
 - She reported that an Interim Provost has been appointed at Sacramento State University because Steve Perez left and is Interim President at San Jose.

(Associate Dean Boatamo Ati Mosupyoe leaves meeting)

4. Specific Agenda Items

- 4.1 **Board Slate Nominations for Officers and Members At Large for the 2022 Board Election:** (Barbara Davis-Lyman, Nominating Committee Chair)
- Barbara thanked the committee – Warren Bonta, Susan Brackenhoff, and Shari Lowen for their exceptional service on the committee
 - She presented the slate of officers and members-at-large (MALS): President: Deborah Seiler; Vice-President: No applicant - Vacancy to be filled pursuant to RS By-Laws, Article VI (E).;

Secretary (unopposed): Bob Benedetti; Controller (unopposed): Norv Wellsfry; Board Member-at-Large: Kevin Bray, Kathryn Tobias, Stacie Walton; Member-at-Large Alternates: First Alternate: Walter Nilson; Second Alternate: Niel Nielsen

- **[ACTION item – VOTE]** Motion to accept the Slate recommended by the Nominating Committee: **Motion/Second – Lyman/Wiseley: Unanimous approval**

4.2 Appointment of Tellers for the 2022 Board Election: Ken Cross, Board President

- Ken Cross identified the names of the Tellers for the Board Elections as:
- Jeff Hendy to tally the electronic votes and Lorene Sarne to tally the mail-in ballots and Jeff Hendy will submit the final report to the board.
- Jeff Hendy reported that to date there are a total of 1,691 members, of these 67 do not have a Constant Contact account or two members share the same email and these members will receive a mail-in ballot.
- **[ACTION item – VOTE]** Ken Cross called the vote for the Election Tellers: **Unanimous approval.**

Break 2:12-2:16

5. Committee Updates:

- (Cross): Thanks to those Committees who submitted written reports.

5.1 Nominating Committee: (Barbara Davis-Lyman)

- See above for report of slate of Directors and Members-at-Large.

5.2 Program committee: (Cindy Suchanek and Pam O'Brien)

- (Suchanek): Cindy shared the number of programs to date for the Fall 2022 semester. It included a total of 112 programs broken down into 47 Seminars, 18 SIGs, 35 Presentations, and 12 Forums.
- She thanked everyone who worked to recruit leaders and presenters especially Pam and Deborah. Cindy's goal with the one-time presentations was to have people who have not done a presentation before, get their feet wet, and see that they can do it and consider offering a Seminar in future. There are a number of new presenters for the Fall.
- Further breakdown showed 24 seminars and 14 SIGs using Zoom on Monday to Thursday, and 23 seminars and 4 SIGs on Friday in-person only or using Hyflex. At this time no Zoom-only programs on Friday assuming no major Covid event.
 - (Ryan-Roberts): Do the Presentations include Monday Big History and Tuesday Speakers Series? Yes, and Cindy's goal is to see if there might be an on-campus Friday Speakers Series and another Zoom-only series on Wednesday or Thursday.
 - (Hendy/Findeisen): Don't know how many are full semester or shorter term. She will work with Lorene to get you that data.
 - (Wiseley): The room size and requirements are requested based on the maximum number of participants and needs provided by the leader.
- Cindy said the Program Committee has worked very hard and some members are leaving since having to pivot to Zoom because of the pandemic, producing the catalog and keeping their side of the Renaissance Society as vibrant as they could. She said this was made possible with the huge amount of work and help from all the Tech people. For example, Evie was able to offer Rendezvous virtually for four semesters and she's really tired and we need someone to follow-up and be her replacement. Chuck is starting to travel and has done a fabulous job with Bill Fackenthal to manage the SIGs. Bill didn't feel comfortable taking the lead by himself as he didn't feel he had the expertise, is in Maine, and is getting involved with programs there.
 - (Brackenhoff): MAL candidates are stellar: Some have experience in program and

catalog development. She said that she would be happy to share their notes about the candidates, even those who were not selected to provide help.

- (Seiler): She will be writing to all the MALs who applied and part of that correspondence will be a “big call” for them to become involved with the program.
- (Cross): Suggested that as Susan did to recruit mentors for the Mentoring Committee, Cindy reach out to program leaders as having experience and ideas by teaching classes and thus a natural affinity for the committee, and recruit them to become an active participant in the decision-making process by serving on the Program Committee. He encouraged them to call first and talk to potential PC members and invite them to be on the committee.
- (O’Brien): Said that at the end of the month will be putting together the final schedule for the Program Leaders Workshop that is scheduled for this summer.
- (Suchanek): Dates changed for catalog readiness as well as Rendezvous & Orientation (R&O), and the Workshop.
 - (Cross): Meeting on March 29th for Rendezvous & Orientation working group very few people at the meeting who were at last in-person R&O. Next meeting is scheduled for April 26th to remember and improve on how we do the R&O for the Fall semester.

5.3 Technology committee: (Jeff Hendy and Sarah Ryan-Roberts)

- Nothing to add to what is already in the report except that he is working on the ballots for the Board elections.

5.4 Membership, Diversity, and Community Engagement (MDCE) committee:

(Darryl Omar Freeman and Debbie Martinez)

- See Membership Report. Current membership numbers are 1702.
 - (Cross): Over last year in renewals but behind in new members by about 33 percent, which means 7% fewer total members compared to last year.
 - (Hendy): Quite a lot of people have joined twice and members are sharing the same email address. Trying to move toward using the email address as a unique identifier that should help prevent people from joining twice and couples will have to have independent email addresses. In addition, Sac State is starting to tighten up security so a word to the membership alerting them about this could be helpful. A system will be put in place to prevent people using the same email address once the word is out and it should be in place for the Fall.
 - (Obrien): Suggested that folks keep a stack of rack cards in the trunk of their car to had out when participating in other events.
 - (Cross): Suggested handing them out at dentist and doctors’ offices as well.
- The electronic Membership Directory went out on April 11th with a link where members can download it and print it out themselves if they want. The few hardcopy versions will be mailed next week.
- Social Committee is planning an event on May 1st at Arden Park with a Cinco de Mayo theme and information will be publicized in the Weekly Update and Recorder.
- (Freeman): RS will have a table and be attending the Senior event at Mission Oaks at the end of May.
- (Cross): Committee reached out to Professor Manuel Barajas for the Diversity and Inclusion award and they will be developing a slide about it for the annual meeting.

5.5 Communications and Marketing committee: (Deborah Seiler and Lorraine Murphy)

- (Seiler): This committee is starting to have similar issues as the Program Committee.

Lorraine Murphy, Recorder Editor, is having medical issues and Amber Korb is picking up the May Recorder to help get it out in time.

5.6 **2022 Summer Speaker Program Working Group:** (Deborah Seiler)

- Following a meeting on-campus, she and Ken did a tour of various places, looking for some venues the Food Pantry, who offered to provide a tour and snacks, the Dreamer Center, the Serna Center, checking out what restaurants are open, to entice members back on campus and to create a fun and social event in addition to the presentation on that particular day. Except for Dr. Barajas, all presenters are confirmed. In addition, two tours of the planetarium have been lined up, possibly a tour of the Arboretum, and possibly the cardiovascular wellness program. Maybe even be able to work with UTAPS to use the Herky streetcar to take folks to the various tour locations.
- Needs to work with Jeff and Sarah to arrange registration for the events and a way to create badges – maybe a low tech “Hello my name is...” name tag.
 - (Wiseley): Reminder that photos are needed.
 - (Hendy): Looking at how to go forward with badges because old printer that used to be used was discarded. Two types of badges: Big one that you can write on both sides and a small one that would have room for a name and not much else.
 - (Ryan-Roberts): Suggested that because Summer program is open to non-members maybe a name tag is all that is needed especially as there will be non-members there. She mentioned that SMUD also offers tours but that it might be a little bit more off campus.
 - (Suchanek, Tom): Suggested to have Renaissance Society and the name as RS is the sponsoring organization. Jeff said thinking about having the RS Logo and the person’s name on it.
 - (Seiler): Social Committee is requiring badges for the May 1st event.
 - (Abelson): Has anyone looked in the parking issue for the Summer Program? For the first four events in June, members will have their parking passes so it only applies to non-members. The membership portal opens June 1st, so non-members could join and get a parking pass as a little incentive that would be good in July. He also suggested that Ken approach Sac State to see if RS can get a waiver on the parking for the Summer program.
 - (Wiseley): Emergency contact information was on the back of the badge; would this still be there? Ken said in addition to that information there was a colored dot on the badge indicating that a person was a new member. These thoughts will be taken into consideration as we go about getting new badges.
 - (Wiseley): Suggested that at R&O the “Hello My Name is...” name tag would be enough with the understanding that a member badge would be in the mail in a couple of weeks.
 - (Freeman): Mentioned that when Sac State departments have an event where they rent the Ballroom for example, parking on the fourth floor of the parking garage is free. He didn’t think UTAPS was expecting a lot of revenue during the summer. Ken said they would ask.

5.7 **Resource Development committee:** (Nancy Findeisen)

- Just received the Foundation Reports from the University last Friday and they haven’t completed the entries for March, so won’t have a full accounting for a couple of weeks.

- Successful donation drive and collected a little more than need to fund the scholarships this year. There will be a final accounting and an overall report at the May Board meeting.
- As they have had two years of successful campaigns to fully fund student scholarships through member donations instead of through member dues and the general fund, the committee is looking at coming back with a policy on the scholarship fund for the Board's review and approval.
- "Give Sac State Day" is April 22nd and 23rd a fundraising competition among the various units of the university and RS was very successful last year. RS had a portal and will get credit for all the contributions that came through on that. Will be reminding folks using the Weekly Update.
 - (Seiler): This year the committee has recommended a stretch goal of \$7,500. Because RS successfully raised \$5,000 last year, the foundation added \$250 to that amount.
- Will be sending out, probably in May, personalized Thank You cards to all donors, which this year is over 400.
- Mr. Drobny will be offering the Estate Planning seminar on May 4th this year. He was able to personalize it last year and it has been very successful for RS.

5.8 Finance & Administration committee: (Norv Wellsfry)

- Committee starting to process and develop the budget for next year. Has received all the budget requests from the committees and the requests are running \$9,000 to \$10,00 ahead of last year's requests that is mostly related to social engagements and being face-to-face. For example, renting classrooms and ballrooms at the university for the Workshop with lunch and using classrooms with Hyflex capability. He discussed the revenue recommendation, which has held steady for the last couple of year at $\frac{3}{4}$ of our average membership despite robust Zoom programming. Jeff mentioned that one of the key determinants of drawing new membership is face-to-face classes on campus. The "Give a Little Extra" campaign drew in \$19,000 and the question is whether that is sustainable – translates to almost 200 new members. If we could get about 200 new members plus a bit from "Give a Little Extra", we would be in really good shape budget-wise.
- Committee discussed making the program more robust on campus, such as maybe offering the Forums in the morning instead of at 3 pm in the afternoon, so members would go to the Forum in the morning, have lunch, and then possibly go to other programs in the afternoon. This approach could double the afternoon capacity. He recommended creating a Working Group consisting of members from committees with a vested interest for example, the Program, Forums, and Finance & Administration Committees (maybe others) to try and come up with a more productive way of scheduling Fridays and generate additional revenue
 - (Obrien): Not this Fall, but possibly for the Spring or the following Fall. We will have a better sense based on the what happens this Fall with a greater on-campus presence and of where we are with Covid.
 - (Abelson): Will the commissaries be open? Deborah spoke with Jim Reinhardt at UEI and the commissaries and dining facilities are open now and he wants our members there.
 - (Cross): Ati was talking about her department but, President Nelsen and senior leadership want people back on campus.
 - (Wiseley): Suggested that with this Working Group that we know what the

recommendations are going to be prior to sending out the survey for the classroom for the programs. For example, for Chips Seminar, they wanted an auditorium for the afternoon because there would be no class after us, because that seminar generally runs over and if there is a class afterwards, they would have to leave the room.

- (O'Brien): Little confused about Ati's reference to Hyflex classes, which in her mind translated to using a classroom, not the Professor's office.
- (Cross): Going to Camelia Sahm to determine when to submit requests and when we will get the rooms we request. Going to have Hybrid Working Group meetings once again starting in May for all those folks with a vested interest to discuss all these and other operational issues. Ken will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule a meeting.

5.9 **Scholarship committee** – (Laurye Brownfield)

- (Brownfield): Spoke with all seven scholarship recipients and they are very grateful to the Renaissance Society and has received two videos for the Annual Meeting. They have done a great job working with ASI to use their automated system and what they're doing now is collecting the videos from the students and will be leading off the Annual General Meeting on May 9th with those videos from the seven scholarship recipients. The Deans and Chairs for those departments of these students Majors will be invited to the meeting so they can sit in and see their student' are receiving awards.

5.10 **Forum committee**: (Tom Suchanek and Michele Finerty)

- (Finerty): Currently have 9 confirmed speakers for the Fall Forums, still hoping to get three more. She identified the speakers and topics that have been confirmed for the fall and will give all this information to the Program Committee by mid-May for the catalog.
 - (Cross/Suchanek): Committee has submitted their request for a room on campus so that the Forums can stream there in the Fall.

5.11 **Gerontology committee**: (Susan Brackenhoff)

- The submitted report contains a thank you letter from one of the students who attended American Society of Aging Conference. When a student registers for this conference, he or she receives a year's worth of membership in that organization, which proved to be very helpful for them when they are writing their resumes and getting ready to work. As a result, the committee has submitted a budget request for funds that are used for conferences.
- The Assessment Fair is going to take place on April 20th.
- Marty Keale, Co-Chair and Susan plan to meet with Deborah to have a planning meeting about the Gerontology Committee for next year.

5.12 **Announcements, Board Direction and Next Steps**:

6. **Reports**

6.1 **Technology Committee Report** (Jeff Hendy) (see **Attachment 3**)

6.2 **(MDCE) Committee Report** (Debbie Martinez & Darryl Omar Freeman) (see **Attachment 4**)

6.3 **Scholarship Committee Report** (Laurye Brownfield) (see **Attachment 5**)

6.4 **Gerontology Committee Report** (Susan Brackenhoff) (see **Attachment 6**)

7. **New or Urgent Business**: None.

8. **Adjourn**: There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:43 pm.

9. **Next Board meeting**: 1:00 p.m., Monday, May 16, 2022

Key dates:

Apr. 18-May 6 Board elections online – Tellers' Report May

6 RS programs end on Friday.

May 9 Annual General Meeting on Zoom: 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. on Monday

May 16 RS monthly Board of Directors' meeting (one week later)

Lorene Sarne (for Bob Benedetti, Secretary)