

University Senate Retirees Rights and Benefits Committee
Minutes for Meeting, February 3, 2020

Attending: Ed Martinko, Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco, Peggy Robinson, Sandy Patchen, and Paul Laird

Our third meeting of the 2019-2020 academic year took place in Alcove A at the Kansas Union. The minutes from the last meeting were approved with one small correction. The main topic of the meeting was comparing the benefits that KU retirees receive to those of peer institutions named by the Kansas Board of Regents. Paul Laird opened the meeting with a brief review of KU retirement benefits listed on the KU Human Resources web site. Laird noted that Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco in her research for updating the KU Retirement Handbook that the KU Endowment Association has opened up the Sprague Apartment to employees who have worked at least fifteen years at the university, if KUEA is unable to fill the apartments with retirees. The situation of whether or not KU Information Technology might start to ask retirees not using the KU email accounts if they can be canceled. Paul Laird said that Chris Brown has reported that there are no immediate plans to start moving in this direction. Sandy Patchen mentioned the LinkedIn Learning with Lydia.com Courses provide through KU's Human Resources Management, wondering if those courses might be available for KU retirees. **Paul Laird will ask HR about this possibility.**

Further discussion of the Sprague Apartments ensued. Ed Martinko spoke of the problems with the facility, noting that with a rent of around \$750 per month that it was unlikely that the facilities might be improved and that he knows the condition of the apartments keeps some retirees from wanting to live there. He suggested three possibilities for providing additional places where retirees might live near campus. The first is to see if Distinguished Professor of Architecture Dan Rockhill might be interested in designing an addition to Sprague Apartments or another facility that he could work on with his students, like he has some houses in Lawrence. The other possibilities were that perhaps an addition to Sprague might be considered a project of interest for the long-term planning initiative that has been announced by Chancellor Girod, a project that perhaps might draw private donations, or whether or not a private corporation that provides independent living, assisted living, and nursing care might be approached about building a facility near campus where retired members of the faculty and staff could live and have easy access to the campus. Ed Martinko knows about such a facility at the University of Colorado – Boulder and believes that there would be KU retirees interested in such an opportunity. The committee agreed that this idea should be presented to the Chancellor. **Paul Laird will look into the best way to do this.** Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco suggested that perhaps some of the unused dormitory space might be made available as residences for KU retirees.

Peggy Robinson spoke about the possibility of restoring retiree discounts at Lied Center events for KU retirees. She suggested that we should contact Derek Kwan and that perhaps the new provost would be more open to such a possibility. She thought that we should work on the possibility before the launch of the new season on May 3. **Paul Laird agreed to speak to Derek Kwan**, whom he has gotten to know through the School of Music.

Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco noted that the KU Human Resources web site list of retirement benefits is incomplete when compared with the KU Retirement Handbook and that the web site should be updated. Paul Laird suggests that the committee should look into this as part of the process of updating the KU Retirement Handbook.

We discussed retirement benefits that we had studied from Indiana University – Bloomington, Michigan State University, SUNY/Buffalo, University of Iowa, University of Missouri – Columbia, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of Oregon, and University of Virginia. The committee agreed that the most striking thing about the list was how close the lists were to what is already offered by KU, but we identified some possibilities to pursue from KU: purchase of hardware and software under university agreements (Indiana), discounts on computer purchases (Iowa), access to limited site licenses and reduced-cost software packages (Iowa), and non-credit computer courses free of charge (Missouri). Several universities have lists of businesses that offer discounts to employees and retirees and the committee wondered if there is any such program at KU or offered to state employees or retirees. Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco also wondered if perhaps KU retirees could have voting privileges in the KU University Senate. Ed Martinko suggested that the committee should discuss these matters with Chris Brown before proceeding any further, and **Paul Laird agreed to do so.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00. The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 30, at 3:00 PM. Our topic for that meeting will be reviewing the changes to the KU Retirees Handbook. The list of assignments for committee members on which entries they will research about updating was announced by Paul Laird via email on January 2. It is reproduced below. Thanks to Sandy Patchen and Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco for their help already on this project. Paul Laird requests that these reports be sent to him before the meeting on March 30. The KU Retirement Handbook was attached to the email from January 2 and it generally includes the contact information for these entities.

Athletics - Laird
Auditing Courses - Cink
Bookstore - Gronbeck-Tedesco
Change of Address - Martinko
Credit Union - Patchen
Email and Computer Services - Robinson
Endacott Society - Young
Food Service - Laird
Health Insurance - Cink
KU on Wheels and Park & Ride Express - Gronbeck-Tedesco
Letterhead/Envelopes - Martinko
Library Privileges - Patchen
Lied Center Events - Robinson
News Service, KU - Young
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - Laird
Parking Permits - Cink

Pioneer Cemetery - Gronbeck-Tedesco
Recreational Facilities - Martinko
Rehiring Retirees - Patchen
Research Support - Robinson
Retiree ID - Young
Sprague Apartments - Laird
Theatre, University - Cink
Voting Privileges - Gronbeck-Tedesco
Watkins Memorial Health Center & Pharmacy - Martinko
Women's Club, University - Patchen

Respectfully submitted by:

Paul Laird
Chair, FY 2019 Retirees Rights and Benefits Committee