

**Approved as submitted April 18, 2024**

**UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association General Membership Meeting of March 21, 2024  
Minutes submitted April 18, 2024, by Larry Dlugosh, secretary pro tem**

UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association President Larry Dlugosh called the March 21, 2024, general membership meeting to order and welcomed members and guests at 11:45 AM. The number of registered members and guests present was 78; the meeting convened in the Nebraska East Union.

Four new members were recognized. They were Mary Jane Bruce, Wendy Horacek, Charles Riedesel, and Dean Young. Guests were also recognized: Amy and Steve Woita, relatives of the featured speaker, Tyler White.

Larry asked the members to share in a moment of silence to honor those members or spouses of members who died since our February meeting. The names of those honored were:

Bill Ahlschwede – Animal Science  
Joyce Clark, wife of Richard Clark, Agricultural Economics  
Ellen Digman – wife of Lester Digman, College of Business  
Jan Gauger, wife of Wendell Gauger – Biological Sciences  
Robert McLaran “Mac” Sawyer – College of Education and Human Sciences  
Linda Shipley – College of Journalism and Mass Communications

A donation in honor of the Emeriti, Retirees, and spouses will be made to the ERA scholarship fund in recognition of their service.

An e-mail had been sent to members on March 11, 2024, informing them that a vote to approve changes in the By-Laws would be taken at the March 21 meeting. The amendments are outlined below:

**ARTICLE III – Membership (changes indicated by underscore)**

Membership shall consist of dues paying officially\* retired UNL: (1) academic-administrative personnel, (2) professional staff members, and (3) office and service staff members. Collegial Membership (dues paying) may be granted by the Board of Directors of the UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association to any person residing in the UNL area who has officially retired from another baccalaureate degree-granting university or college. All dues-paying members are franchised to vote on matters affecting the Association. Honorary (non-voting) Life Membership is granted to surviving widows and widowers of University of Nebraska-Lincoln Emeriti and Retirees Association members.

\* As specified in University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaw 3.12

**Article VII – Committees**

Added the Programs Committee to the list of ERA Board Committees.

**ARTICLE IX – Amendments**

Will specify today’s date (March 21, 2024) as the date the by-law changes were approved.

Larry asked if there were any questions regarding the amendments and hearing none, proceeded to call for a vote. On a voice vote the amendments were approved without dissent.

Larry introduced Earl Hawkey to present the Treasurer’s report.

Earl presented the Treasurer's report by highlighting the checking account balance, and the increase in funds to the Scholarship fund.

Larry introduced Nancy Mitchell who provided information about upcoming tours. The tours for April and May are:

**Kiewit Hall (new engineering building) April 23** Coffee if you wish to buy it at the coffee shop in the lobby area starting at 2:30, tour runs 3:00-4:00.

**Davis Global Center at UNMC in Omaha, May 13** from 1:00-3:00 p.m. (Limited to 40 participants)

**ERA/OLLI pop-up Season Preview/Backstage Tour at the Lied Center on May 21.** Season preview starts at 2:00, backstage tour for those who wish to do so following the preview.

Pam Edwards, ERA Vice President, provided some background information about the featured speaker and introduced Dr. Tyler White. His presentation was titled – “The Future of Freedom – Understanding and Addressing Threats to Freedom in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

Dr. White pointed out that most of human history is marked with autocratic or totalitarian ruling structures

- There is some evidence of democratic style systems but often limited to small segments of society
- There is also evidence of some waves of democratization in the 20th Century

Further, White pointed to definitions of Autocracy and Totalitarianism and indicated there are a number of countries who seem enamored with autocrats due largely to the fear that citizens are being marginalized and a “strong man” may be able to protect them. Data indicates this is not necessarily the case.

White also addressed what might be done to stand in the way of threats to democracy. This is a social threat, but it requires individual effort.

- Rigorously assess the efficacy and accuracy of information.
- Read newspapers and respected magazines.
- Limit or turn off cable news and social media, they are profiting off your cortisol levels
- Keep reading!
- Seek and support good local news sources.
- If you aren't paying for your news, you are the problem.

Listen to others you disagree with and show them and yourself grace.

It is okay to disagree. Respecting or loving people we disagree with is important.

- See the common humanity in others and remember that we all want a lot of the same things even if we disagree on how to get there.
- Acknowledge that people see the world differently and that is okay.
- Have hope.
- Do something to make the world a better place and remember that there is a lot out there that is not under your control.

Pay attention to the important things and ignore the drama, speculation, and incitement that is here only to manipulate your emotions.

- Drink lots of water, get plenty of sleep, and be kind.

White answered a number of questions from members before he concluded his presentation.

His presentation was well received as indicated by the applause and the response to the answers he gave to questions.

Larry thanked Dr. White and mentioned that an honorarium of \$100 would be given in his name to the ERA Scholarship Fund.

Larry thanked Pam Edwards for providing treats for the that were available on every table.

The April 16, 2024, general membership meeting was announced:

The Speaker will be Chancellor Jeffery Gold, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Priority Candidate for the Presidency of the NU System. Chancellor Gold will provide an update on the programs, research, and the national and international accomplishments of the UN Medical Center and talk about his vision for the University of Nebraska System.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.