

DRAFT PLATO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 15, 2013 -9:30 a.m.
DCS Office, 21 North Park, Madison, WI

Present: Tim Otis, Mike Lovejoy, Barry Orton, Sybil Better, Aleta Murray, Wendy Kerr, Patricia Becker, Greg Bell, Judy Sadowsky, Scott Kolar, Marvin Beatty, Harold Green, Frank Power, Mary Boyd

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Tim called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- II. **MINUTES:** The minutes of the January 19, 2013 meeting were approved.
- III. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Mike Lovejoy reported income of \$14,044.94 and expense outgo of \$182.76. He indicated that the next month's report would include a 4 month report from DCS. Earnings from the \$80,000 original foundation investment for the last 3 months of 2012 was \$3,000. Total income to date for this fiscal year (July 2012-Feb 15, 2013) is \$45,599.45. Expenses to date for this fiscal year (July 2012-Feb 15, 2013) are \$36,743.68.
- IV. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Tim reported that on February 14th he participated in a conference call with five other learning in retirement organizations (Kellogg Community College, UW Parkside-Racine, Roosevelt University, Rock Valley College, and National Louis University). What he learned was that there is wide variability among all of these schools when it come to dues (\$15--\$395), session length, and course topics (some purely academic and some craft and recreational or a combination). Some pay instructors and some do not. Some were classified as some type of 501-C group for tax purposes.
- V. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES:**
 - Curriculum:** Harold reported that there are 37 courses scheduled for the Spring semester. One course is scheduled for an evening at the Space Place. He also reported new locations include the Jefferson/Attic Angel retirement homes. He indicated that a Middleton location also is interested. Frank Power reviewed the procedures for the Preview on February 20th.
 - Communication/Membership:** Greg reported that the January *Persimmon* had 15 articles and was out on-time. He reported that Patricia Herling is the editor for the *Persimmon*. Wendy reported that there are 893 paid memberships to date. Greg indicated more analysis would be done in the future with membership data. He also indicated a membership recruiting task force would be formed from among his committee's membership. He also indicated that he met with Tim and Barry to discuss issues related to the website—particularly delays in updating the website. Because of recent changes in staffing and other departmental priorities, it is unlikely that improvement will occur immediately. However, on a more positive note, a new system is in place for on-line registration for both memberships and day-trip registration.
 - Special Events:** Mary reported that there are special events coming up in the remainder of February and March. First, two lectures are planned. The first lecture on February 27th is about the Wisconsin Institute of Discovery. Tom Still will provide the

second lecture on March 19th on the topic of “Early Stage Investing in Wisconsin: Building Tomorrow’s Companies and Jobs.” Both lectures will be at Oakwood West at 3:30 p.m. On March 20th Special Events is sponsoring a day trip to Chicago to the Picasso Exhibit and the Art Institute. The committee also has a subcommittee who will provide refreshments for the Preview on February 20th.

Financial Resources: Marv reported that the committee met on February 14th. They are working on steps to provide on-going information to grow the PLATO fund. He also indicated that there is an event to be held at Union South in late April where scholarship recipients will be awarded. The 100 plus donors to the PLATO Fund would be invited to attend.

Leadership Development: Pat explained that this committee is working on developing a handbook that describes the mission of PLATO and the structure of the organization.

Agora: It was reported that there are 83 submissions for the third edition. This is down a bit from the previous two editions. However they expect that the quality will be on a par with previous editions.

Administrative Task Force: Tim reported the following recommendations for their mission to provide additional staffing at times—especially when a large number of registrations are coming into the PLATO office. The task force (Tim, Lauren, and Aleta) are planning to set up support procedures involving volunteers coming in to handle registrations and other requests to the extent possible within the time frame of a few hours a week. They have a meeting scheduled for March 5th to establish procedures to see if this can help lighten the load for Wendy and provide an efficient routine. DCS will provide space and the task force will pilot the procedures before looking for additional volunteer help. One immediate improvement is a process for on-line registration described earlier in these minutes.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Task Force: The task force is made up of Tim, Patricia, and Mike. The purpose of the task force is to negotiate the MOA for the next two years. The primary discussion point is the request from DCS for more funding for PLATO’s administrative services. Currently the funding split from dues and other sources is 70% for PLATO and 30% for DCS. The proposal on the table is to change the split to 60% for PLATO and 40% for DCS. To make this work the task force is proposing a dues increase from \$50 to \$60 which would provide approximately \$8,000 more for DCS and \$1,000 more for PLATO assuming the same number of PLATO members as at present. The Board discussed the need for good communication to the membership about the reasons for a dues increase and how the additional money would be spent. Tim indicated that there are a number of opportunities for this starting with the most recent *Persimmon*. Issues related to a timeline were discussed with no final decision made. Tim also indicated that the task force would spend time reviewing the MOA appendix which describes duties and responsibilities and provide detail for operations. He indicated some updating may be in order.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A Dues Increase: The Board discussed the process for communication of a dues increase as well as the timeline for making the change. Tim has already written an

article for the previous *Persimmon* explaining the situation. The upcoming Preview is a second chance to reach a fairly large group of members. A final suggestion was to send a letter to all members describing the financial needs of the organization and the timeline for change. It was agreed that the Treasurer would submit a preliminary budget for 2013-2014, prior to the Board voting on a dues increase.

A Speaker for the Luncheon: Tim also indicated that none of our original suggested speakers for our luncheon are available. A suggestion from the group was to ask David Mollenhoff, a noted Madison historian. Mary indicated that a member of her committee is a neighbor and friend of his and she would ask if he were available and willing to speak at the luncheon.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Honoring Long-time Members: Tim asked the Board to think about names of long-time members to honor at the luncheon based on their service to the organization. Norman Risjord's name was mentioned. The Board was asked to think about additional people to honor.

Nominating Committee: Judy will chair the committee also comprised of Patricia, Tim, and Loren. They will be looking for officers as well as at-large members for the Board. Names will be submitted in March.

VIII. FUTURE BUSINESS

Tim indicated the following topic, **The Board's role in providing leadership and oversight**, would be discussed at a future meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. The next meeting is March 15th.