

Tufts University
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Executive Board Meeting
Minutes: 08/19/2021

Executive Board Members Present: Diane Boettcher, Joyce Callaghan, Joyce Carpenter, Ken Fetting, Grace Hall (Chair), Ellen Kitzis, Deborah Lapides, Kathleen Mayzel, Kim Pratt, Gloria Rosensweig,

Guests Present: Bob Green, Irene Hannigan, Judy Katz, Rebekah Plotkin (UC Tufts Univ), Laura Ramsay, Joan Stein

Recording Secretary: Kathy Scanlon

Minutes of previous meeting: We will hold on accepting the meeting notes from July until the September meeting

Comments from Chair Grace Hall:

Welcome to all our guests who are joining the meeting today.

Introduction of Rebekah Plotkin: Rebekah is the Director, Professional and Custom Education at University College. The Osher program has now moved under her umbrella.

Comments from Rebecca Plotkin:

Rebekah gave an update on the process of hiring a new Associate Director to replace Sam. We hope to identify a finalist in early September and get them onboard quickly. We have been seeing lots of good, qualified candidates.

Update on the University's Fall plan for opening:

Tufts is opening campus this fall, everyone needs to upload vaccine info and will be required to be tested weekly. Tufts will be piloting bringing back some non-matriculated students to test their systems. Everyone on campus would need to be in the database for testing, contract tracing, etc. The challenge for OLLI is we do not have Tufts ID's so tracing would be more difficult. Moving forward we may need to issue ID's.

Conversations have shifted due to the increase in restrictions due to the Delta variant. The logistical challenge is that this situation is changing daily and the OLLI plans in advance. We are still planning on getting OLLI back to campus for the Spring session.

Comments and Questions from Visitors:

Gloria Rosensweig stated that members of the membership committee are present at the Executive Board meeting due to three concerns

- No on campus study groups this fall
- Inadequate communication during this transition
- Perceiving that OLLI is losing autonomy in many areas, mainly financial

Individuals providing comments were Irene Hannigan, Jean Keefe (read by Gloria), Laura Ramsay, Gloria Rosensweig and Joan Stein.

-Looking at the Tufts website, one person saw that visiting students and other adult learners could come back to campus. She understands it is more complicated than it appears but it seems like other groups are being taken care of and not us. She is hoping for some in-person classes in the late fall session.

-Another member was upset that they had never been informed how the interview process works to hire a new OLLI director. Her second concern is that she feels OLLI is being treated as a 2nd class citizen and that there should be a way to be back on campus for some activities in spite of the delta variant by showing a vaccine card, being masked, etc. Maybe there could be a class or other events in Alumni Lounge.

-A third person had two concerns:

1. Why are we not back on campus? Will Tufts administration commit to getting us back to campus soon?
2. Since we have been running a strong surplus in the budget can we reduce the fees and provide discounts for taking multiple classes?

-The feeling was also expressed by another individual that we had been independent and now we have been co-opted by Tufts. There has been no clear indication on when we can go back to campus; it feels like we are a pawn in this process- and would also like to get more clarification on how and why the surplus in the budget gets turned over to the university.

-Final comments were that having Osher committees makes a qualitative difference between us and other organizations. Many members have been feeling alienated, social connections have been lost, the university has not been clear in communications with OLLI and University College was not aware of the sense of volunteerism in our program when they took us over. This member thinks a solution would be to give OLLI members ID's.

Rebekah thanked the members for sharing their views and concerns. She wanted to make sure that people know that she and Joe are in conversations to get OLLI back to campus. Communication and transparency will be better and a priority.

New Business:

Due to the time, we tabled the committee chair reports.

Bob Green reported on the Financial Advisor Subcommittee:

The committee was composed of Ellen Kitzi, Rory O'Connor and himself. This subcommittee was formed out of the concern to have a person in the financial advisor role. They explored the possibility of making the role more specific and drafted an amendment to the by-laws, as well as a description of the position. Kathleen Mayzel looked over the new bylaw and said this person should be appointed by the new director and the Chair of the Executive Committee rather than being nominated by the Nominating Committee. The by-law change will be voted on next month after minor revision.

Ellen Kitzi voiced a concern from the Curriculum Committee, saying the biggest challenge for the committee is how to get back on campus – how to handle the programming, space concerns etc. Rebekah made a note of this to go over with the new Associate Director.

A special thank you to Bob Pride for serving as the Curriculum Committee Chair for 10 years. It was unanimously voted to give Bob one free semester of classes as a thank you from the Board.

Adjourned: 2:00 pm

Next Meeting: September 16th at 12:15pm

All Committee meetings as well as the Executive Board meeting are open to all members with advance notice to the Director.

There will be an open comment period at the end of each meeting, time permitting. Upcoming meeting dates:

- Curriculum Committee: TBD
- Membership Committee: TBD
- Executive Board: September 16, 2021, October 21, 2021
- Lunch & Learn: TBD
- Nominating Committee: October 2021