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Meeting Minutes, 17 February 2014

University of Mississippi. Library. Friends

Jennifer Ford
University of Mississippi

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Meeting of Friends of the Library planning group, February 7, 2014, 1p.m. Harrison Room, J.D. Williams Library.

--Present: Dean Julia Rholes, Dr. Stephen Monroe, Dr. Gerald Walton, Dr. Ann Abadie, Dr. Jennifer Ford, Mrs. Mary Ann Fruge, Ms. Angela Barlow.

---Dean Rholes referenced the handouts she put together: an RSVP list (yellow highlighting on the list indicates who is coming to the Friends meeting on March 29th). There was also a list of a possible due structure—maybe we do not need so many levels to the dues structure; keep life at \$1000; we currently do not have a student level but it was thought this was a good idea. Dr. Walton said historically this had been a problem as the students paid library fees but this is no longer the case so the idea of a student level was agreed upon.

--There was also a discussion of a faculty and staff level for the dues structure- the ability to do a payroll deduction was mentioned. Mrs. Fruge liked this idea and Dean Rholes thought this could possibly be in the range of \$30.

--There was a discussion of phasing out the title “regular” and making it just “supporting.”

--Dr. Abadie thought the level “contributing” should be \$100 instead of \$80. Dr. Walton mentioned that he was happy with the current levels of dues. Dean Rholes thought they should go up because of what we will be offering now—more programs and communications.

--There was a discussion of possibly having a “senior” level for retired Friends. Dr. Abadie asked how many regular members do we currently have? Dean Rholes stated that it is important to let people know that the dues have not been increased since 1983.

--Ms. Barlow spoke of new efforts of the Friends group—more events—more communications. She mentioned the possibility of jumping from \$100 in the Sustaining level to \$500. The Dean agreed that we could add a \$500 level, but Angela did mention that we could have too many levels to the dues structure.

--Dean Rholes mentioned the spring issue of *Keywords* where there is a donor list (includes monetary donations and gifts in kind). Currently we do not have distinctions in gifts but we could do this in our list of donors for this publication.

--Dean Rholes said the group meeting on March 29th may come back with suggestions. Ms. Barlow suggested that we should go ahead and create a dues structure to have in hand at the meeting for discussion.

--Dr. Monroe liked the idea of eliminating the regular category but keeping initial dues low—about \$25 or \$30. There was more discussion about the faculty and staff category. Dean Rholes thought this level should be \$25 and “supporting” \$30. She thought the faculty and staff category should be \$30 or \$15. But she noted that the dues structure will not be perfect for everyone and Dr. Monroe is right that we do not want to lose members based on the new structure.

--Dr. Abadie stated that she thought the dues for faculty and staff should be \$15 and \$25 for supporting. Dr. Monroe thought it should be \$25 for faculty and staff and supporting slightly above this.

--We will put this in front of the board on March 29th. We will see what happens the first year of the dues increase.

--There were three proposals for the dues structure: Proposal one—the Dean’s handout (Regular \$40; Supporting- phase out; Contributing \$80; Sustaining \$150; Life \$1000; Student \$10); Proposal two (Supporting \$30; Regular- phase out; Contributing \$80; Sustaining \$150; Life \$1000; Student \$10); Proposal three (Faculty/Staff \$25; Supporting \$30; Contributing \$100; Sustaining \$500; Life \$1000; Student \$10). Dr. Monroe volunteered to draft one sheet with the three options and email it to this small group before the March 29th meeting.

--The discussion then turned to committee memberships. Dean Rholes mentioned that we should have form for the March 29th meeting where there are choices to sign up for the different committees. She created charges for the committees on a handout at the February 7th meeting. The four committees she drafted are: Membership Committee; Programming Committee; Communications Committee; Executive Committee. There was a discussion at this time of possibly going ahead and sending out such a form before the March 29th meeting.

--Mrs. Fruge did not think we needed any more committees besides the ones the Dean outlined in her handout. She asked about the executive committee—how often would they meet? Maybe we could recommend regular telephone meetings or they could have meetings as needed.

--We have an interim president (Dr. Stephen Monroe) but right now do not have a past president or president elect but we plan to in the future.

--Dr. Monroe asked about the regularity of Friends letters- they have historically come twice a year—dues reminders and the Christmas letter. There is a separate endowment that pays for postage and stationery.

--Dr. Abadie mentioned using social media in promoting the Friends group. Dr. Monroe agreed that this is an easy and cheap way to reach out to prospective members.

--Dr. Monroe asked if there was a Friends logo already in existence. If there is not he thought it was a good idea to develop one. He liked the idea proposed by Dr. Kellum in the January meeting of highlighting the 75th anniversary of Friends into the logo. The 75th year will occur in 2015. He volunteered to speak to Stephanie in UM Communications about creating a logo. Dr. Walton recalled that there was a logo in the past. Dr. Ford volunteered to look through the Friends collection in Special Collections to see if such a logo existed in past communications.

--There was more discussion about creating a form of committees for people to sign up—this is the first thing the March 29th group needs to do.

--There was discussion of possibly creating a 75th anniversary level to the dues structure.

--Dean Rholes mentioned that we may not do a lot in terms of programs this year as the group gets off the ground a little more.

--There was discussion about the possibility of sending out the interest form in advance of the March 29th meeting—through email. This would allow members to have already volunteered for the committees they would like to participate in. This would help us streamline the March 29th meeting.

--Dr. Monroe mentioned that we could possibly have draft logos by the March 29th meeting—thereby giving people something to respond to. But he mentioned that this would cost money. Dr. Abadie asked about the status of the Friends operation budget. Dr. Walton did not know at this time but would get in contact with Tiffany Webb, the Library's Administrative Coordinator II.

--Dr. Abadie mentioned that the monies collected by Friends have historically all gone to books and in the future digital collections. She suggested exploring the possibility of getting sponsors for the events—that event costs would not come from the Friends proper. Dean Rholes thought that the Programming Committee could talk about this. Mrs. Fruge mentioned that this was the only way to go---for fundraisers to have sponsors but it is sometimes difficult to make the right connections.

--Dr. Monroe asked if someone currently makes a contribution to the library in any way becomes an automatic Friend of the Library. Dean Rholes mentioned that we have not historically done this because we use the funds for other reasons than materials—we have to have some spending money for the library. Dr. Monroe stated that if someone gave \$25,000 to the library could be called a friend but this would not restrict the use of the funds. Dr. Abadie mentioned that we could have honorary members. She stated that the record keeping of the Friends group needs to be centralized. Dr. Monroe stated that he could provide Dr. Walton with support. Dean Hopkins has agreed that Dr. Monroe's secretary could assist with Friends.

--Dr. Abadie stated that we really need to figure the archives situation of the Friends out. She would rather the collection of documents be housed at the library and centralized at the library. Dean Rholes mentioned that the library does not have much support staff and really could not take the centralization on in our current situation. It was decided that we did not have to decide this at this meeting but we could bring it up at the March 29th meeting.

--Dr. Monroe asked if the work was mainly sending out the letters? It was mentioned that the work this year has been unusual as we are trying to streamline the process, but we need to be careful of the library's support staff.

--Dean Rholes mentioned that someone on the executive board should be watching the accounts. Dr. Abadie mentioned that we should look for someone at the library to do this. Dean Rholes said this was okay to a limited degree but that we really needed to look for someone on the executive committee to do this. She asked how the Center for the Study of Southern Culture handles their work for their friends group. Dr. Abadie stated that the staff of the Center does everything. The Dean again mentioned that this year is unusually busy but we cannot continue in the library at this rate and that this needs to be clear with the new board membership.

--Dr. Abadie mentioned that one way to centralize is to ask some off-campus and on-campus people to contribute money to a staff member to monitor the accounts. The Dean mentioned her special account that she contributes to for an expense account and this might be a model for raising money.

--Mrs. Fruge stated that we really do need to get the materials on campus and we need someone to have an overview of the accounts. She said that this function does not need to be in the hands of volunteers.

--Ms. Barlow stated that she would prepare the committee interest form to be emailed out to the small group first for review and then to be sent out to the bigger group before the March 29th meeting. Mrs. Fruge mentioned that when we receive the completed forms we can choose possible chairs for each group and telephone these possibilities to see if they are interested. That way we could have the structure set up before the March 29th meeting.

--Dr. Abadie thought it would be good for the group to have Dr. Walton's history of Friends sent out before the March 29th meeting as well. Mrs. Fruge agreed to this as well.

--Mrs. Fruge mentioned that a notebook should be created for each member of the group on March 29th. It should have tabs and documents we have created for the organization and places to add new documents as they are created. Dr. Abadie volunteered to help create such notebooks.

--Dr. Abadie questioned whether we should have an emailed history or a paper history for the March 29th meeting. Dr. Walton voted to have it sent out electronically. Dr. Monroe mentioned that we could have the history on our redesigned Friends website.

--Dean Rholes spoke about the redesign of the library's website. We will have a domain for Friends on the new site and the new documents could reside there as well as in the notebooks given to the March 29th group.

--Mrs. Fruge mentioned that when we give the interest forms we could state that these are proposed committees for the Friends for this calendar year and that these groups could be evaluated after the close of the year to see how they work.

--There was a question about sending out a complete membership list to the March 29th group in advance of the meeting. Should it be everyone who has paid their dues in the last year? Or should we include those who pay their dues sporadically? Should it be divided into a current list and then a list of past members? Dean Rholes mentioned it would be the Membership Committee who would be most interested in such lists. Dean Rholes asked Dr. Walton to serve as a liaison to the membership committee and Dr. Walton agreed.

--Dr. Monroe asked if someone goes through the University Foundation site to pay dues who notifies the Friends president? Dr. Walton stated that he currently receives a notification usually once a month. There are two lists- people who have paid their dues and one of people who have paid to a memorial account. Ms. Lee Ann Cooper sends this to Dr. Walton currently. Dr. Walton asked if the Foundation could prepare a list of dues paying members from January 1, 2013 through January 31, 2014. Ms. Barlow

stated that she could have lists become automatic from the Foundation once a month to the president of Friends. Dr. Walton stated that he has a list of all members we have not removed. Ms. Barlow stated that we could have a quarterly initiative to write to those who have not paid their dues within five years. These letters could be divided for response by people on the membership committee who know them to write to them personally.

--Ms. Barlow stated that she could have the University Foundation prepare such a list to us by the time of the March 29th meeting—those who have paid dues beginning January 1, 2013-January 31, 2014. Dr. Walton will need to add lifetime members to this list. She also volunteered to go back as far as the University Foundation records go for the March 29th meeting. Such a list would only contain the names and addresses—not funding levels.