

The Illinois Club Board Meeting Minutes, March 25, 2019

The Illinois Club Board met at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 18, 2019, in the Enterprise Works conference room. Attending were Kathy Valdés, Linda Lopez, Jane Myer, Libby Johnston, Sandy Camargo, Janice Hiland, Allan Penwell, Donna Offenbecher, Jenny Kim, Christine Lyke, and Cathy Jackson.

Board Reports

President, Kathy Valdés

Kathy called the meeting to order and welcomed the board. She announced that the prior minutes were approved via e-mail.

Vice President, submitted by Helen Valentine and reported by Kathy Valdés

The speaker previously announced for the Spring Luncheon had to cancel due to medical issues. The new speaker will be Dr. Samantha Sanders, new Director of the Wildlife Medical Clinic at the University of Illinois and a Lecturer in Zoological Medicine at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Meetings and Events, reported by Jan Hiland

The Meeting Managers Team has met with the in-coming 2019-2020 Meeting Managers to provide a full briefing on the responsibilities of the role and has shared all the materials that were provided to them last year and added their experience/lessons learned to allow for full preparation for the incoming team.

The Scholarship Awards Brunch was held on March 2nd at the IHotel. The event went well. We had 75 registrations. Space was appropriate, food, AV support, and service was good. Parking was challenging due to a large breakfast event that was underway at the hotel as our event began but hotel staff were present to assist in finding parking. There was some extraneous noise from guests from that other function as they departed the hotel during our presentations.

Our event was slightly over budget (this is a function of the Meeting Managers not being aware that our budget was to pay for the scholarship recipients and their guests, plus the addition of sales tax). We have clarified this for the incoming team, that they need to budget for sales tax and the cost of the speaker and scholarship recipients and their plus one guest.

The Spring Luncheon will be held on May 4th at the Hyatt Place Hotel in downtown Champaign. Cost is \$20 per member, \$23 per guest. All Board Members are encouraged to bring a guest. The event will begin at 11:30, buffet to be ready at 11:40. Our guest speaker is Dr. Samantha Sanders, new Director of the Wildlife Medical Clinic at the University of Illinois

and a Lecturer in Zoological Medicine at the College of Veterinary Medicine. She will present “Conservation of the African Penguin, One Health in the Real World.” Parking is free in the hotel parking garage and is also free on the street and in the Hill Street garage on weekends, should the hotel lot fill-up. We have guaranteed 60 attendees and hope to increase that number based on registrations in the next few weeks. Last year’s attendance was 56 on a Friday, we are hoping for higher attendance this year on a Saturday. Sign-up cut off will be April 23 – and we will give the final number to the hotel on April 29th. This allows for late postal service deliveries and oversight by members. We will not guarantee reservations without payment.

There was a discussion at the Board meeting about costs. The general feeling is to keep costs down, but action is deferred to the 2019-20 Board. The 2019-20 Meeting Managers are interested in knowing what members are willing to pay for the big events (Holiday Party, Scholarship Brunch, Spring Luncheon). Consensus of those attending the Board meeting was around \$25 per person per event.

While members may feel that their dues should help to subsidize events, the reality is that dues do not even cover the operating expenses for the Club (such as mailings).

Treasurer and Budget, reported by Allan Penwell

Financials are within appropriate boundaries.

Scholarships, reported by Sandy Camargo

We awarded the following scholarships at the Brunch on March 2, 2019:

Make-a-Difference Awards: Elisa Jensen, Dakota Richmond, Charmaine Ong, Joey Mustafa, and Ashli Drummond

Global Focus Award: Matthew Schultz

Humanities Award: Carmen Gutierrez

Purnell Education Award: Emily Boehm

Ikenberry Fine Arts Award: Xochitl Cisneros

The students who were unable to attend because they are studying abroad this term sent in remarks to be read to the guests (Drummond) or video greetings (Schultz and Gutierrez). We were grateful to the IHotel for providing a computer and projector at no extra charge.

We are pleased to report that the procedural changes that we instituted in 2018–2019 were successful in protecting student privacy and in preventing any applications from being mishandled. The only change that we might make for 2019–2020 would be to use Dropbox as storage rather than UI’s BOX. BOX access can be a problem for committee members who are not part of the University. The committee will discuss this aspect of our operations when we reconvene in August.

We are on hiatus until early August, when Advancement will tell us how much money we will be able to offer next year.

Membership, submitted by Kathleen Weibel and reported by Kathy Valdés

Below is a summary of ongoing discussion Judith and Kathleen have had about recruiting members. They hope that this could be the basis for discussion at a future meeting we can both attend.

In casual conversation with some TIC members the suggestion has been made that the Membership Chair and Assistant Chair should be responsible for recruiting new members as well as maintaining membership records and producing the Club Directory. We sincerely feel that membership recruitment is a Club-wide responsibility.

We also feel that a membership initiative can't be undertaken without overall direction from the Board. To that end we recommend a Board discussion of membership issues and recruitment opportunities. Here are some questions that might be considered in such a discussion:

- 1. What is a realistic optimum number of members for The Illinois Club? We are presently at 267.*
- 2. What is a realistic goal for new members per year? This year we added 2 new couples and 15 new individual members?*
- 3. We don't have a good picture of the number of members who leave the Club each year or why they leave. Should we?*
- 4. What should be the focus of membership recruitment? New faculty? Newly retired? Community members? Others?*
- 5. What have been or could be effective recruitment strategies?*
- 6. What are effective retention strategies?*

We request that the Board take some time at a future meeting to discuss these and other questions.

There was also some general Board discussion about attracting new members. Our membership has gradually declined over the years. Current members are encouraged to bring guests to the four general events and to interest groups. It was suggested that members who bring guests receive an entry into a drawing each time they bring a guest, and at the end of the year, there could be a drawing from these entries for an individual membership for the next year.

Although the Board can suggest this incentive, the decision to put it into place would be the incoming Board's decision to adopt this idea or introduce other measures to attract membership. A previous attempt was made to answer questions about declining membership a few years ago when Sheila Krein, the President at the time, asked Kathy Marshak to form an ad hoc committee to study our membership situation. A range of surveys were sent out to the members to assess their experience with the Club. Sandy discussed the findings from these surveys and will share these findings with the new board at the next meeting.

Newcomers, reported by Linda Lopez

There are no further Newcomers events scheduled for spring. The new Newcomers Chair and Assistant Chair may choose to schedule some summer activities.

The Riggs Brewery Newcomers Event went very well. It was a good venue, and there was good interaction with the owner, server, and staff at Riggs.

Possibly TIC should consider scheduling joint events with other groups, such as International Studies, to improve TIC visibility among people who might potentially be interested in joining TIC.

Interest Groups, submitted by Julia Schmidt and reported by Kathy Valdés

There really is nothing new to report. Julia will be following up with interest group chairs in May and June.

Tours, submitted by Pat Cardenas and reported by Kathy Valdés

Both upcoming spring tours, the tour of the National Museum of Ship Models and Sea History in Sadorus and the tour of the Wildlife Clinic are filled.

Communications, reported by Libby Johnston

The April mailer was to go to the printer on March 26.

Historian, submitted by Mary Hodson and reported by Kathy Valdés

Co-Vice President Kathleen Weibel and Historian Mary Hodson met with Bill Maher, Director of the University of Illinois Archives. We learned that the Archives have extensive holdings of the Illinois Club records going back to at least 1908. Bill said that our records provide information relative to feminist culture through the 20th century. We donated several additional notebooks of interest club reports.

For the future, Bill said the historian should keep notebooks containing hard copies of the following, in chronological order:

- 1) Directories
- 2) Newsletters
- 3) Board meeting minutes
- 4) Interest Group Reports if available

We were not able to donate a complete set of TIC directories. If you have extra directories for the years 2004 through 2015, please give them to Mary Hodson.

Mary also wishes to express her gratitude to Kathleen Weibel for making the arrangements for our visit to the IL Archives.

Corresponding Secretary

No report.

Webmaster, submitted by Ann Campbell and reported by Kathy Valdés

Board members are reminded to be very cautious of email coming to the alias@theillinoisclub.org addresses, as these addresses sometimes receive spam.

Ann Campbell sent in a report about Email list management. Presentation of this report was delayed until the next meeting as all new board members will need to learn about administration of our email lists.

If anyone is experiencing difficulties in gaining access to the board-member portion of the website (i.e. the club database), please do not hesitate to let Mike Haney know. It is relatively easy for him to extract an Excel spreadsheet of the mixture of information that you seek.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Kathy Valdés and Linda Lopez will attend the Big 10 Conference in June. We have 3 minutes to do a presentation and thought we could highlight some of our challenges as a way to spark conversation with other attendees.

Helen Valentine has offered to host the outgoing/incoming board meeting on Monday, May 20 at 5:30. The outgoing board will be responsible for providing pot-luck for ourselves and the incoming board members. Some of us are both outgoing and incoming, but it will be nice for those who are new to the board to be treated to some goodies.

Linda Lopez motioned to adjourn, seconded by Sandy Camargo. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned by the president at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Jackson, Recording Secretary