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Emeriti Association, University of Nebraska-
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November 2005

November 17, 2005

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Lutz, Dan B., "November 17, 2005" (2005). *Minutes of Meetings of the UNL Emeriti Association*. 8.
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**Thursday, November 17, 2005
East Campus Student Union**

President **Don Edwards** called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He asked for self-introduction of those present. Vice President and Program Chair **Irv Omtvedt** introduced the speakers, **Mark Intermill**, Associate for Advocacy, and **Robin Szwanek**, Associate State Director of Community Outreach, both from AARP Nebraska who discussed “*The New Medicare Prescription Drug Program and Health Insurance Considerations.*”

The length and complexity of the remarks and explanation of Medicare Prescription Drug Program (Part D for short) for eligible participants precludes a full summary of this excellent and detailed discussion. During their hour-long presentation and Q&A discussions (which continued for another hour in a separate room) **it became clear for the majority of those retirees who are enrolled in Medicare’s traditional Private Fee-for-Service Plan[1] that:**

1. Unlike the Federal Medicare parts A and B where all pay the same fee and get the same services, the Medicare Prescription Drug Program is provided by private insurance companies—each of which have different policies, with each company and plan have differing monthly premiums, and each company and plan covering differing drugs,
2. The best plan for individual “A” is unlikely to be the best plan for individual “B” if the prescription drugs that “A” takes are different than those taken by “B.” Further, the best plan for “A” might not be best for “C” even if they take the same drugs if “A” and “C” live in different states because the plans from the same company are often different between states or regions, And the difference in total cost that you pay (the premiums plus co-pay drugs) between the *best* plan for a individual and the *next best* plan can be hundreds of dollars per year, and
3. The more meetings that you attend that focus on Part D the more you will become convinced that the determination of the best choice of an insurance company (or specific plan from that company) is complex and is not easily done. The only way to make a rational choice is to use the computer program built into the Medicare Website at <http://www.medicare.gov/> and click on the tab that says “Compare Medicare Prescription Drug Plans.” You will need to have all your prescription drugs (and dosages) by your side when you go to this website since you will need to input these into the program. If you are not comfortable with computers you should contact various agencies and organizations in your area that have established help centers for Part D consultations. Of course, any Part D insurance company will be glad to sign you up for their policies.

The speakers cautioned that the complexity of Part D should not lead you to do nothing. The enrolment period for Part D ends on 15 May 2006. After that, there will be a 1% per month premium increase. Delay signup for 36 months and the premium you pay will be increased by 36% of the average premium paid in the U .S. at that time.

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Also, if one is not taking any prescription drugs at the present time, it's wise to signup for the least expensive Part D plan available in your area (often less than \$5 per month) Why? Some time in the future you might be taking prescription drugs and you will get coverage then without the delayed signup penalty. Finally, you can change your Part D insurance company or your plan each year (without penalty) from 15 November through 31 December.

Those retirees still on the UNL health plan, or other health care plans that include drug coverage, probably don't need to do anything now, but should check and reaffirm that their plans are cost effective. Those on Federal retirement probably have the best of all worlds, low cost and broad coverage.

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President Edwards convened the business session at 1:30 p.m. No deceased Emeriti were reported in Memorial Moments.

The minutes of the October 20, 2005 membership meeting were posted on the website, and secretary Lutz had hard copies available for those without computer access. Moved by Omtvedt, seconded by Cyril Bish, that the minutes be accepted as submitted. Approved.

Treasurer's report: posted on website by treasurer Mientka. Reproduced here:

Assets: Maude Wisherd Fund, as of Nov. 3, 2005: Balance: \$54,966.83; spendable earnings: \$32,290.32, (after three \$1,000 awards by the Maude Wisherd Committee to three individuals); market value: \$155,230.92.

Income (total received January through Oct. 20): \$3,209.90.

Expenses: (total paid January through Oct. 20): \$2,618.31 (includes \$500 to open new UNL Emeriti Assn. Fund).

Moved by Duane Olsen, seconded by Earl Ellington that the report be accepted as submitted. Approved.

Old business: Election of officers and a director. Absentee ballots posted on website.

Nominated for vice president/president-elect/program chair: Howard Ottoson. Two absentee votes cast for Robert Kleis. Moved by Ted Hartung, seconded by Dick Boohar, that Ottoson be confirmed for this office. Approved by show-of-hands vote.

Nominated to serve as co-secretaries: Dan Lutz and Anita Leininger. Moved by Wilma Crumley, seconded by Jim McShane that the nominees be confirmed for office. Unanimous vote for approval by show of hands.

Nominated to serve as treasurer: incumbent Walter Mientka. Moved by Omtvedt, seconded by Duane Olsen that Mientka be confirmed for this office. Unanimous vote for approval by show of hands.

Nominated to serve a 3-year term as director: Max Clegg. Absentee votes received for Ted Doane. Moved by Charles Cromer, seconded by James McShane, that Clegg be confirmed for this office. Unanimous approval by show of hands.

New business: Proposals to change the Association Constitution and By-Laws. Proposals posted on website and handed out at meeting. After a summary of the proposed changes by Omtvedt, Jim Kendrick moved “approval of the Board’s recommendation of changes to our present Constitution and By-Laws and the Board’s recommendation to combine these into a single Constitution/By-Laws document. Seconded by James McShane. A show of hands met the requirement of a 2/3 vote in favor of the proposed changes be recorded for the changes to be approved.

Gwen Newkirk questioned the procedure, stating that a secret vote would be desirable. A friendly amendment to the wording of Article VI – Election – Election of Vice President/President-Elect and a Director was introduced by Kendrick, seconded by McShane and approved by show of hands. There were two votes in opposition.. (Change indicated in bold face): “A Vice President/President-Elect and a Director shall be elected **by written ballot** at each November meeting of the Association.”

Rose Tondl raised the possibility that it might be desirable for the Association president to appoint the secretary and treasurer rather than these positions being decided by nomination and election. She opined that these positions require particular skills and willingness for an Emeritus to serve in these offices. The Constitution/By-laws approved at the meeting states: “The President shall appoint the Secretary and Treasurer annually with no specified term.”

Standing committee reports (posted on Emeriti website).

Benefits – Francis Haskins, chair: No report.

Maude Wisherd Fund – Lee Jones, chair, no report. Gwen Newkirk recommended that the names of Wisherd Fund recipients not be included in board or membership meeting minutes or reports, as a privacy issue.

Membership – Dick Boohar, chair. Three deaths of Emeriti have been reported. Input is solicited from members with knowledge of deaths, Emeriti moving to another location, etc. to keep roster up to date.

Nominating committee – Ted Hartung, chair. Task completed for 2006 program year with current election carried out.

Courtesy committee – Delivee Wright, chair. She urged that members report knowledge of other Emeriti with birthdays of 75, 80, 85 and up, in 5-year intervals, to assure that those qualifying receive a courtesy basket. Knowledge of an Emeritus who had been hospitalized and returned home also is needed. It was mentioned that Emeritus Ted Jorgensen, Physics, recently observed his 100th birthday.

Website committee (now a standing committee) – Jim Kendrick, chair. The recently activated website underscores that in reality the UNL Emeriti group is a national organization, not just centered on Lincoln. A ListServe is being constructed and Emeriti are being urged to sign up and avail themselves of its benefits in keeping up with ongoing developments.

Newly-elected Vice President/Program Chair Ottoson was asked to announce the speaker and presentation for the January 19, 2006 membership meeting at the East Campus Union. The speaker will be Dean Marjorie Kostelnik of the UNL College of Education and Human Sciences, who will discuss how the academic unit was formed from previous academic entities. The speaker and title of the presentation will be posted on the website.

The gavel signifying the presidency was passed from Don Edwards to incoming president Irv Omtvedt. Edwards thanked the 2005 officers and board of directors for their service on behalf of the Emeriti Association. Omtvedt introduced the 2006 officers and board of directors. He called for volunteers to serve on the Association's standing and ad hoc committees.

There being no further old, unfinished or new business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan B. Lutz, secretary

[1] As contrasted to Medicare's Managed Care Plans or its Preferred Provider Organization Plans which have their own prescription drug plans.