

BREA Zoom Meeting Minutes 03/09/21

Minutes recorded by L. Miller

Contact Information:

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association BREA

BNL Bldg. 400A

BERA Recreation/ Attention BREA

Meeting Upton, NY 11973

Present: A. Moodenbaugh, J. Baum, C. Conrad, D. Cox, D. Dougherty, W. Eberlo, L. Feierabend, L. Fishbone, R. Hackenburg, L. Hanson, J. C. Higgins, M. Israel, B. Kinsey, L. Kouchinsky, B. Leonhardt, B. Lin, L. Miller, S. Perino, M. Radulescu, M. Rowe, D. Sievers, L. Seubert, S. Shapiro, B. Siskind, S. Stein, K. Walker, G. Williams

Officers 2020-2022: President: Arnold Moodenbaugh, Vice President: Lillian Kouchinsky, Secretary: Laura Miller, Treasurer: Les Fishbone, Membership Secretary: Beth Lin, Newsletter Editor: Mona Rowe

1:01 pm EST via Zoom

1. Call to order. Arnie Moodenbaugh

2. Minutes. Laura Miller reports on the Minutes of the Feb. 9 meeting. Minutes were revised by BREA officers; revisions have been made.

- **Action: Minutes were approved and will be published after this meeting.**

3. Treasurer Report. Les Fishbone reports financial activity from February:

- Les provided Teachers Federal Credit Union (TFCU) account balance and transaction information he had as of Feb. 28. There are 3 CDs with the following maturities: one in October 2021, the next in February 2022 and the third in Feb of 2023. The grand total of the accounts plus the CDs (slightly corrected from that announced at the meeting, after receipt of the February statement) is \$29,035.03.
- Mark motioned to accept the report, Sievers seconded, none opposed.
- E. Levitt verified that the Tax ID # on the 2020 interest statement from TFCU from last year has the BERA tax ID. Les had already sent the interest statement to Elliott.

4. Membership Report. Beth Yu Lin. Beth and Arnie plan to send a prod letter to members who have not renewed membership. Beth sent Arnie a list, but he hasn't generated the letter. Discuss better methods of reminding members to renew.

- Since Feb 9 meeting, current paid membership is 273 and people who have email is 244. Beth has received two checks since last month. She is waiting for more checks before forwarding to Les. A suggestion was made to deposit checks more promptly or have Beth deposit checks she receives and send copies to Les. After discussion, the decision

was to keep the current procedure (Beth forwarding Les checks when she has more than one or two). Les said a deposit of dues checks was made in February.

- Arnie has created the 'prod' letter. Beth sent Arnie the list of those who hadn't paid. Arnie will update the list and send the 'prod' letter. Discussion involving reaching people regularly at the end of the year, maybe by sending a paper copy to the members at the end of the year. There is a cost, but we would get return mail of addresses that are no longer valid, and it could be used as a renewal prod for people. This might cost a couple hundred per mailing.
- Sievers made a motion that BREA send a paper copy of the newsletter at the end of each year, Conrad seconded, none opposed.

5. Newsletter. Mona Rowe produced and had published the March/April BREA News and may provide tentative content for the May/June edition.

- The March/April issue has been published and Mona just received hers. The next issue will carry the top 10 science stories of the year from the lab and a piece about Les, who was named a Fellow of the Institute for Nuclear Materials Management. She received a letter from the daughter of a former BNL employee, John Barouche, who had died in 2019 at the age of 99. Mona read the letter, which showed how important BNL and BREA was to him. His daughter wanted people to know how much BREA and BNL's outreach meant to him. This letter from the daughter is an example of how far-reaching BREA's newsletters and information can be.
- We have learned of the first active employee at BNL to die from COVID. There will be a donations request to fund a memorial bench at BNL for her. We may want to send a donation.

6. Community Advisory Council. Mark Israel will report if any CAC activity.

- The next meeting is Thursday, March 11. Mark reminded us of the YouTube presentation chaired by Adrian Esposito that the CAC sent out about wind farms: "New York Offshore Wind Projects, The Future is Today". It described four projects from four different companies: Empire Wind, Sunrise Wind, Beacon Wind, South Fork Wind. Mark thought it was interesting and well done. These projects are approved and currently are in the design stage. Most said they will be producing electricity by 2023-2025. One is located off Montauk, another off Atlantic Beach (using Brooklyn Marine Terminal as their headquarters).
- Mark will report next month on Thursday's CAC meeting. He may have an update on the HFBR stack and some environmental issues.
- **Action: Mark will ask someone from BNL at the meeting for photos of the stack.**

7. BNL operations continue in Phase 2. Retirees are not allowed on the BNL site, with only minor exceptions.

- No change.

- K. Walker: the lab changed the ID policies for retirees and retiree spouses. They no longer issue badges to spouses of deceased retirees and are no longer issuing badges to retirees. This could create issues for retirees who have PO boxes on site.
- Sievers suggested that people can go online to USPS and forward their mail for up to 12 months, avoiding the need to go onsite.
- **Action: Arnie will find out about the current policy to replace ID cards or what the policy will be when the lab fully reopens.**

8. Covid-19 issues, including obtaining vaccination.

- Currently, the CDC is saying that more than 10 days after completing the vaccination process, we can visit grandkids as long as it's not high risk. Carnival Cruise Line is requiring people going their cruises to be vaccinated. It was pointed out that some people on a strong medication that suppresses their immune system may not be able to take the vaccine. If the medication suppresses a person's immune system, it may well be it will also suppress the vaccine efficacy. How is someone with this complication accommodated?
- Vaccine: more doses are available, but it is still difficult to get it. B. Suskind recommended Cona Elder Law: 631-390-5000. They are helping people get a vaccine. Bob also checked Long Island Community Hospital (formerly Brookhaven Community Hospital) daily until he got appointments.

9. Review John Hill talk at Feb. 9 meeting.

- The slides of John's talk are now available on the BREA website. A thank you letter to John Hill and Tammy Stein of his office is being prepared and will go out shortly.

10. New Business.

- There is a concern about how meetings will take place when BNL is fully reopened. Those retirees living too far to travel to BNL like the Zoom format. Arnie suggested alternating Zoom meetings with other in person meetings. No decision was made.
- Note: Linda Feierabend joined BREA after the pandemic started. A lot of people she has talked to said they were not told about BREA when they retired. She suggests more advertising/communication for retiring people. She suggested the packet we receive from HR when we leave should have a letter from BREA president. To our knowledge, there is such a letter from the President, but several people commented that we get a lot of information in the packet and it can be easy to miss the BREA invitation.
- BERA: Perhaps when the BERA folks get together, Chris Carter can promote BREA to all other BERA organizations. Also, it is important to know that BNL employees can join BREA WHILE STILL AN EMPLOYEE. It might be better to let people know about us while people are still working. Note: BREA is only for current and retired employees. If someone leaves without retiring, they can't join BREA.
- There was an article in the March 15th Monday Memo that had a link to the speech Jennifer Granholm, the new Sec. of Energy gave.

- **Action: Distribute it to BREA membership, either via the next newsletter or in Arnie's email to members.**
- Shapiro received a notice from United HealthCare Supplemental that their rate is going up \$10/pp. This may be a good time for Arnie to approach the lab to get another increase, the lab seems to be in a good place. We should try to include in that discussion an agreement from HR for way to re-enroll those retirees who inadvertently lost their HRA payments. Les mentioned that it's possible for any of us to write to the Insurance Commission of NY to protest it.
- It has been suggested that we ask someone, possibly Tom Schlagel, to provide a talk on computer security.
 - **Action: Arnie will speak to Tom about setting a date for T. Schlagel to speak at an upcoming BREA meeting.**

Motion to adjourn by D. Sievers, seconded by C. Conrad. Passed unanimously.

Adjournment at 2:17 pm