

BREA Zoom Meeting Minutes 07/13/21

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, R. Clark, D. Cox, A. J. Feldman, V. Ghosh, L. Hanson, M. Hauptman, T. Siskind, E. Sperry, G. Williams **Absent:** L. Fishbone

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. **Call to Order.** Arnie Moodenbaugh

Meeting called to order at 1:03 pm

2. **Minutes of June meeting.** Laura Miller

June minutes were discussed and approved to be published by voice vote.

3. **Treasurer's Report.** Les Fishbone (*Possibly to be revised by LF; see the November minutes when posted.*)

Les was away and forwarded the June statement to Arnie, who read the accounts, the CDs and the balance. Motion to approve by D. Sievers, seconded by M. Israel, approved by voice vote.

4. **Membership Report.** Beth Yu Lin

HR does include a recent newsletter to retirement packages and an application form for BREA. Discuss the maintenance of contact with spouses of retirees. No status to date. Limited by BNL policy – spouses can't become members, but can receive newsletter, which is on the BNL website.

Number of paid members is 285, number of current members who have email addresses is 256. Since last meeting she received 3 member-paid dues and 2 new members: Etsuko Fujita, who has already paid for a life membership. The other is Dhruva Ghimiray. He paid for 5 years. Regular members are retired employees and employees out on long-term disability. Associates are all other employees and spouses of deceased retirees. A person who worked at lab, left before retiring but later returned as a consultant is not entitled to membership, but could become an associate. Membership report was accepted as read by voice vote.

Action: Arnie will send a mailing to lapsed members.

5. **Membership retention.** Arnie Moodenbaugh.

(a) Once each year, consider mailing paper copies of the BREA News to encourage renewal of membership by members. Also contact lapsed members by mail with a letter encouraging renewal of membership. These steps could help maintain membership and keep rolls up to date. Talk to BNL about how to recruit those people. Will they be 'unbadged' once we are allowed

on the site.

Action Arnie will inquire about allowing retirees on the BNL site when restrictions are eased. The BERA web page states that Brookhaven Lab is operating in essential mission critical operations mode, and all in-person BERA [including BREA] activities are suspended.

(b) Membership in BREA is not a spousal benefit. Could have a nonvoting status for them.

Beth: when someone dies as a retiree who is a lifetime member in BREA, can she switch the name to the spouse so they can continue receiving newsletter? Our newsletter is on a public website, so sending it out shouldn't be a problem for BNL.

It is in our By-laws that *wives* can continue to receive our newsletter. May need to modify our By-laws to say 'family' rather than 'spouse' for family members who want to receive it. Any change in the by-laws or the charter would have to be approved by BERA. HR looked at every word in our constitution and if we change even one word, they will need to look at it again. Arnie's email announcing each newsletter and providing a link may work for the families.

Decision: Our Membership Chair, Beth, will decide if family members should continue to receive the newsletter, and for how long.

6. CAC Meeting Report. Mark Israel

No meetings until September.

7. Newsletter Report. Mona Rowe

In the Sept-Oct issue she will report on Medicare info, including a history of benefits at the lab going back to (1) first, when the lab covered premiums, (2) then we had to pay for them, (3) then retirees had to go through SelectQuote. She may also include other management changes and changes for retirees. Mona will talk to HR. She will include basic facts about what to do to get through open enrollment and will emphasize that we MUST go through SelectQuote. It will give Mona a chance to discuss with HR the business end of using SelectQuote. Does SelectQuote get a commission? Does the money go back to BSA? How much? We know of at least 2 retirees who lost their HR benefits. Every year there is the potential for more, and it's to the advantage of BSA for that to occur. We need to make sure there is a universal way to identify and be sure we are dealing with SelectQuote. People who get a call back should at least get confirmation that they are talking to an official representative for SelectQuote. Beware of 'scammers'. Another SelectQuote question: people did not know they were supposed to be proactive in doing something with SQ and may have missed a mailing. Is there any action to keep the lab's supplemental benefits? Everything goes on 'autopilot'. Part B must go through whatever SelectQuote says to use for a person's particular state. Part D (drugs) doesn't need SelectQuote. Check rates annually on Medicare website, see if anything is cheaper, then see if SQ offers it, and then **USE SQ** to make that change. Also, Arnie spoke to HR who said they didn't remember that we are tempted to deal with different insurance companies because SQ is so unresponsive. They didn't know and said they will look into it. Mona will get her historical information from people's memories and HR. This is public info and HR should provide it, but she may have problems with the AUI years. It might have been in old BNL bulletins or BREA newsletters (BREA newsletters started after AUI years). Can also look at old employee handbooks (like old AUI handbook).

Action: A. Feldman thinks he might have AUI handbooks. He will look and if found, will then send to Mona.

Action: If there is space available, Mona will fit in a piece about scamming.

8. BRE A election discussion. (A. Moodenbaugh)

Most of the current officers and appointees are willing to continue to serve. Vice President Lillian Kouchinsky has indicated her desire to step down. We'd like to thank Lillian for her service. We should identify one or more candidates for that position. Members, both local to Long Island and remote, are also encouraged to consider becoming a candidate for any position (Pres., Vice Pres., Treasurer, or Secy.) Ballots can be returned via email.

We have candidates for most positions but need candidates for the Vice President position. This might be a good role for a remote person (off LI). Ballots: Ballots go to person named in newsletter. Send ballot to BNL.

Normally the Nominating Committee would approach individuals. Who should be on the Nominating Committee? Ex-presidents, like Dave Cox and Steve Shapiro? Dave thinks Lil would be a good choice. Steve S. doesn't think there's a need for a committee; he will think of people and contact them. He will contact Beth for name, phone numbers and email addresses. He will also talk to Dave Cox and Lil K. Steve S. asked Vinita G. if she would be willing to become a VP. Vinita said yes. He also asked Gwyn, who declined.

Action: We will consider the need for a nominating committee at the September meeting. A nominating committee is not required by the by-laws; additional candidates can be added to the ballot if volunteers are identified.

Action: A paper ballot will be sent to all BRE A members along with the Nov/Dec newsletter.

Action: For Nov/Dec newsletter, Beth will see if she can provide Mona with postal addresses for all BRE A members, including those who opted out of getting a printed newsletter, so they get actual ballots. If she can't do it, Arnie will print and mail out the additional ones.

Action: Arnie will send reminders to people who are in arrears regarding membership dues within the next few months.

Arnie has a zoom account that is at the first level, only \$15/month, but he is the only person who can host a meeting. If we are going to have other people host, it would be a good idea for more flexible hosting.

Action: Arnie will determine what it will take to change account so that others (such as officers) can host.

9. Retiree Health Benefits (SelectQuoteSenior). A. Moodenbaugh / BNL Human Resources
See above.

10. Charitable Donations. John Baum has asked BRE A to consider the possibility of erecting "Peace Poles" at BNL. Arnie Moodenbaugh believes this would require involvement of and approval by BNL, and possibly DOE, managers.

Arnie researched the Peace Poles program and doesn't think BNL would support it. It isn't a charitable org and it's not clear what the benefits are for doing it. Two organizations, one religious, are sponsoring it.

Action: Beth will give Arnie contact information (email address) for J. Baum.

11. New Business

Gwyn: Mihail Radulescu is the name of the person from BNL who was in the Florida condominium disaster.

Gwyn: wanted to switch supplemental medical insurance from Continental to United and needed a complete assessment before he could switch (through SelectQuote). Plan G seems to be the best option for him.

Sievers: (1) Zoom type of meeting is very beneficial. If we get to a point of having meetings at the lab, supplement it with a Zoom-type meeting for those people not on Long Island. (2) If you've flown anywhere recently, screening for people getting on a plane has become very lax.

Arnie: suggested we have fully Zoom meetings at least half the time. It might be difficult to set it up and get it up and running at the lab. Other options: Webex and GoToMeeting. BNL hosted our Zoom talks earlier this year, they are using a government Zoom application.

Meeting adjourned at 2:32 pm.

There is no meeting in August. The next meeting will be September 14 at 1:00 pm via Zoom unless otherwise stated.