



Northwest Retiree Association
General Meeting: August 16, 2023, 4 pm-5pm
Valk 118

Attendance:

Board Members: Janice Brandon-Falcone (President), Joel Benson (Vice President), Christine Benson (Secretary), Johanne Fairchild, Bob Dewhirst, Rosalie Weathermon, Karen Schaffer

Ex-officio: Jim Eiswert (Past President) , Lori Steiner, Brenda Untiedt, and Jana Hanson

Members: Ken Nelsen, Barbara Nelsen, Theo Ross, Vicki Grispino, Frank Grispino

Minutes:

- I. Call to Order – 4:00
- II. Welcome – NWRA President Janice Brandon-Falcone
- III. Greetings from University President Dr. Lance Tatum.

Dr. Tatum invited everyone to the Gaunt House after the meeting for the Northwest Family Dinner. Dr. Tatum explained a bit about himself, his family, and current priorities for Northwest.

He earned his undergraduate degree in Sports Management (business) and master's degree at Troy State (like Northwest, formerly a Normal School), a small liberal arts school that with a focus on education, and earned his Ph.D. from Florida State. He taught for a few years at a very small school, honing his teaching skills. He has spent the last 24 years at Troy State, where he taught, then moved to Department Chair to Dean to Vice Provost to Provost. He is married to Jill, who taught elementary education in inner-city public schools before moving to the Alabama State Department of Education. Their son, Thad, and daughter, Zoe, are at Auburn University, but both fell in love with Maryville and plan to visit.

This was Dr. Tatum's 76th day of his first 100 where his priority continues to be to listen and learn about the university and area culture, strengths, and challenges. He is also speaking at many organizations like this one, introducing himself. Listening and learning are very important so that he does not come in with his own priorities and mess up something that is already working well.

Northwest's greatest strength he has experienced is its culture. People are friendly, part of a family, and truly care about each other and student success.

Challenges expressed so far:

1. Enrollment: Admissions and Recruitment are working together, as enticing students has become very competitive with few students graduating from high schools. Although Northwest is one of two universities in Missouri that have experienced enrollment growth in the last five years, most of that has been in online programs. This

is great but a viable university must have people walking around, getting involved on campus. Living space is a big part of that. Students used to interact with others as they propped their dorm doors open and shared restrooms down the hall. Now students demand restrooms in their rooms and doors must be designed to shut automatically for fire and intruder safety reasons. Students are more isolated than ever, but research shows that students who engage with other people (get involved in at least one campus organization, for example) have significantly greater success and completion rates than those who do not. We are constantly exploring ways to get students connected to each other. We are also looking at adjusting scholarships for certain populations of out-of-state high-achieving students to minimize the out-of-state tuition fee.

2. Infrastructure: There is a critical need in the tunnels and a plan for a \$50 mill. Stage 1 plan to demolish the current (centralized) steam plant after building a more decentralized system so that one place going down would not knock out the entire system. The Sewage and Storm Drain system problem involves cooperation with the City of Maryville. The NW system is okay, but when it hits the Maryville system, which has smaller pipes, it backs up.

Updates:

1. Finances: The university is financially stable with good credit and the ability to pay our bills. However, the enterprise of a university is education, which means taking care of our faculty and staff and student support services, so we continue to look for ways to do this better.

2. Martindale Hall Renovation: The 3rd floor is finished, and the rest is in progress and will be done in stages. They are investing in equipment that students will use in their jobs after they graduate while also being careful not to chase every hot item that arises.

3. Dr. Mike Steiner helped write a grant to rehab Garrett-Strong with new lab updates and other improvements.

4. We have torn down Philips Hall and North Complex, which really helps infrastructure and finances because we no longer have to service them. We are taking the next 12 to 18 months to decide what will go in those spaces. His preference is that the plan be diverse, benefiting students, faculty/staff, and the campus, but he wants the process to play out.

5. New Dining Services:

a. Sodexo has replaced Aramark. Watch for the ten Kiwibots, little robots that will deliver food to students who order it on the app! Switching our Dining Services provider lowered the cost of dining plans for students.

b. The Station is being remodeled to include a Buffalo Wild Wings.

Dr. Tatum thanked us for inviting him and finished at 4:35 p.m.

IV. Approval of Agenda (Jim—moved approval, Bob—seconded, and passed unanimously)

V. Approval of March 14, 2023 Minutes—approved online by Board

VI. Treasurer’s Report – emailed in by Ray Courter

Summary period: March 1, 2023 – July 31, 2023

Net Balance Feb. 28, 2023

\$3,074.24

Income:

• Membership Dues: March 1 – June 30	\$55.00
• Donations: March 1 – June 30	\$125.00
• Membership Dues: July	\$360.00
• <u>Donations: July</u>	<u>\$95.00</u>
• Total Income:	\$635.00

Expenses:

• <u>AROHE (annual fee)</u>	<u>\$120.00</u>
• Total Expenses:	(\$120.00)

Net Balance July 31, 2023 **\$3,589.24**

(Janice—moved approval, Bob—seconded, and passed unanimously)

Additional notes:

1. Janice Falcone said the coupons for free drinks at 2nd Fridays Happy Hours averaged about \$25 per month. **This does not come out of the NWRA budget but is covered by private donations.**
2. Christine will send out directions for how to create personal usernames and passwords for the AROHE site, linking names with NWRA on the site.

VII. Election of officers for 2023-2024

A. Call for Nominations

1. President: Joel Benson (Jim—nominated, Bob—seconded, and passed unanimously)
2. Vice President (President-elect): Rosalie Weathermon (Janice—nominated, Bob—seconded, and passed unanimously)
3. Secretary: Christine Benson (Joel—nominated, Rosalie—seconded, and passed unanimously)
4. Treasurer: Theo Ross (Bob—nominated, Rosalie—seconded, and passed unanimously)
5. Board Members-at-large: Jim Eiswert (moving from Ex-officio Past President to Board Member-at-large), Johanne Fairchild, Bob Dewhirst, Karen Schaffer
6. Janice Falcone moves from President to Ex-officio Past President.
7. Thank you, 2022-23 officers, for your service.
8. Thank you, 2023-24 officers, for stepping up and agreeing to serve.

VIII. Old Business

A. Campus Tour of the Arboretum—Karen & Johanna:

Saturday, September 9, 10:00 a.m. to noon—after a brief introduction at Garrett-Strong, Karen and Johanna will lead a guided educational tour around campus, ending at the Gaunt House. The Foundation will provide a golf cart carrying water and/or a ride for those who need it.

B. Proposed Day Trips or other activities?

1. Bob and Janice will organize a day trip to the Brown v Board of Education Museum in Topeka, KS. Lori and Brenda will see if there are NW retirees who live in the Topeka area so Bob and Janice can reach out to them.

2. Joel will offer another Lunch and Learn this ~~fall~~ covering the Tudor Stuart Era of English history. Like spring 2023, people will meet at Noon in Rm. 301 of the First United Methodist Church, 103 N. Main, Maryville, bringing their own lunch and enjoying instruction and conversation. [Those who participated last year praised last year's class and thanked Joel for his work and leadership.] **Addendum: Due to Joel's health issues, this class has been moved to winter/spring 2024.**
 - C. Ray Courter plans to explore the establishment of a NWRA Endowed Scholarship.
 1. Who would like to join him? Rosalie and Jana Hanson, with NW Foundation.
 2. See the Fall Newsletter for more details.
- VIII. New Business
- A. Plan for Homecoming (Oct. 21, 2023): Because last year's information table and pamphlets were ineffective for recruitment or donations and no one saw the value in having a parade entry, it was agreed that we might consider a parade entry every 3 years or so but nothing this year.
 - B. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 11:00 in Michael L. Faust Center (Alumni House) Lawhead Conference
 - C. Next General Meeting: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 1:00, before the **Holiday Tea** at the Michael L. Faust Center (Alumni House) that starts at 2:00 p.m.
- IX. Adjournment: 5:07 p.m. (Janice—moved approval, Frank—seconded, and passed unanimously)