

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**January 25, 2019, 8:00 – 9:20 a.m.**  
**Friswold Room**  
**McNamara Alumni Center**

Executive Committee Members Attending

Huebsch, Doug  
Jessen, Mark  
Kramer, Matt  
Lewis, Lisa  
Moret, Laura  
Ulsaker Wiese, Sandy  
Wallace, Scott

UMAA Staff Attending

Garry, Dan  
Klein, Stephanie  
Massaglia, Samantha  
Ruzek, Jon  
Yust, Adam

Chair Doug Huebsch welcomed committee members and noted that Sandy Ulsaker Wiese will be joining the meeting a bit later.

**Consent Agenda**

The following items on the consent agenda were approved unanimously:

MOTION:       Approval of the October 4, 2018, Executive Committee Minutes  
*APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY*

The November 30, 2018, Internal Financial Statements and Investment Report, the FY19 December Membership/Revenue Summary and the New Member Orientation Communication Series were provided for the committee's information.

**Network Approval**

VP of Engagement Jon Ruzek presented the requests of three alumni networks that wish to be official affinity networks of the UMAA. Ruzek noted that affinity networks are organized groups of alumni who share a common experience, background, or shared interest. The UMAA currently works with four affinity networks (Band, Black, Greek, and YMCA alumni). Steve Davis, Director of Minnesota and Affinity Engagement, is the primary UMAA contact for these networks.

The three affinity networks seeking approval are the American Indian Alumni Network, the International Student Alumni Network and the Multicultural Alumni Network.

Matt Kramer asked whether the American Indian Alumni Network would serve only Twin Cities alumni, as the Morris campus has a sizeable percentage of American Indian students. President & CEO Lisa Lewis said that the network will technically work with Twin Cities alumni, but the network will include interested alumni from other campuses. Kramer suggested that we contact Morris Chancellor Michelle Behr to let her know that this network will be approved.

Laura Moret sought clarification on the difference between affinity groups and networks. Ruzek noted that there have been different terms in the past to describe UMAA groups, but now everything falls under the category of a “network”.

MOTION: Approval of the American Indian, International Student and Multicultural Alumni Networks

*APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY*

### **3x3 Meeting with Regent Leadership**

President & CEO Lisa Lewis noted that in their last 3x3 meeting with Regents McMillan and Powell, they discussed the 2018 legislative candidate survey that the UMAA organized in coordination with Government Relations. The survey, which had been done in the past, asked all candidates a series of questions regarding their views on the University. Probably because of the recent changes in political climate, the UMAA, Government Relations and University Relations received some pushback in response to the survey. Regents McMillan and Powell asked the UMAA to be thoughtful moving forward in regards to the purpose and stated goals of any additional legislative survey.

Lewis suggested that if we choose to do the survey again, we could perhaps get approval upfront from the Executive Committee and possibly the Board. The UMAA would also consult with the Board of Regents and Government Relations to craft more strategic and thoughtful questions.

Executive Committee members are open to conducting the survey again, because they feel that it provides nonpartisan guidance and acts as a dialogue-starter for those who are advocates for the University. Because there was no pushback on previous surveys, members chalked up the negative feedback to the change in climate of current politics.

### **Board of Regents Elections**

President & CEO Lisa Lewis acknowledged the UMAA team, and in particular, Director of Advocacy Adam Yust, for a successful Regent Candidate Forum. She reminded the committee that last year the Legislature had lots of questions about the Regent Candidate Advisory Council (RCAC) and whether it was the most effective way to select Regents. The UMAA Board embraced the values of an open and transparent process and made a statement to that effect.

In response to the criticisms, the RCAC made some changes surrounding the vetting of candidates and number of candidates recommended. Other observations of the RCAC focused on whether their members stayed within the intended role of the Council. With that in mind, the UMAA is considering how the RCAC has responded to this legislative feedback and whether it is operating in a manner as originally envisioned.

Lewis suggested using the UMAA's communications channels and networks to find a diverse and balanced group of potential RCAC members from across the state to present to the Legislature. There have been observations made regarding the RCAC's lack of diversity. Executive Committee members believe that if the UMAA is willing to recruit for the RCAC, it will increase the pool of RCAC candidates.

As next steps, Lewis and Director of Advocacy Adam Yust will reach out to Sally Olson of the RCAC and have a conversation as to how the UMAA could be of most help in aiding Olson and supporting the process.

In regards to questions about the governance of the Board of Regents, Matt Kramer replied that the governance guidelines are set in their bylaws. If the UMAA feels strongly about governance issues that merit consideration, it might be best to not take a board position, but rather bring it up to the chairs of the House and Senate Higher Education Committees.

### **Revenue Growth Task Force**

Treasurer Scott Wallace proposed the formation of a Revenue Growth Task Force to look for new revenue-generating ideas. The UMAA had a Financial Model Task Force in 2014, and it was successful in creating some new revenue streams. Wallace would chair the task force, which would consist of three UMAA staff members and six or seven volunteers; several of the volunteers would be of an entrepreneurial background. The task force would organize in February, and then spend March and April generating ideas. The end result would be 2-4 ideas presented to the Past Chairs Advisory Group and the UMAA Board for approval to move forward. The Executive Committee members shared Wallace's enthusiasm for the possible opportunities to be found.

MOTION: Approval of the Revenue Growth Task Force

*APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY*

Wallace also noted that the Finance & Audit Council is taking the audit out to six firms for a bid. They will interview finalists and he will present findings back to the Executive Committee.

### **CEO Report**

President & CEO Lisa Lewis touched on the activities surrounding the presidential transition. Springing from an idea from Board Chair Doug Huebsch, the Mentor Appreciation Dinner in April will include a surprise recognition of Karen Kaler. Kaler has had a passion for mentoring students and has grown close to many of them over the years. At Annual Celebration in April, the Theater of Public Policy will be an

integral part of the recognition for the Kalers. The UMAA has commissioned Woodchuck to create a going-away gift for them.

Lewis has the opportunity to sit down with President-Designate Joan Gabel in a week's time when she comes to Minnesota. Lewis is looking forward to sharing the value of alumni with Gabel, as well as to discuss plans to have Gabel travel across Minnesota and the country to meet alumni and friends of the University.

Lewis highlighted the new initiative the UMAA has launched with the creation of a "Career Month" in February. In direct response to alumni survey results asking for career help and networking, the UMAA will host a variety of webinars, in-person events and networking events both nationally and internationally. The Maroon & Gold Network continues to exceed its goals of recruiting mentors and mentees, even though the program isn't yet a year old. Royalties to date from the Minnesota Alumni Market are exceeding last year's. The UMAA's email communications have continued to improve, particularly after the shift to more segmented communications; this has resulted in higher open rates and clickthroughs, and lower rates in volume of communications sent. Director of Communications Sam Massaglia has spearheaded a New Member Orientation Communication series, which emphasizes to new members what their membership means to them and the broader alumni community. The goal is for this communications series to drive up first-time renewal rates.

### **UMAA Marks**

U of M VP of University Relations Matt Kramer highlighted the difference between the University's "M" and the UMAA's "M". He noted that brand consistency is a legal issue, and he is legally responsible for correct use of the University's "M". Because the goal is to have a strong, undiluted University brand, the University consistently files cease and desist orders when it discovers use of marks similar to its "M".

Laura Moret noted that the UMAA's mark has been in use a long time and the UMAA has a formal agreement with the University acknowledging its separate mark. Kramer said that Sr. Associate General Counsel Rosalie O'Brien could speak to this point better at another time, but it still falls under the umbrella of dilution. O'Brien has also done an analysis on the difference in marks for other Universities and their Alumni Associations. According to her research, it's rare for an Alumni Association to use a closely modified mark of the University.

Kramer noted that he is sympathetic to the UMAA's need to pursue revenue opportunities. There is a possibility of the UMAA modifying the University's mark by adding text; University Libraries received permission for a modified mark.

Board Chair Doug Huebsch noted that UMAA Board Members help push the mission forward and it's important for everyone to be aligned in order to protect the integrity of the UMAA. Executive Committee Members agreed to continue a good faith discussion with University Relations in regards to the marks. Since there are many possible details to be discussed, there is no formal agreement at this time, but rather a commitment to continue the conversation. Kramer will bring O'Brien to the upcoming

Board Meeting to discuss the issue further and take additional questions. In the meantime, the Executive Committee members who are attorneys will meet separately with O'Brien to better understand the legal aspects of this discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Submitted by Stephanie Klein  
For Mark Jessen, Secretary