*Presiding:* Houston, Spaeth

*Attending:* **Alumni Board:** Balej, Beine (student), Breuer (student), Buss, Carlson, Hansen (alumni trustee), Kitslaar, Kreofsky, Laufenburg, Lewandowski, McCullough, Meier, Miller, Padilla, Petersen, Rohrbeck (student), Voigt, Wade, Waldinger (student), Waldvogel, Warmack

**College Administration/Staff:** Joyce (President) and Lynne Joyce; Gaines, Gerretsen, Hintz, Liethen, Loest, Malchow, Neuberger, Scanlon, Seeliger, Stephenson, Webster (Advancement); Blumer, Brown (Community Engagement); Chapin, Schuetz (Admission); Joanis (Residence Life); Johnson (Athletics); Vaubel (Career Development); Doug and Lynn Northrop (special guests); Agamaite ’11 (Annual Fund Intern)

*Absent:* Gillard, Larson, Lenz, Meyer, Ryberg, Selleck (alumni trustee), Umhoefer (alumni trustee)

**A. Proceedings (Friday, 3/25/11)**

Spaeth welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with the singing of the Alma Mater at 8:05 a.m. Announcements followed.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the minutes from the September 2010 meeting.

Alumni Board and staff members made self-introductions.

Webster announced that Petersen is endowing a scholarship in the name of Professor Doug Northrop. Petersen presented the scholarship agreement to Dr. and Mrs. Northrop. Joyce presented a Partners in the Legacy certificate to Gerretsen.

Joyce addressed the Board regarding the state of the College. He discussed the upcoming campaign. Currently, the College is closing in on 15 million toward the campaign goal, a very strong start. First year student applications are slightly behind last year at this time. Joyce spoke about the Merriman House, including the fact that - over $300,000 repairs were needed, and ultimately, the College chose to treat all fraternities/sororities equally and require them to live in the “residential necklace” of campus. The Board of Trustees looked at all angles and determined that closing the house would be the best decision for the College. It was determined that the case against the College would not stand up in court, and Merriman dropped the suit. There are a number of Merriman alumni that are not happy with Ripon at this time. The President believes that the right decision was made for the College and he expressed hope that the Merriman alumni’s feelings will begin to heal over time. He commended our Board of Trustees for making the right decision, a very difficult decision.

Webster offered a Power Point presentation on the campaign preparation in more detail and described the current and future staff changes that will be occurring in the Advancement Office. Webster reviewed the campaign goals and also provided an update regarding progress. He went into greater detail about the silent and public phases of the campaign and is hoping to announce the goal publicly by July 2012.

Webster detailed numerous ways that the Alumni Board can help the campaign:

1. We need to know who you know.
2. Give of your personal resources. Make a personal commitment at a level that you can afford.
3. Consider including Ripon in your estate plans.
4. Serve as a liaison to your geographic area…help sponsor and staff events. Make calls to encourage attendance.
5. Help us educate others about the importance of giving…participation matters. Success can be our biggest enemy.
6. Participate in a Volunteer Leadership Institute next spring to discuss the “elevator speech,” identify your peers that we should pay attention to, and help us take the campaign public.
7. Possible service on a campaign steering committee.
8. Help be ambassadors for Ripon College in your geographic area.

The Board took a 15 minute break.

Vaubel presented a brief report about the Alumni Bio forms. The Career Development Office has asked for updates and revisions and he reported that the many alumni responded. Vaubel went on to explain the pilot program for virtual mentoring. He explained that the relationship between the mentor and the student is one in which the two determine the parameters of the relationship. For example, the mentor/student may engage in a traditional mentorship or in more general networking relationship, such as requesting recommendations for places to live in new cities, resume review, graduate school information, etc. Career Development is hoping that the virtual mentoring program will really take off in the fall and that the mentors are not limited to just to Alumni Board members, but that other alumni or faculty will become mentors.

Gerretsen reviewed Commencement and Alumni Weekend plans. The commencement theme is "ethics", and there are two honorary degree recipients. The graduating class is approximately 220. Amy passed around a volunteer sing-up sheet for Alumni Weekend. Joint reunions were briefly discussed; some people may not realize the consequences for having joint reunions. One suggestion was that the College offer another more generic event other than Alumni Weekend to celebrate reunions.

Joanis, Interim Director of Residence Life, gave a brief report about each Greek organization. She also mentioned that a new staff position, assistant director of residence life/student activities, is being created so that the Student Life staff can expand to many different areas. Greek council leadership has changed, and there are more sophomore leaders. Greek groups have also been reminded who alumni are very important for students and helping develop the tradition and pride within each organization.

Liethen distributed several Annual Fund reports pointing out the need to zoom in on some areas where there are weaknesses- the larger gifts seem to be more robust than the smaller gifts. These figures are good information to share with the Alumni Board because they could help out with increasing support for the Annual Fund. Liethen introduced April Agamaite ’11, Annual Fund Intern, who explained her current role in the Advancement Office for the past three years; her experience will help with her future career plans.

Stephenson presented an update about the Senior Class Gift. There are eight fundraising officers this year, and they have sent a few solicitations. Gift reminders were sent to both senior’s home and campus addresses. Students are currently working on an e-solicitation. Stephenson has also been working on student philanthropy program. The Alumni Office is hosting its first open house for seniors on April 1. Letters were sent to students asking them to write thank you notes to their scholarship donors. Stephenson is planning a Tuition Free Day for spring 2012. Stephenson gave a Phonathon update: 28 callers (few more than past), 4 supervisors, which ends on April 7. The Phonathon is right on track with fundraising goals because of excellent callers who are very engaged.

Hintz announced that the *Ripon Magazine* will be revamped with the aim of improving quality (in-depth coverage, glossier publications, and more photos). The magazine will reduce the number of annual issues from three to two. One issue will go out in June and the other in January or February. The Annual Report will go out in October and will focus more on the state of the College with each Vice President providing an update and the issue will go into some detail about the entering class. Donors will be honored in the Annual Report, but the recognition may be limited to higher end donors, perhaps the 1851 club members, Partners, etc. The different volunteer Board members will be listed in the Annual Report, as well. The fall class letters will used to recognize donors of the previous fiscal year (a thank you) and the spring class letter will focus on those who have given in the current fiscal year, with encouragement to give before June 30th. The new format will allow more coverage, and a new editorial board has been created. Electronic alumni newsletters will be sent out once a month, which might provide a tease for the upcoming magazine issue. The current class letter is a little too bulky, and Hintz talked about having the class letter formatted to a more structured letter. An idea was brought up of treating it like a bank statement; alumni could have an option of electronic or hard copy.

Steve Schuetz, VP of Admission and Financial Aid, gave an update on Admission. He gave the current number of applications (1080) and was very pleased with the level of perspective students. They have accepted 73 percent of students, the lowest on record, which looks good in the current higher education environment. The academic profile of the applicant pool is up (24.86 ACT average, higher than last year). The number of deposits is down from last year; however, last year was record year. Since we are now in two years of recession, people are more cautious in the college decision making process. Deposits will increase in April and May, so that should determine how the class will come together. Schuetz also discussed the challenges in Admission, namely the federal Pell Grant and the Wisconsin Tuition Grant. Schuetz is very encouraged by the endowment campaign which would help the College meet students’ needs in the future.

Chapin talked about the AAA program, explaining how it works and how it is also a great networking tool.

Johnson, Athletic Director and Head Coach of Women's Basketball, gave a current update on the Athletic Department. Both the NCAA and Midwest Conference have become more demanding, but the department does not have the personnel or budget to some of the recommended changes. Johnson stated that with the 400 student athletes the building is definitely not adequate. Off campus recruiting will be starting in the fall of 2012, and Ripon College is one of the two schools in the Midwest Conference that have coaches who both coach and teach, which could possibly be a scheduling issue in the future. Johnson is currently working with Ric Damm on Ripon's athletic website to improve marketing. New hires are coming in. The Alumni Board can help support Ripon athletics by having an awareness of what coaches/staff do, and spreading the word to their classmates and friends. Athletic accomplishments for the year are outstanding; the men’s teams are only half a point behind in all sports, which is quite significant.

The Board took a two hour break for lunch and committee meetings at 12:05 pm.

The Alumni Board meeting continued at 2 p.m. for the approval of the Alumni Board, Alumni Trustee, and Senior Award nominations; as well as, the President and Vice President elections. Spaeth introduced the slate of Senior Award nominees and the potential Alumni Board member nominees.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved two Alumni Association Senior Award recipients to be honored at the Awards Convocation (April 20, 2011).

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the nominee list for the Alumni Board positions.

After discussion, the slate of Alumni Trustee nominees was presented.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the nominee list for the Alumni Trustee positions.

Houston introduced the election for President. Kitslaar and Spaeth both spoke before the election occurred. Kitslaar and Spaeth removed themselves from the discussion and vote.

**BOARD ACTION:** Spaeth was elected the new Alumni Board President.

Houston next introduced the election for Vice President. Kitslaar did not add any additional comments, but Waldvogel addressed the Board. Kitslaar and Waldvogel removed themselves from the discussion and vote.

**BOARD ACTION:** Kitslaar was elected the new Alumni Board Vice President.

The Board meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Board members enjoyed the following social activities: Accepted Student Days Mixer, Career Networking with Faculty & Staff, and the 2011 Cap & Gown Party.

**B. Proceedings (Saturday, 3/26/11)**

Standing Committee meetings continued over breakfast.

The full Board convened at 9:15 a.m.

Lindsay Blumer and Sarah Brown '09 from the Office of Community Engagement discussed “Service in Ripon and Beyond”, including how they are helping every student organization, and helping students find the right volunteer position and organization. Ripon College received recognition in “Newsweek” for being a “do-gooder” school. Blumer shared the office’s new website, “AlumServe” and everything that it offers alumni interested in service in their geographic area. Later in the afternoon, an alumni/student service project was offered at the Ripon Community Thrift Store and Food Pantry.

**C. Standing Committee Reports**

Meier reported for the **Governance Committee**

* Focused on defining the committee’s purpose within the greater alumni organization
* Brainstormed new committee structure for the Alumni Board, but need to think further about impact and labor/investment before any decisions are made.

Kitslaar reported for the **Ripon Person Committee**

* Announced that they are now one committee with no subcommittee.
* Wade will be taking over as the committee chair.
* Discussed structural changes and enhancement changes.
* Again hosting the fall speaker series, “Ripon’s Return on Investment” with speakers focused on entrepreneurship.

Buss reported for the **Advancement Committee**

* Reviewed past initiatives and came up with some new ideas including:
  + - Gathering testimonials
    - Sending out emails to the Alumni Board
    - Discussing ways the Alumni Board can help the Advancement Office
    - Enhancing the alumni e-newsletter
    - Showing students that the Alumni Board exists

The Board took a 15 minute break.

Webster presented Houston with a Partners in the Legacy certificate.

Hansen gave the **Annual Trustee Report**

* At their winter meeting, trustees expressed interest in helping students with their post-baccalaureate plans. The College is preparing the students to present themselves as very well rounded individuals.
* The Trustees are very involved with administration, asking each area in the College on how they wish to measure success in the future to make sure leadership is on the same page.
* The Trustees have been working on re-organization and better evaluations during their meetings.
* Hansen is vice-chair of Ripon Person committee, and student life was determined to remain independent of different committees. Helen also brought some ideas about how students are stressed with family financial concerns, depression and general well being- access to counseling is important issue to student life committee. How can RC help students deal with stressors? We need another student counselor on campus. Wayne responded that position is being posted in July for another counselor.

**D. General Discussion/New Business/Old Business**

No further items were discussed.

**E. Acknowledgement of Retiring Board Members and Student Representatives**

Houston acknowledged and thanked Board Member John Ryberg ’67 and Alumni Trustee Joann Selleck ’73 for their service on the Alumni Board. The four student representatives were also thanked for their service this year.

**BOARD ACTION:** Adjournment was made at 11:50 a.m. after singing the Alma Mater. Lunch followed.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Gerretsen ‘04

Ripon College Alumni Association Executive Secretary

Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Relations