

As approved February 12, 2025

Senior Scholars at Queens Board of Directors Minutes January 8, 2025

Board Members Present: Steve Lauer, Jack Gill, Glenn Paton, Barbara Devinney, Len Norman, Carlos Glender, Alan Matthews, Aimee Hite, Pam Nemecek, Ollie Frazier, John Koch, Kristan Smith; John Romano

Others Present: Don Campbell, Larry Ferri, Steve Gilbert, Gordon Haymond, BG Metzler, Ken Orenbach, Bill Thomas

Call to Order and President's Report: President Steve Lauer called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. He announced the resignation of Kathy Gray from the Board, saying that 2nd Vice President Carlos Glender will now serve as 1st Vice President and recruitment for a 2nd Vice President is now in progress.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the special Board meeting on November 20, 2024, were approved.

Queens University Report: Queens Liaison Allison Meyer-Tucker highlighted several events of possible interest to seniors:

- A free concert series titled "A Testament of Freedom" in honor of Thomas Jefferson on Sunday, January 12.
- Free Distinguished Leaders in Action Lecture Series featuring Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, president of Central Piedmont Community College, on Tuesday, January 28.
- "A Conversation with Geddy Lee," son of a Holocaust survivor and lead musician with the rock band Rush, in commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27. A benefit for the Greenspon Center, ticket prices range from \$67-\$185, depending on seating.
- "Royal Weekend:" 2025 Homecoming & Reunion, February 7-8, with multiple activities.

Action Items:

Adoption of 2025 Budget: Treasurer Glenn Paton described minor revisions to the proposed budget for 2025 from the preliminary version. Projected net revenue from name tags was increased from \$96 to \$240. The budget plans for 31 meetings at PUMC, plus a couple hundred dollars for alternate facilities. A decrease in revenues from membership dues is anticipated, and \$1,000 is available for marketing if there is a decision to spend funds to attract new members. Total income is projected at \$34,315, with expenses projected at \$30,975. Glenn is confident that the projected net income of \$3,340 will be achieved, just not the \$7,350 earned in 2024.

Steve Lauer moved adoption of the 2025 budget, which was seconded by Glenn and unanimously approved.

Approval of Operating Procedures: On behalf of the ad hoc review team, Barbara described some minor updates to the Operating Procedures since they were approved on November 20, 2024. Steve Lauer offered a few new minor edits, and Kristan Smith noted that there was no description for the Email Committee. Steve Lauer indicated that that was a new committee and it would take some time to develop a description. Following discussion, it was moved by Barbara, seconded by Len and approved, by more than 51% of required votes, with one abstention, to adopt the revised Operating Procedures as presented and with Steve’s minor changes. This will allow printing of the Board Member Handbook without further delay. A placeholder for the Email Committee will be inserted, with details to be approved in the future.

Approval of Bylaws: On behalf of the ad hoc review team, Barbara presented the Bylaws for second reading and a vote. With no suggested changes, it was moved by Len, seconded by Kristan and approved, by more than 67% of required votes, with one abstention, to adopt the revised Bylaws.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer’s Report and Finance Committee: Glenn reported a strong year-end closing with revenue of over \$7,300 for 2024, and over \$55,000 in certificates of deposit. He also shared notes of appreciation received from two renewing members.

Webmaster Committee: Aimee Hite reported that the website has been updated with speakers and events for Winter 2025. The Speaker Archives section has been brought back to the website, with five presentations from 2024 available for viewing by the public. Other 2024 presentations are “restricted” but available for member access, using a password that will change annually. All 2023 presentations are currently “restricted,” pending review by Steve Lauer to identify which ones may be made available for member access. According to policy, presentations will not be retained beyond the current year and the two immediately preceding years.

The Speaker Archives are available on the website at the drop-down menu under Speakers, or at <https://seniorscholars.net/speaker-archives/>.

Following discussion, Amy will add to the Speaker Archive main page a link to a Jotform request for member access to restricted presentations, similar to that used to access the Member Directory to validate the membership number. She will connect with Ben Eubanks regarding the Jotform process.

Email Committee: Kristan Smith reported there have been no bounced emails for a long time, and the email notice process is working smoothly. Email meetings are held on Thursdays at 2 p.m. and include Steve Lauer, Bill Griesmeyer, Jane Howard, Carol Kesmodel, Pam Nemecek, Len Norman, and Kristan Smith.

Curriculum Committee: Carlos Glender reported on the January 8 Curriculum Committee meeting, with a screen presentation of the roster of spring speakers, starting on January 10 with Laura Little on production roles in theater. Due to rescheduling, a new speaker is needed for the January 17 meeting. The remaining roster is nearly complete for the spring series. A different

venue is needed for March 14 because of the Scout BBQ at PUMC, and requests to other churches are in process. On Good Friday, April 18, the program will be presented via Zoom only. The final spring presentation will be on May 30 with Charlotte Fire Chief Reginald Johnson.

Speakers are still being confirmed for the Fall series. Sergio Costello will be the first speaker on September 12, on “Globalization of the Economy.” Three dates are being reserved in October and November for Great Decisions speakers.

Nominating Committee: Len Norman, on behalf of Jane Howard, reported continuing needs for a chair of the Marketing and Cultural Diversity Committee and a co-chair of the Wildacres subcommittee. With Kristan now co-chairing Wildacres, a replacement for her as co-chair of the Email Committee would be helpful. The Nominating Committee will also be working on recruiting a new 2nd Vice President. Carol Kesmodel needs to take some time off, and help is needed to lead the Field Trips subcommittee and plan for visiting the Earl Scruggs Center in Shelby, hopefully in February.

Social Committee: Len Norman reported on behalf Nancy Stancill that the Holiday Luncheon at Maggiano’s on December 4 went very well, with 87 people attending. Great holiday music was provided by members Pierce and Jane Howard and Randy Broom, and the featured speaker Mark Washburn, talking about his reporting on “the miracle on the Hudson,” was well received.

Planning is starting for the Spring Luncheon, and ideas for speaker and locations are welcome.

BG Metzler said the next Lunch Bunch outing is being planned for February 7 at 11:45 a.m. at Red Rocks at Strawberry Hill because the location is familiar to members. After that, the subcommittee will plan for lunches at some of the newer restaurants around SouthPark and Cotswold. With 30 participants at the last event, two restaurants will be considered for future dates. BG is grateful that two new volunteers are available to help.

Marketing & Cultural Diversity Committee: Don Campbell said he is working with Kristan on a flyer to promote Wildacres, with a plan to get a pdf to the printer by mid-January. Mini-expos are being planned for the coming months, with two exhibitors each. On January 24, Ronald McDonald House is confirmed. If that date is not good for the Harris Y, it will be the Village on Morehead.

Membership & Directory Committee: Pam Nemecek said that since December 1, 18 new members have joined, and 74 members have renewed. There are currently 537 members registered for 2025, compared to 427 on November 18. A total of 441 has still not renewed, but that is typical for this time of year. Pam will be contacting them to encourage renewals. The online Directory will be updated within two days.

Glenn indicated that more than 800 members are needed to break even on operating costs, so recruitment needs to continue. Don will look into getting more business cards printed.

PUMC Liaison: John Koch indicated there are no new events happening at the church that would affect Senior Scholars presentations, other than the Scout BBQ on March 14 and Good

Friday, April 18, as previously discussed. Two events at the church open to the public are the Chamber Music Series with a “Sensational Strings” program on Sunday, January 26 at 6:30 p.m. and the Organ Concert Series program on Friday, February 7, at 7 p.m. featuring the Director of Chapel Music at Yale University.

Wildacres Retreat Committee: Kristan Smith reported that the committee met and agreed on a budget for the retreat, April 28 to May 1. The price will be \$305 per person for a double-occupancy room for three nights and eight meals. Speaker Meg Johnson is confirmed to present on music therapy, and a second speaker is being sought. Following Hurricane Helene, road access is now available via 226A, but not yet through the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Steve Lauer said he spoke with Wendy Burns who indicated the facility is in reasonably good shape, with plans to be fully operational by the time of the retreat. He said the original theme for the retreat was Brain Health. With no luck finding a speaker from the medical community, the overall topic now is the benefit of music in a broader social context.

Glenn reported two of the three donations to benefit staff at Wildacres have been made, with the third to be made in early February. Wendy Burns has sent thanks to Senior Scholars for the donations.

Barbara suggested connecting with Friendship Missionary Baptist Church to promote scholarship opportunities to attend Wildacres. Steve Gilbert said he shared that information with a minister there at the program in September, but there has been no response. Don Campbell will be asked to follow up.

Technical A/V Committee: Jack Gill said the A/V team did a trial run last week to prepare for upcoming presentations. He reported some recent trouble with the camera control equipment. Alan Matthews said the equipment worked during the trial run but froze near the end of three recent presentations. The equipment may need to be replaced, and with something more robust. Options online are priced at \$1,295.

Old Business: Steve Lauer said he is working on text for the website related to copyright issues.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Devinney, Secretary