

*As approved May 14, 2025*

**Senior Scholars at Queens  
Board of Directors Minutes  
April 9, 2025**

**Board Members Present:** Steve Lauer, Carlos Glender, Said Atri, Jack Gill, Glenn Paton, Barbara Devinney, Len Norman, Alan Matthews, Pam Nemecek, Dave Collins, John Koch, Kristan Smith

**Others Present:** Don Campbell, Larry Ferri, John Gaertner, Gordon Haymond, Cynthia Henry, Bill Griesmeyer, Allison Meyer-Tucker, Ken Orenbach, Bill Thomas, Joan Ward

**Call to Order:** President Steve Lauer called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

**Approval Minutes:** On motion by Steve, seconded by Pam, the minutes of the March 12, 2025, Board meeting were approved with corrections as noted. Barbara introduced Joan Ward, who is willing to serve as Assistant Secretary as Barbara prepares to move to Winston-Salem in the coming months.

**Action Items:**

Policy for use of surplus funds. Steve referred to a document provided to Board members titled “Policy for Using Senior Scholars at Queens Surplus Funds.” The policy calls for a committee of three Board members to recommend annually to the Board the expenditure of a portion of funds in excess of the Bylaws-required operating reserve fund of \$30,000. Funds would benefit other nonprofit organizations, typically within a 25-mile radius of Charlotte. Initially, no more than \$10,000 a year of the current surplus would be disbursed, and donations would be no less than \$500 each. Glenn Paton indicated that he and Dave drafted the policy as a background for discussion, and Steve clarified that the item was not for action at this meeting but presented for discussion, with input welcome for refining a proposed policy. Len suggested focusing on organizations that focus on seniors and their interests.

Donation to Duke Mansion. Steve reported a highly positive field trip to the Duke Mansion on April 7. The rain limited the number attending, but 30 Senior Scholars members did attend and were seen contributing to the donation opportunity at the end of the tour. Steve recommended sending a contribution of \$100 to the nonprofit Duke Mansion with thanks for their efforts. On motion by Len, seconded by John Koch, the action was approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**Treasurer’s Report and Finance Committee:** Dave Collins referred to Glenn’s report of April 6 indicating the finances are in good shape. Dues revenues in March were a little better than last March. A CD with \$18,000 will renew in May. Another CD with \$30,000 will renew in June, pending a decision on whether to begin reducing surplus funds as just discussed. The current

surplus is about \$50,000. CD renewal decisions depend on the best interest rates and terms available at the time of maturity.

**Nominating Committee:** Len indicated Barbara has found a good prospective replacement in Joan Ward to help with the Secretary position, and Kristan Smith has found Shannon Smith to replace her as an Email Coordinator. Shannon will work with the other Email Coordinator, Bill Griesmeyer.

The Nominating Committee will be meeting soon to develop the slate for 2026. Three at-large board members' terms will be expiring – Aimee, Pam and Dave, and all will be eligible for reappointment. A 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President will be needed as well as a co-chair for Wildacres. Pam announced that she will be stepping down as Membership Chair at the end of the year but will be willing to help a new person in 2026.

**Webmaster & Email Committee:** Steve referred to the written report Aimee Hite submitted indicating she is keeping the website up to date. Kristan said she was glad that Shannon Smith has agreed to serve as one of the Email Coordinators. Kristan will remain on the committee to help with the transition.

Bill Griesmeyer, who produced the email newsletter the past two weeks, indicated the “bounce” rate for undeliverable emails was down to two or three. Kristan noted that the “open” rate has increased to 85-88%. Bill suggested trimming some of the content in the Thursday edition and printing the recurring information in the Monday issue. Steve concurred that a slightly different format could be helpful.

**Curriculum Committee:** Carlos Glender shared that County Manager Dena Diorio's presentation on April 11 will be more of a town hall format. Other upcoming presentations include:

- 4/18/25 Parig Sakia, India, China and Global South (via Zoom only)
- 4/25/25 Dr. Sarah Fatherly, Queens University Update
- 5/2/25 Lori Semel, The Butterfly Project
- 5/9/25 Dr. Stephen Riggs, Levine Cancer Institute Update
- 5/16/25 Jack Christine, Charlotte Airport Construction
- 5/30/25 Reginald Johnson, Chief of Charlotte Fire Department

In the fall, Ken Orenbach has three slots reserved for Great Decisions topics, and only three other slots remain to be filled. The Curriculum Committee just reviewed recommendations from Senior Scholars' members for four speakers on various topics to be considered by the committee.

The new Science Manager John Gaertner will be working on speakers for fall and spring.

**Queens University Report:** Allison Meyer-Tucker reported that commencement activities will be taking place May 2 and 3, which will create a lot of traffic near Queens. She indicated it is time to renew the contract agreement with Senior Scholars, and she would like to set up meeting

with appropriate representatives. The agreement was last reviewed in February 2021, and the staff involved are no longer at Queens. Steve said he will contact her.

**Social Committee:** Len reported for Nancy Stancill. The Spring Luncheon will be held June 5 at Raintree Country Club with speaker Tom Hanchett. The cost is \$45 per person.

The Lunch Bunch met on March 28 at Leo's Social, with a good turnout. The next Lunch Bunch event is scheduled for April 25 at Brix.

For Field Trips, Ian Pollitt reported that 60 people signed up for the Duke Mansion tour, but about half attended due to weather. Member feedback was universally positive, and Lauren Judson said the Jotform registration process was highly positive and they recommend using it for future field trips.

Pam provided an update on the April 15 field trip to the Carolina Raptor Center. A minimum of 15 people is required and 16 are registered. The Jotform process has been successful, with virtually all payments made online. Len mentioned the Lunch Bunch committee is ready to start using Jotform as well and will benefit from the list of attendees it generates.

**Marketing & Cultural Diversity Committee:** Cynthia Henry confirmed the budget for marketing of \$1,000. She said the Charlotte Ledger has an opportunity to advertise with ten articles for \$450, for inclusion in both paid and nonpaying access. Distribution of promotional cards to churches, independent living and senior centers has been working well, but publication in the Charlotte Ledger could be very worthwhile.

Len said we attracted about 20 new members when the Ledger ran an unpaid article about Senior Scholars a year or two ago. Cynthia said a reporter attended a recent meeting and plans to publish another article this quarter. Pam suggested starting the paid articles in August and spreading the remaining nine over the following months to attract new members. Cynthia said the committee has talented writers committed to contributing to the effort, perhaps featuring upcoming speakers and topics.

The Marketing Committee would like to make an announcement at the last two Friday meetings in May about the effort to recruit members and the plan to hold a membership drive in November through January. If a member brings a guest to a meeting, the member would receive a certificate for a pie donated by a local grocery store, such as Harris Teeter, Publix, or Fresh Market. Kristan liked the idea and suggested a similar approach with a raffle for a Starbucks gift certificate. Len said there was a good response to the raffle items for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Steve said it was a good idea and with more details could be brought back for formal vote at the next meeting.

Steve and Cynthia will be making a presentation and handing out promotional cards to the Charlotte Mecklenburg retiree group on April 22.

**Membership & Directory Committee:** Pam said the online Membership Directory has been updated and posted online. Since January 1, there have been 58 new members and 154 renewals.

There are currently 744 paid members for 2025, leaving 228 with their 2024 cards not yet renewed. Those tend to dribble in, but to reach Glenn's target we need 56 more people.

Fourteen people attended the new member orientation, and a new orientation is scheduled for April 11.

**PUMC Liaison:** John Koch said there have been no problems with use of the facility for Friday meetings and using the parking lot for occasional carpooling to occasional events would not be a problem.

**Wildacres Retreat Committee:** Kristan Smith reported 66 people have registered, and a maximum of 70 can be accommodated. Registration will be available until April 22 or 23. Steve mentioned the speakers and their guests will need rooms. A waiting list will be maintained in case there are cancellations. It may also be possible to request more rooms from Wildacres staff. Speakers receive room and board and an honorarium.

**Technical A/V Committee:** Jack Gill mentioned a subcommittee meeting on Zoho and Dropbox still needed to happen, and Steve said he would be setting that up soon.

Alan Matthews said the church has made audio equipment changes which may present some technical difficulties at Friday's meeting. The speakers that were suspended failed. The new ones are floor-mounted on the stage and need some adjustment. The scene setting on the soundboard was set up three years ago, and there have been a lot of equipment changes since then. It will take some paid support to change the settings because the technical challenges involved.

**Old Business:** Steve said he is working on the text regarding copyright infringement that will go on the Jotform and website, but he hasn't completed it yet.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.**

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Devinney, Secretary