

## June 24, 2023 Meeting Minutes 11-1 pm EST

[meet.google.com/phb-rutg-yww](https://meet.google.com/phb-rutg-yww)

- Goals:**
1. Create and implement clear and consistent communications strategy
  2. Build and define effective relationships with internal and external collaborators
  3. Review and clarify the Alumni Association's internal structure, processes and accountability
  4. Develop consistent programs and activities to (re) engage alum

**Open Meeting**      **Bobbi Thompson**

**Roll Call**              **Barbara Campbell-Harvey**

[W](#) June 24 2023 Resolutions & Attendance

**Introductions**      **Bobbi Thompson**

- New board members were sworn in as part of the 2023 Annual meeting so the board took turns introducing themselves to each other
  - AAEB President: Karen Thomas '77
  - AAEB Vice President: Jill Shuman '76
  - AAEB Co-Director /Communications /Marketing: Janine Coveney '81
  - AAEB Director of Student Outreach: Courtney Bryant '94, '01 MBA, '08EE
  - AAEB Director of Alumnae Outreach: Kelly O'Connell '99
  - AAEB Director of Athletics: Jasmine Clarke '15
  - AAEB Alumnae Association Historian: Maddie Gretzky '16
  - AAEB Director of Operations: Priyal Goyal '14
  - AAEB Assistant Treasurer: Clare Pak '15
  - AAEB Treasurer: Barbara Campbell Harvey
  - AAEB Director of Nominations: Elaine McCarthy

**Annual Meeting Feedback from Survey /Board Feedback**      **Karen Thomas**

- As part of the annual meeting on May 20, 2023 AAEB launched a survey for alumnae to gather feedback on the board but also ask alums for ideas on programming
- 140 alums responded via the [simmonsalumassoc.org](https://simmonsalumassoc.org) website
- Below are the survey results

## Survey Says

- 140 Simmons Alum responded via the AAEB Website to attend the meeting
- 61 participants were recorded as actually attending
- The Board Officers recorded a quorum attendance
- 18 post meeting surveys were returned with the following results:
  - ◆ The top future topics of interest were:
    - i. Student Body updates
    - ii. Administration Updates
  - ◆ The majority of respondents preferred participating in hybrid meetings and events
  - ◆ 65% of respondents would like to attend dedicated reunion weekends with others preferring Family and/or Homecoming events
  - ◆ 88% of respondents want to be involved in more AAEB activities and meetings

**Simmons UNIVERSITY**  
Alumnae/i Association

- Karen spoke about a Boston Globe article that came as a surprise to the AAEB
- President Wooten has sent invites to the board and other engaged alums to talk about the article related to financial challenges being faced by Simmons University
- Link to the article: [Alumnae\\_i Association Mail - Globe Article.pdf](#)
- Another article was published with student responses. Here is the link: [Alumnae\\_i Association Mail - a 2nd Globe article with student responses.pdf](#)
- Simmons is facing a tough financial situation because it provides heavy scholarships to students, there has been a decrease in enrollment which is deepening the financial crisis
- Simmons has done research to see what majors are students interested in and they have learnt that a major that might have been high in demand back in 70s, 80s might not be the highest rated majors anymore which is upsetting some student and alum population
- The article was not specifically an attack on Simmons but a panoramic view of higher education and specifically with women's colleges and how the education system is in stress. President Wooten's comment in the article made it clear that the university was interviewed about it
- The university's real estate project is still ongoing
- Board members were encouraged to attend the town hall meetings organized by President Wooten
- Board members suggested that it would be good to get some talking points from Karen Thomas or President Wooten in case other alums reach out asking questions
- The university has created a Building Our Future webpage to also address questions that alums, prospective students or parents may have about this matter: <https://www.simmons.edu/about/building-our-future?bbeml=tp-785g2x8IwUm-s2iIBbfPiA.jAfvEc3T5IUGvuD0wvePPgQ.rbAb-V6RqyEOL0k-kPc8sJQ.IPSrP5rIYEK2PeFVVRN0-4w>
- Jodi expressed her shock about this news article as she believes Simmons is a great school and has done a lot of great work for students
- Barbara believes that times are changing and the university is still abiding by John Simmons' vision where women will be receiving education to find employment opportunities so she added that this change is positive for the university

## Simmons Strategic Goals


- Karen spoke about Simmons' strategic goals through 2027
  - Optimization and Financial stability
  - Academic Innovation - There will be 2 colleges as compared to 4.
    - Ifill College
    - College focused on health sciences
  - Community, culture and wellbeing
  - Leadership
  - Social Justice
- Karen talked about the upcoming 125th anniversary campaign focusing on fundraising for the university and inviting many alumni back to Simmons
- Currently only 10% of alums give back to Simmons. So the 125th anniversary campaign is focused on increasing the giving back spirit
- This weekend will also give alums an opportunity to say goodbye to the residence campus as the lease for the res campus expires in 2026

Proposed **125th Anniversary All Classes Reunion Weekend**

**Friday - Check-in**  
125th Anniversary Tea (by decade in separate Dorms) – Craft and Sip– make a Simmons Memory quilt piece and share memories with classmates  
Dinner on your own

**Saturday**  
Morning meditation and movement –  
Campus tours  
Lunch (Brown Bag and Bragging about Simmons– Alumnae Hall)  
Simmons History – Jason Woods- Historian/ Memory Project / –Contributions to Simmons Time  
Capsule to be buried on new Campus  
125 Anniversary–Sneak Ball in Bartol Hall (300 attendees)  
Alumnae and Staff Awards  
Lobster bake  
Entertainment- (Nneena Freelon, photo booth/ blue carpet–step and repeat photo station, ???)  
Dessert Bar and coffee

**Sunday** -Service of Remembrance remembering those we have lost  
Brunch /Speaker Alumnae Hall



- Bricks - Different tiers of bricks will be open for purchase to alums as a fundraising activity for the 125th anniversary weekend. Some of the tiers are listed below. Each level will accommodate 125 bricks. Overall goal is to fundraise \$1million for the university that can be used to provide scholarships for incoming students

Platinum Brick level      125 @      \$5,000= 625,000

1. Gold Brick with name, class year and degree
2. Owner Certificate
3. 2 nights in a dorm room on Simmons Residence Campus
4. ???? tix to Alumnae 125th Anniversary Ball
5. Platinum VIP Pass to access to all 125th Alumnae Activities

Gold Brick Level                      125 @ \$2,500= \$312,500

1. Gold Brick with name, class year and degree
2. Owner Certificate
3. 2 nights in a dorm room on Simmons Residence Campus
4. ???Tickets to Alumnae 125th Anniversary Ball
5. Gold VIP pass to access to all Alumnae Activities

- Kelly O’Connell expressed her opinion about the recent changes at the university and showed support as she thinks this is a way for the university to revamp itself and welcome new ideas and embracing that change is constant

### **Proposed Initiatives 23-25/ planning**

- Karen mentioned that one of the challenges for all officers on the board will be to plan initiatives that would align both with the university’s goals and the board’s goals that were discussed as part of the strategic goals exercise in 2022
- One of the goals is engaging more with the alumnae/i community and we are already working towards that goal by planning 125th anniversary celebrations, tuesday podcast teas etc.
- Elaine and Karen are planning to create a new 125th Anniversary Director at large position who will be leading the planning and execution of this vision as this is a large

effort and we want to achieve our goal of fundraising for the university through this initiative

### **Meeting Norms and Schedule/ Binder Review      Bobbi Thompson**

- Bobbi went over the new board binder which is a comprehensive document that lists the board's strategic goals, annual meeting calendar, AAEB Commitment form listing board position responsibilities and expectations
- Link to the board binder can be found here: [AAEB Board Binder.pdf](#)
- Board members read through the AAEB Commitment slides during the meeting to ensure there were no open questions or concerns
- As part of the commitment, 5 out of 7 board members agreed to meet on Saturdays
- Bobbi informed the board that if a member cannot attend at least 3 out of 8 board meetings then there is a possibility to have a conversation with the President of the board to check if this commitment still works for that individual or they would like to serve in a different capacity
- It was discussed that communication is key when it comes to attending board meetings and if folks cannot make it.
- Otherwise it is expected for board members to attend all board meetings as per schedule
- It was discussed to update #7 commitment on the list about confidentiality to allow sharing committee related information with individual committee members
- The board members agreed to sign the commitment form by July 1, 2023

### **General Information /Professional Development topics      Bobbi Thompson**

- Courtney suggested that the board should adopt a process of pre-reading updates where members put their updates in a slide deck prior to the meeting and folks review it beforehand so our sessions can be more productive instead of going through individual updates
  - All board members were in favor of this decision
- Elaine suggested that we should have sessions on strategic planning or projects at the university so the board can be more informed on what's going on
  - Courtney will take charge of coming up with ideas of sessions on professional development (All board members passed this resolution)
  - Karen will take charge of coming up with ideas of sessions on updates from Simmons administration (All board members passed this resolution)

**Budget Report****Barbara Campbell Harvey**

- Budget report presented by Barbara is posted here:  
[Alumnae Association of Simmons University AAEB Financial Report](#)
- Alumnae Association had higher expenses than expected in the book-keeping department
- The association spent funds on the intern's salary
- The association gave out 3 awards throughout the year
- On the hand the budget is \$156,735.42 but Barbara has not updated the year end expenses
- Barbara is still working on finding a contact at Liberty Mutual

**Resolutions****Barbara Campbell Harvey****01-06-23** The AAEB adopts the 2023-2024 meeting schedule with necessary revisions (PASS)**Closing Reflections personal goals** (write in chat)**Jill Shuman**