

BREA Minutes

Meeting Date and Place: Tuesday, June 12, 2012; Berkner Hall, Rm A

Attendees: Dave Cox, Eena-Mai Franz, Louise Hanson, Les Lawrence, Ken Mohring, Frances Scheffel, George Oldham, Steve Shapiro, Richard Skelton, and Myron Strongin

Dave Cox opened the meeting at 1:09pm.

The minutes of the May 8, 2012 meeting were accepted as presented with one change – to add Dave Cox’s name to the meeting with HR’s Bob Lincoln and Denise DiMeglio.

Steve Shapiro presented the Treasurer’s Report. It included the expenses and moneys received for the luncheon. BREA subsidized the luncheon – the moneys received did not cover the cost. A CD also comes due in July.

Old Business:

Annual Luncheon: Thanks to Ken Mohring for a very successful luncheon, held on Thurs. June 7 at the Bellport Country Club. Ken further extended thanks to Martine O’Connor and Steve Shapiro for their help. Eighty-eight people came, including six guests. Since the venue only charged per head for the people who actually came, it was decided to refund those who sent in checks and didn’t come. The 50-50 raffle was won by one of the guests who donated his winnings to BREA. Thanks again. In general, people had a nice day, the food was good, and the hors d’oeuvres were excellent. However, those present felt that BREA ought to create guidelines for future speakers at a future meeting, nearer to next year’s event.

Membership: Carmen Benkovitz was not present. Steve Shapiro said that he has been receiving renewals and new memberships.

Plum Island Tour: Steve Shapiro said that the BREA tour of Plum Island on Wed. June 20 has had a few cancellations. However, because all attendees must have security clearance and that takes time, it is too late to substitute people. Due to its popularity, he will consider organizing another trip next year.

DOE former worker medical screening program: One of the attendees described his experience and strongly urged BNL retirees to take advantage of this program. (Only 3% of those eligible for the screening have shown up thus far.) He was encouraged by the attending physician to file a claim. Apparently, if you have a problem that can be related to an occupational hazard, such as hearing loss, the screening physician becomes your advocate. The screening process has been streamlined, in that the paperwork that needs to be filled out before the screening is sent to the individual ahead of time

(rather than taking up time during the visit to the physician). Will a reminder appear in the next newsletter?

BREA newsletter: No report

Changes to retirees' medical benefits: Bob Lincoln has updated Dave Cox on the number of non-respondents to BNL's changes to retirees' medical benefits: it is down to 40. One of the attendees has appealed the new charges. He was told he could appeal through BNL's General Counsel.

SeniorNet: No report.

New Business:

BNL Bulletin: Mona Rowe heard from retirees at the luncheon who were no longer receiving the Bulletin. She collected their addresses and will straighten out the problem.

BNL Communication to Retirees via Email: Louise Hanson voiced frustration that despite BREA's provision of email lists to the Lab over a year ago, and the collection of email addresses by HR from new retirees, again initiated over a year ago, NO attempt has been made by the Laboratory to communicate with retirees via email since that time. (These were BREA initiatives that took much effort and negotiation to implement). Especially given the recent, important policy changes to retiree benefits, such communication would have been more than welcome.

Future BREA Trips/Tours: The issue of another tour on-site was raised. Ken Mohring said we should discuss this at the next meeting. Suggestions included going back to NSLS II, something in chemistry or biology, the solar array (is it accessible now?) and the weather station. Steve Shapiro inquired about off-site tours – he was told that other than his tour to Plum Island, attendance had been poor for past off-site trips.

BREA has been told that BSA's contract for the Lab expires in 2014. BSA is preparing now for the renewal process. Concern was expressed by several attendees as to the impact that this might have on retirees' benefits. Would DOE and/or BSA support, or use this as an opportunity to whittle away at, retiree's interests? BNL currently has 2200 retirees.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06pm.

July 2012 meeting: Tuesday, July 10, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

There is no August meeting

September 2012 meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 11, 1pm, Bldg. 400, Rm RSB 2

Minutes submitted by Louise Hanson