After a glacially slow start, the Oral History Task Force has been reconstituted and is ready to resume work working on a project to capture and preserve the voices of distinguished UCSB emeriti.

The working group now consists of co-chairs Patricia Cohen and Ellen Broidy, Loy Lytle, Cynthia Brown (ex officio), and Muriel Zimmerman (ex officio).

While we have yet to conduct any interviews and, in fact, are still in the process, with the assistance of the EA Board, of identifying the first 2-4 emeriti to interview, we have continued to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of oral history best practices. To that end, in addition to earlier conversations with UCSB Instructional Development (for technical advice and information about costs) and Heather Silva and Vanessa Alvarez from the Library Development Office, several of us connected with emeriti from UC Davis about their oral history project as well as with Joe Lambert from the Story Center, an organization whose mission is to teach “ordinary people” how to produce oral histories. Story Center worked extensively with the UC Berkeley Emeriti Association on its oral history project.

We have learned a great deal and now have a better idea of next steps, although significant questions remain about equipment, funding, training and, most importantly, names of emeriti we want to approach for the first round of interviews.

In order to move the project forward, and ensure that it has the standing and support required for it to succeed, the task force recommends that the project be elevated from a task force to a standing committee with the following charge:

*The Emeriti Association Oral History Committee is charged with developing a strategy for ensuring that the voices and experiences of distinguished emeriti are captured and recorded for posterity. In close cooperation with the officers and members of the board, the committee solicits names of retired faculty to interview, develops procedures for training interviewers, designs format for the interviews, creates and monitors the budget, partners with the Library and other*
campus entities to ensure archiving and access to the interviews, including search metadata and storage, and works with other Emeriti Association committees, to publicize the UCSB Emeriti Oral History Archive.

We trust the EA Board will continue to support us in our efforts to get this project off the ground. The first step in that support is to approve the formation of a standing committee.