

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES of the Council Meeting held January 8, 1997 at 1:30 pm in Gilmour Hall-B109

PRESENT: J. Baby, J. Evans (Chair), D. Haisell, J. Maas, D. Matheson, M. Maggs, J. McCutcheon, C. McMullen, A. Thompson, M. Welton, B. White

REGRETS: M. Hubley, V. Morrison, J. Walker

I. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the December 11th meeting were approved with the following amendment:

Page 1 (a) under Business Arising to read "such a success"

II. Business Arising

a) Christmas Lunch

Council members were pleased with the turnout for this annual event and for the presence and comments of President Peter George at the luncheon. Letters of appreciation have been received from the MURA Scholarship winners.

b) Computer

C. McMullen stated that the computer is "up" and that he will load the "works" program.

III. President's Report

i) Pension Matters.

J. Evans reported that a meeting regarding pension surplus matters will take place on one of the next three Wednesdays. The Provost has suggested that some of the surplus in the fund be used for early retirement packages, presumably with a trade-off for additional benefits to retirees.

ii) Nominating Committee - no report

IV. Treasurer's Report

D. Haisell circulated a financial report which indicated a projected balance of \$2,024.44.

V. Portfolio Assignments

The chair stated that Bob Tagney had accepted Council's invitation to appear at today's meeting at 2:00 p.m. He circulated a chart listing items covered in the new and old plans. J. McCutcheon assumed that our lifetime out-of-Province coverage remains \$10,000 which is correct.

Members were advised to **not** sign any forms upon being admitted to hospital, otherwise they or the University could be liable for a larger amount. M. Maggs suggested Bob be invited to the AGM on May 21, 1997 to which all agreed.

V. Portfolio Assignments Cont'd.

- Visitation

J. Maas had nothing to report at this time

- Trips

Joy reported 26 had registered for the St. Lawrence Centre event. At the present time she had no information on the Shaw or Stratford Theatre plans.

- Membership

NOTE C. McMullen distributed membership figures and stated that the non-paying 1995 retirees have been dropped but suggested that a note be sent to these retirees informing them they are no longer "active". Carm also stated that labels could be segregated for this purpose and information sent out to approximately 84 retirees. Dora volunteered to keep a running account of those who have paid between January, 1997 and the next issue of The MURAL. Reference to the Constitution verified that paying members are considered "active" and non-paying members are considered as "inactive".

- Courier

No report

- Benefits Committee

The Chair welcomed Bob Tangney to today's meeting and turned the meeting over to M. Maggs the Benefits Committee representative.

Bob presented a well-prepared and comprehensive review of the Benefits situation as it now stands. Before any detailed information is available for retirees in the form of correspondence there are many and varied groups which will be asked for input before final decisions can be reached. An overview of existing plans was presented as follows: *Communicated*

Active Group: Salaried and hourly plan now switched to Faculty, Clinical Faculty, Librarians, Exempt Staff, MUSA, Hourly and Others

Hourly workers - each Union has their own group, e.g. Food Services, Security, Parking, O & M etc.

Retirees : Three groups consisting of (1) Positive enrolment group without drug card. (2) Positive enrolment group with drug card and (3) Those under the Old Plan with \$25/\$50 deductible. Those in group (3) will need to switch to group (1) to obtain any new benefits. Bob stated that in future there could be an additional category initiated which would allow for new proposals.

Bob advised that regarding tuition assistance there are two options available:

Waiver - paid full tuition - taxable to employee
Bursary - paid to student. The first \$500. is tax free and the balance taxed to student. Bob pointed out that the Bursary delivers more money to the individual and less to Revenue Canada.

With respect to Out-of Country/Province- coverage:

Faculty are allowed 120 days
Staff " " 60 days
Retirees have a \$10,000. lifetime coverage. The retiree pays the bill and submits a claim to Great West Life.

Dental Coverage

Recall appointments changed from 6 mos. to 9 months, (including Xrays) but appointments already scheduled will be covered.

Exemption process for those who need more frequent visits. If reason is valid the University will pay for a six-month recall.

[Bob commented that up until the present, dentists have been treating the plan not the patient]

Any items that were formerly covered for 80% - now changed to 85%, but retiree must be in Active plan.

Orthodontistry, dentures and bridges - is a defined benefit of 50% of ODA schedule. Part of funding provided by the University is now stabilized at a cost of \$14 per employee. *has been reduced by \$4*

Full examination will be performed every four years, but will be covered if examination and treatment required at an earlier date

Vision Care for Retirees

\$100 - (both plans) *at present* changed to
\$150 - non-Faculty
\$200 - Faculty

Retirees will be required to move to the new plan to obtain additional vision care amounts.

Hospital - {Semi-Private Room}

There is a cap of \$110. however hospitals differ in their billing practices. Bob warned Council that retirees must not sign a form upon admission, otherwise they could be liable for an amount over the \$110 limit. Quite often if the first form is not signed the hospital will provide another form stating the patient is covered up to the plan limit of \$110. Bob added that if a patient **does** receive a bill, for example, in the amount of \$180., Sun Life will cover \$110. and the University will pay the balance of \$70. but this additional cost to the Benefits program can and should be avoided.

Drug Plan

The TEG (Therapeutic Evaluation Group) consisting of Pharmacists, Doctors and Economists) have placed drugs into categories:

- A level drugs - always good - always paid
- B level drugs - always paid
- C level drugs - should be managed, but not necessarily will they be automatically paid. Require review by the TEG *(in negotiation)*
- D level drugs - will not be covered because they could be old style drugs or due to the fact that A & B level drugs are preferable. Bob stated that lists will change and new drugs will be paid, but if a drug is later categorized under D it will not be paid.

Tier 1 contains all AB&C drugs *will be paid for*

Tier 2 contains all new drugs. D type drugs will be paid for only until April 1, 1997
New drugs

- G Plan 1 - with drug card. Changes will be implemented automatically for the same coverage as ACTIVE
- G Plan 2 - without drug card. No changes. If claim is rejected by Sun Life and the retiree complains to the University the cost may be absorbed by McMaster
- G Plan 3 - customer pays and submits bill to Sun Life who will check with Physician or Pharmacist to ascertain which level drug is involved before paying claim

Bob advised that a letter will be issued to the University community and Retirees explaining the drug plan and the monitoring process by TEG

A letter will be sent from Personnel covering:

- (1) overview of all benefits
- (2) explanation of changes, including brochures
- (3) lay terms - options - and dates for open sessions

The Chair with M. Maggs offered their assistance to B. Tangney in drafting communications to Retirees.

Amended Indexing of Pensions - applies to all plans

Council thanked Bob for addressing the meeting and providing us with information on the Benefits Program.

Portfolio Assignments (Cont'd.)

- MURAL

Averil advised that the next issue will be sent in March. An insert will be included from the Centre for Student Development - Ability and Access.

VI. Other Business

- (i) correspondence requesting cancellation of out-of-Province coverage for faculty had been received to which the Chair will respond
- (ii) Council members had received the President's Newsletter dated December 11th
- (iii) a Faculty member who had elected to take the BUY-OUT retirement package will be refunded their \$10 active membership in MURA
- (iv) Brian White stated the cost for the AGM will be \$60 to cover the setting up and putting away of 50 chairs at the new venue between 2:30 and 5:00 p.m. It was agreed to add this cost to the approved budget.
- (v) Bruce Clark had contacted Carm to ask if MURA could set up a 'phone group' to contact shut-in retirees. Joy suggested we include this item in the MURAL but since this matter falls under the portfolio of Jack Maas, he was requested to give this suggestion his consideration.
- (vi) Carm advised Council of his Regrets for the February and March meetings of Council

VII. Next Meeting will be held February 12, 1997 at 1:30 p.m. in GH B109

Secretary
Dorothy Matheson