

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES of the Council Meeting of September 11, 1996 at 1:30 p.m.
in GHB109

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PRESENT: J. Baby, J. Evans (Chair), D. Haisell, S. Hambleton,
M. Hubley, J. Maas, M. Maggs, D. Matheson, C. McMullen,
V. Morrison, A. Thompson, J. Walker

REGRETS: M. Welton, B. White

I. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the June 12th meeting were approved with the following amendments:

- i) page 2 under AGM - communication; the word 'con^sensus' had been misspelled
- ii) page 4, line 2 should read; 'the proposed mailing date'

II. Business Arising

(a) Emeriti Prof. Ass'n.

* The Chair stated that the Faculty Association is considering setting up their own retirees group. Grant Smith of the Association is gathering information and the status of this group is not clear as yet. J. Evans has been invited to attend the President's Faculty Retirees' Lunch on October 7th. *

(b) 96/97 Budget

The budget approved at the last meeting was circulated.

(c) 96/97 Portfolios

A list of the portfolio assignments was distributed to Council.

III. President's Report

i) Pension Ad Hoc Working Group

President Jack Evans reported that this group had agreed on a pension plan text for submission to the Department of National Revenue after three meetings had been held during the summer. There are still some sections of the plan text in disagreement, e.g. pension surplus, and therefore these areas are not covered in the submission. The Chair directed Council's attention to excerpts from the Second Interim Report To the Joint Administration/Faculty Association Committee re Benefits outlining complexities of the current benefits package, one of which is that at the time many of the benefits were negotiated, not much attention was given to the question of where the money would be obtained to support the negotiated items.

One other problem has now presented itself due to the fact that the Provincial Government, which, for example, directs the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan, has unilaterally decided to reduce their former drug benefit commitment which will weigh heavily on the University budget. Three key suggestions have been proposed which, in essence, are:

- (i) focus on several key benefit items; namely the dental plan, the drug plan and hospital coverage;
- (ii) articulate, on the financial side, a process for monitoring the financial impact of benefit changes, and have an agreement about how to deal with the financial consequences of any changes made;
- (iii) realize the importance of regular communication and education about benefits resulting in individuals using their benefits more effectively and economically

The second document presented to Council for information from the Faculty Benefits Review Team concerns the Faculty Drug Benefit Plan and recommendations and alterations to this plan are outlined on page two of this document, together with a list of drugs which it is proposed will no longer be covered by the University's Drug Plan.

The Chair advised that according to law, pension fund money is not taxed by the DNR (Department of National Revenue), however any surplus over and above the DNR limit for Defined Benefit Pension Plan limit **will** be taxed. Therefore, any excess surplus accrued in the plan by the University will be taxed. To prevent this, whenever the pension surplus becomes "excessive" the University has placed excess surplus contributions in a segregated account that forms the capital for MUFF.

Jack also commented on the unilateral action of the Federal Government in the reduction of Grants to Universities. Council was urged to read Directions II on the Summer Strategic Planning. He drew attention to recommendation I-2 which proposes to use pension plan surplus to fund the recent early retirement scheme.

The Chair requested Council members M. Maggs, J. McCutcheon and C. McMullen plus G. King to assist him as an advisory committee in the discussions re pension and benefits.

ii) MUFF - covered in item i)

iii) Summer Activities

The Retirees' party had been most successful and several new members had joined during this event.

On July 19th J. Evans lunched with the MUSSA President who is willing to speak to MURA at some future date. Carm McMullen was requested to add MUSSA and the Faculty Association to MURAL the mailing list.

On July 24th M. Maggs and J. Evans had met with Les Robb regarding the Faculty Association's approach to Benefits. (covered in item i)

On August 1st the President and J. McCutcheon had met with University President Peter George and had raised the question of the Benefits Committee not having held a meeting. MUSSA has agreed to support the need for this Committee.

iv) Directions II - covered in item i)

IV. Treasurer's Report

D. Haisell circulated her report, showing a balance of \$3,337.74 as of September 10th.

V. Portfolio Assignments

- Visitations

J. Maas had nothing to report, however he was advised that Blythe Williams' widow will be admitted to hospital for a hip replacement. A card will be sent on behalf of MURA.

- Trips

Sept. 26 -	Orillia Cruise At present 37 people are booked
October -	Nothing concrete, but Joy has received brochures from the St. Laurence Performing Arts centre
Nov. 28 -	Xmas Lights
Dec. 9 -	Xmas Luncheon - Schwaben Inn
Jan./1997 -	Stage West could be a possible event
Feb/Mar/Apr-	Nothing definite as yet but Ragtime might be a popular event (although expensive)

David's
Mother

Information had also been received by Joy from Bill Stafford of the Mohawk College Retirees notifying MURA of their coming events:

- Oct. '97⁶ - St. Lawrence Centre
- Nov. '97⁶ - Argyle⁶ & Sutherland Officers' Mess
Dinner with a program on regimental history
- Dec. '97⁶ - A pre-Xmas lunch at the Royal Alex
in Toronto followed by a performance
of Jane Eyre

It was pointed out that there were a number of attractive restaurants in the Niagara winery area and it was suggested that a mini-wine tasting event with dinner following might be enjoyable during the spring or fall. Seagram's Museum was also suggested as a possible activity for 1997.

- Annual Dinner⁹⁶

Sept. 17, 1997 - Canterbury Hills

To date 27 people have expressed an interest in this event. Neither Joy nor Mavis will be attending. The President reported that John Weaver, the guest speaker, had been sent a map and a CV had been requested for introductory purposes.

The question of the viability of the Annual Dinner event was raised and deferred to the next meeting of Council for discussion.

- Benefits Committee

On July 24th, M. Maggs had received a call from Bob Tangney to say that although McMaster retirees are covered by the Benefits Plan for the recently imposed Ontario drug charges, there are many groups and categories of retirees involved. Bob had advised that a letter will be forthcoming from Personnel with details.

- Courier

V. Morrison had nothing to report.

- Membership

J. Walker had spoken to several employees who will be retiring and who are interested in MURA membership. C. McMullen circulated membership figures showing 344 paid to date. He stated it was doubtful that a figure of 500 paid memberships would be reached this current year.

- MURAL

A. Thompson advised that the Oct/Dec issue of the MURAL will be sent to Active members only. She requested that information for this issue be submitted to her by September 25th. The next MURAL issue will be Jan/Feb. D. Haisell offered to provide Carm and Averil with any information on 'passings' which is received through the MURA office.

- Xmas Lunch

In the absence of M. Welton, J. Walker reported that the Schwaben Inn has been booked for this event.

VI. Other Business

- President's Letter 28/06/96

The President's letter had been received by Council members and it was agreed that a note of our appreciation of his support should be sent to President Peter George on behalf of MURA.

- Student Opportunities Fund

This document was circulated to Council and it was agreed that the details regarding this fund should be published in the next two issues of MURAL.

The Chair proposed that a donation to this fund be made by MURA and it was therefore MOVED by M. Maggs, SECONDED by C. McMullen that a contribution of \$250 per annum as a multi-year pledge for the years 1996/7/8/9 be made. CARRIED

- Donation of a Computer

A computer with Windows 3.0 has been offered to the MURA office by the Faculty Association. Although some details respecting the Internet and wiring are unresolved, the consensus by Council was to accept with thanks this kind offer.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

VI. NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 9, 1996 at 1:30 pm. GH B109