

# McMaster University Retirees Association

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday November 12th, 2003 at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 230

**Present:** Mildred McLaren (chair), Helen Barton, Marju Drynan, Jessie Dunlop, Frank Drieman, Marilyn Elliot, Erica Giese, Brian Ives, Veronica Morrison, Helen Otrosina, Anne Sinclair, Averil Thompson and Bonnie White

**Regrets:** Gerry Keech

## 1. Welcome

Mildred welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

**Motion:** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday October 8th, 2003, be approved as previously circulated (Helen Otrosina/Frank Drieman carried)

## 3. Business arising from the minutes

### (a) Christmas lunch

Helen has all the arrangements well in hand. Marilyn has volunteered to help with the tickets. It was agreed to rent the PA equipment and to pay for the set-up and dismantling. Bonnie White will bring the name tags. Guests at the top table will be served first.

### (b) MURA web-site

Progress is a little slow at the moment but Helen and Marju are meeting with Nicholas Solntseff on Monday and hopefully they will iron out a few problems.

### (c) Distribution of the MURA news to "Inactive" members

Helen said that she had felt for some time that limiting the distribution was a disservice to our Association. There was consensus on the importance of providing each member with each edition of the MURA news regardless of the person's active or inactive status. The difficulty is funding, which is addressed (but not solved) in the next item.

## 4. A possible new approach to MURA funding - Brian Ives

There was a long and lively discussion on Brian's note which had been distributed with the agenda. Helen Barton suggested we should try to find out how other associations are funded. There was concern that new sources of funding should not compromise our independence. Various options were discussed and the most promising seemed to be through MUSA, MUFA and the University, viewing the funding in the light of a "benefit" (continuing care for all retirees regardless of their employment group). As a

first step, Mildred McLaren, Brian Ives and Frank Drieman will sound out the key representatives in these groups as soon as possible.

## **5. CURAC**

**Motion:** that MURAJoin CURAC as a member (Brian Ives/Helen Barton - carried)

Averil will complete the application form and send it with a cheque for \$300 to CURAC. (The annual membership fee is due on July 1<sup>st</sup> each year.) Mildred McLaren volunteered to go to the annual conference May 27-29th 2004 at her own expense, as our delegate. Helen Barton might be able to accompany her. (The date of the AGM will have to be changed from Wednesday May 26th, ideally to another close date when Convocation Hall is available. The two Helens will follow up on this.)

## **6. Correspondence**

Mildred had received correspondence concerning the United Way campaign, and had also received a copy of the MUFA Newsletter. An e-mail from Germaine Warkentin of CURAC, asking about the impact of escalating drug prices on McMaster University benefits, was given to Marilyn Elliot, who will consult with Michele Leroux.

## **7. President's Remarks**

Mildred said that she would invite Michele Leroux to attend our Council meetings.

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

Jessie Dunlop presented her report which showed that our finances are in a healthy state and we can afford to pay the \$300 membership fee to CURAC.

## **9. Portfolios**

(a) Membership - Bonnie White said that she plans to seek advice from Gerry about some new data entry.

(b) Trips/Special Events - Anne mentioned that she is quite happy to do this job on her own. In an emergency she thought that Joy Baby would be willing to come to our rescue.

(c) Cards - Helen Otrosina said that there had been six deaths.

(d) MURA news - Veronica Morrison said that she plans to mail the next edition on January 6th, 2004.

(e) Pension Matters - Frank Drieman said that the present thrust was to try and improve communications with members in accordance with the motion passed at the AGM in May of 2003

#### **10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday, December 10th, 2003 at 1:30 pm . in the Student Centre Room 230.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Erica Giese moved the adjournment and the meeting ended at approximately 3:30 pm.

Averil Thompson  
Secretary

Mildred McLaren  
President

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**Director, M. Brian Ives, PhD., F.A.S.M., F.N.A.C.E.**

Date: October 24, 2003

To: Executive Committee  
McMaster University Retirees Association

From: M. Brian Ives

Ref: A Possible New Approach to MURA Funding

It appears clear that some of us believe the current method of funding MURA through voluntary membership "dues", and the associated qualification for all issues of the Newsletter, needs rethinking.

My suggestion is that we look to a method whereby MURA would receive an annual "grant" per head for each McMaster retiree in that year. The per-retiree amount would be determined by dividing the "typical" annual operating expenses by the number of retirees in a "typical" year. This amount should be determined at the start of the new funding system and only modified when either the annual operating expenses or the annual number of retirees changes substantially.

The obvious question raised by this proposal is "*From where does the money come?*" There are a number of scenarios, and we would need to consider each if the general principle were accepted. I thought of the following, in decreasing order of attractiveness:

1. A direct annual grant from the University.
2. A per capita payout from the Pension Fund on retirement.
3. An automatic deduction (with an "opt out" provision?) from the first pension payment of each retiree.
4. Each retiree is billed for "Lifetime Membership" at retirement.

The impact of these scenarios depends on the amount involved. From the last annual treasurer's report, it appears that MURA received \$10,245 from Memberships in 2002-2003 (although annual expenses were only \$8079). The number of members increased by 72 in that same year. Assuming, arbitrarily, that there were 28 deceased that year, the number of new retirees would have been 100. This would make the annual per capita grant an even \$100. A reasonable working number, and one we can immediately suggest to the University President!

What do you think?