

# **McMaster University Retirees Association**

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday April 12th, 2006, at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre, Room 220

**Present:** Helen Barton(chair), Jeff Chuchman, Beth Csordas, Margaret Jenkins, Roman March, Mildred McLaren, John McCutcheon, Joan Morris, Veronica Morrison, Joan Parker, Rod Phillips, Anne Sinclair, Averil Thompson and Bonnie White

**Regrets:** Gabriele Erasmi, Geoff Evans and Brian Ives

## **1. Welcome**

Helen welcomed everyone and especially John McCutcheon, who was appointed recently to take the place of Mariana Brown. Helen also reported that Geoff Evans is likely to miss several Council meetings, as he has been in hospital for several weeks and will take some time to regain his strength.

## **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

**Motion:** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on March 8th, 2006, be approved as previously circulated (Mildred/Beth – carried)

## **3. Business arising from the minutes**

### **(a) Constitutional matters**

Joan Morris explained the need for a "parliamentary authority" clause. Every constitution should specify a procedural authority to which committee chairs can refer when a procedural problem or question arises that is not covered in that constitution

**Motion:** that Council include the following "parliamentary authority" clause as article 13.01 in the proposed changes in our Constitution (Joan Morris/Joan Parker – carried):

"The Chair of a meeting shall conduct the proceedings in conformity with the rules of procedure contained in the Constitution and, in all cases not so provided, the following reference shall be used: M K .Kerr and H. W. King Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, Carswell Legal Publications, 1984."

Under our present constitution only regular "active" members are eligible to vote and to be counted as part of the quorum at an AGM. As the distinction between regular members has already been virtually eliminated due to the new funding arrangements, our initial position at the AGM will be to seek the approval of those present to allow every regular member to vote, in effect suspending Articles 4.05 and 4.06 temporarily to allow the meeting to proceed until the vote on the constitutional changes is taken. Should there be any objection to this, we would need a fallback position. Joan, Roman and Helen will work on a fallback plan, to be finalized at our next Council meeting on May 10th.

## **(b) Arrangements for AGM**

### **Speaker**

Detective Sergeant Doug Cousens, OPP will talk about “Protecting Your Identity”. The necessary arrangements have been made between Brian and our speaker, who has been invited to join us at 1 pm.

### **Business Agenda - It was agreed that:**

Following the welcome, the first order of business will be to address the constitutional question outlined above concerning the quorum and the right of all regular members to vote;

There will be one pension report which would cover the salient points regarding both the salaried and hourly pension plans;

The proposed changes to the Constitution should be addressed immediately prior to the Nominating Committee Report.

No Membership Report will be required this year - Brian can mention the "vital statistics" concerning membership in his President's report.

**Handouts** - Veronica volunteered to organize the handouts for 70 people, with Joan Parker and Roman's assistance. The following people will provide the necessary material:

Averil - agenda (following consultation with Brian), minutes of the 2005 AGM and the Nominating Committee Report

Beth - Treasurer's report and Auditor's reports

Anne - Trips financial report

Joan Morris - constitutional material (50 copies of both full document and proposed changes document, to be separate from agenda package)

The budget for the coming year will not be included in the package. Although the draft Terms of Reference for the position of Treasurer indicates that the budget would be presented for approval at the AGM, this has not been past practice and the Terms of Reference have yet to be adopted.

### **Name Tags for Council Members**

Bonnie and Averil will ensure that we have name tags available for all the current members of Council.

### **Physical Arrangements & Refreshments**

Joan Morris has made the necessary arrangements for tables, chairs, microphone, data projector etc. Joan has also arranged for beverages and eats, including an ample supply of chocolate chip cookies.

**(c) MURA Secretary** – the position has been advertised in the MURAnews, which was mailed just before our meeting started. John McCutcheon suggested that Dorrett James, a recent retiree from HSC Human Resources, might be a good candidate for the job. Michael Oullette, who will soon retire from HR, was also suggested.

**(d) Bay Area Science and Engineering; Fair (March 29th to April 1st)**

Joan Parker, Pam Penny and Anne Sinclair were kept exceptionally busy as volunteers--an interesting but exhausting experience. For next year, a request for volunteers should go in the January issue of MURAnews.

**(e) Terms of Reference documents**

Helen gave a deadline of May 1 st, 2006 for returning the individual terms of reference (with proposed changes) to Brian. E-mails and hard copies are equally acceptable.

#### **4. Correspondence**

**(a) Observer on Hourly Pension Plan Retirement Committee**

Helen outlined the background to our efforts to have MURA representation on the Hourly Pension. Plan Retirement Committee and recommended the appointment of Cliff Andrews, as a very experienced retiree member of the Committee, for the position. Cliff has indicated that he would be willing to do this MURA work (in addition to his current duties serving as the SEIU Alternate), but not on a long term basis.

**Motion:** that Cliff Andrews be appointed as the MURA Observer on the Hourly Pension Plan Retirement Committee for a two year period and that we accept Mark Haley's offer to appoint a second person to the Committee next year, to start in September 2007 as Cliffs "apprentice". (Mildred/Joan Parker; carried)

Jeff Chuchman pointed out that the only bargaining on pensions for the hourly groups is done at this committee, which makes its role quite different from the salaried pension trust committee.

**(b) Members of the Council** have received an invitation from Peter George to have. lunch at the President' Residence on Tuesday April 25th.

#### **5. Report from the President/Vice President**

**(a) Insignia Design Competition**

There have been two submissions to date. This item will await Brian's return for further action.

**(b) Letter to new retirees**

Helen reported that Brian had updated the letter to new retirees. Averil had a few suggested editorial changes that Helen will relay to Brian.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Beth reported that over the years MORA had accumulated a "financial cushion" which now totaled approximately \$32,000. This is the main reason why she wonders whether it is really necessary or wise to start asking for donations this year. It was mentioned that there is a need for a surplus on an ongoing basis, and also that the size of the surplus will likely change under the new funding arrangement.

## **7. Information reports from committees and liaisons**

(a) Membership - Bonnie reported work in progress on the MURA database and wished to thank Gabriele Erasmi for his most helpful assistance in entering department data, and the Retirement Services staff for their prompt responses to her many questions.

(b) Pensions - Roman March said that some meetings have been planned for over the summer, which may involve some joint work with the benefits committee.

Helen summarized a report of the March meeting of the salaried Pension Trust Committee submitted by Les Robb. The Fund earned 9.2% over the year ending Feb. 28/06, well above inflation. There has been some activity regarding replacement of some of the Fund managers. Some changes to the Plan are being made. For example, for MUFA a "rule of 85" by 2016 has been ratified, plus a contribution increase of .75% per year for each of the next 2 years. Also for MUF A, new hires from July 1, 2006 will be under a new 2 year vesting rule, as well as requiring 10 years service to qualify for retirement health & dental benefits. These changes have also been imposed on the TMG group.

(c) Special Events - Margaret Jenkins said that the Valerie Tryon/Suzanne Shulman concert followed by an excellent lunch at the University Club on March 28th was a very successful event.

(d) Trips - Anne reported that she is continuing to negotiate the arrangements for a Bermuda cruise in May of 2007.

## **8. Other Business.**

Averil will update the listing of Council members to include John McCutcheon and also ask the President's Office to include John in their guest list for the luncheon on April 25th.

## **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday May 10th, 2006, at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 220 with Brian Ives in the chair. .

**10.** The meeting ended at approximately 3:29 pm.

Averil Thompson, Secretary & Helen Barton, Vice President