

McMaster University Retirees Association

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday December 14th, 2005, at 1:30 pm, in the Student Centre, Room 220

Present: Brian Ives (chair), Helen Barton, Jeff Chuchman, Beth Csordas, Gabriele Erasmi, Geoff Evans, Margaret Jenkins, Roman March, Mildred McLaren, Joan Morris, Veronica Morrison, Joan Parker, Averil Thompson and Bonnie White

Regrets: Anne Sinclair

1. Welcome and Regrets

Brian expressed the sorrow of the Council concerning the death of Mariana Brown on Monday December 12th. Joan Morris said that a memorial service is planned for Saturday December 17th, at 10 am, at St. John the Evangelist, 320 Charlton Avenue West, Hamilton. On behalf of the Council, Averil will write a note of sympathy to Mariana's husband, David, and family.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Brian drew the attention of those present to Item #7 (b) Standing Committee on Pensions and there appeared to be general agreement with the re-wording of the original motion.

Motion: that the minutes of the previous meeting held on November 9th, 2005, be approved as previously circulated (Roman March and Gabriele Erasmi). Carried

3. Business arising from the minutes

(a) Christmas Lunch

There was a general discussion and some concern for the difficulty of moving about the restaurant to chat with friends. Some members wondered whether it might be a good idea to have the lunch on campus. This was taken under advisement for discussion in September of 2006.

(b) Representation on Hourly Pension Plan Committee

Jeff Chuchman reported that the request for MURA representation was being viewed favourably and he was encouraged by the progress made so far. A letter can be anticipated inviting a MURA representative to attend the next meeting to discuss details of the proposal.

4. President's Report

(a) Brian reported that one evening he and Helen Barton had met with John Froud, part-time student prize recipient from Gerontological Studies, who had not been able to attend the Christmas lunch due to his work commitments. John has written a most interesting letter in which he thanked MURA warmly for the much appreciated prize of \$250.

(b) MUFA Newsletter - need for clarification

The MUFA newsletter, unlike the MURA News, is distributed to all faculty whether "active" or retired. It is therefore important that there should be clarification regarding the group (or groups) affected by news items and information, for example on benefit matters.

5. Treasurer's Report

Beth Csordas distributed her draft budget for 2006/2007 to those present and emphasized that a number of significant costs, such as the MURA News, were difficult to estimate at this point. Also, it is not known how many of our members, who have paid in advance, will ask to have their money reimbursed.

6. Detailed reports from scheduled committees

(a) Special Events - Margaret

Margaret spoke about a variety of possibilities and it was tentatively agreed to plan for a tour of the McMaster University Art Gallery in March of 2006. It was also agreed that an event does not have to be "big" and might even start with a small focus group, such as one on investments, which Roman March has offered to lead.

(b) Membership - Gabriele Erasmi and Bonnie White

Gabriele distributed the report to those present. The main topics covered were solicitation of money, the data base, discount opportunities for members and (retiree) ties scarves and pins. There was a strong recommendation that "we should not solicit from our members any money that could be construed as membership fees." However, there was also a recommendation that the President insert in the Newsletter a request to the membership couched more or less in these terms: "In order to help MURA undertake new initiatives and strengthen its present undertakings, we ask members for voluntary contributions in any amount they may think appropriate. The names of contributors will be listed in the Newsletter with our thanks."

No specific decisions were made on the recommendations at this time, although there did appear to be general consensus that we needed a "cooling off period", following the implementation of the new funding arrangements, before we asked the membership for any money.

8. Open Council discussion on upcoming scheduled committee studies

(a) Following some questions and discussion, it was agreed that Geoff, Jeff and Helen be given "carte blanche" to address any benefit matters which they consider to be of importance to retirees. There were no particular suggestions from Council members.

(b) MURA News

Joan Parker said that sometimes volunteers were reluctant to 'help with the mailing due to the cost of parking in the morning. Brian said that reimbursement for parking could be made from MURA funds in such cases. .

Helen suggested a CURAC Comer in the newsletter. This year the annual conference is to be held in Guelph and some of our members might be interested in attending.

Veronica hopes to have the next newsletter mailed around January 18th, Copy deadline will be the date of our next meeting, Wednesday January 11 th.

9. Information reports from committees and liaisons

(a) Cards - Joan Morris reported that she had sent several sympathy cards.

(b) Website - Brian encouraged us to look for seasonal reindeers and new photos.

(c) Board of Governors - Mildred said that the next Board meeting is due to take place on December 15th,

(d) CURAC - the annual meeting will take place on May 25th and 26th, 2006, at the University of Guelph.

(e) MUFA Liaison - Gabriele had met with Dr. Levy, MUFA President, who was concerned that new faculty should enjoy the same level of benefits as the current faculty members.

(f) Hourly staff liaison - Rod Phillips had talked recently with several hourly staff and tried to get their input regarding MURA and how the Association might serve them better. He felt disappointed by their apparent lack of interest.

(g) Nominating Committee - Mildred reported that she had found two people willing to serve on the committee as community representatives.

Motion: that Helen Otrrosina and Murlis Cooper be appointed to the Nominating Committee as (retiree) community representatives and that Helen Barton and Roman March serve as the two Council members. (Mildred McLaren/Geoff Evans Carried)

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday Jan. 11th, 2006, at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 220.

11. Adjournment

The meeting ended at approximately 3:35pm.

Averil Thompson
Secretary

Brian Ives
President