

McMaster University Retirees Association

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday November 9th, 2005 at 1:30pm in the Student Centre Room 220

Present: Brian Ives (chair), Helen Barton, Jeff Chuchman, Beth Csordas, Gabriele Erasmi, Roman March, Joan Morris, Veronica Morrison, Rod Phillips, Anne Sinclair, Averil Thompson and Bonnie White

Regrets: Mariana Brown, Geoff Evans, Margaret Jenkins, Mildred McLaren and Joan Parker

1. Welcome and regrets

Brian welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Motion: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on October 12th, 2005, be approved as previously circulated. (Roman March/Helen Bartop - carried)

3. Business arising from the minutes

(a) CARP membership proposal

The leaflet was mailed with the October MURA News and no extra postage was needed.

(b) Reception for new retirees October 18th

This was a very pleasant occasion but it was disappointing that only 19 of the 64 guests were new retirees. Perhaps next year new retirees might be encouraged to attend by personal invitations from "old" retirees.

(c) MUF A/University retiree luncheon November 2nd

Brian attended this gathering and spoke to the group about MURA.

(d) Annual visit with the President

Brian and Helen enjoyed a productive meeting with Peter George on November 8th.

4. Correspondence

A letter signed by Richard Rempel asking for support of the United Way had been mailed to retirees. Brian was a little disappointed that the letter was not especially geared to the retiree group. Unfortunately 149 letters were sent in error to retirees who had died. Letters of apology had been sent to survivors.

5. President's Report

(a) The "Committee Reporting Schedule" has been updated and will be attached to the minutes:

(b) The portfolio statements need to be revised (or produced for the first time) by each committee, office and liaison person before March 1st; 2006 and given to the Secretary.

(c) Brian explained that there are occasions when it would be unwise to list the names of all the recipients of a message being sent. In this situation MAILMAN, which permits anonymous mailing lists, can be a useful alternative. The e-mail address is as follows: muramembs-1@mcmaster.ca

(d) Meeting with Mark Haley re.hourly pension plan representation
Brian, Helen and Roman had met with Mark Haley, who had been most helpful. A letter requesting some sort of observer status on the "Hourly" Pension Plan Committee has been sent, and will be considered at the next meeting of that Committee.

6. Treasurer's Report

Beth gave each person present a copy of the Account Balances Report, the Profit and Loss Statement and the Budget Update for the six months ending October 31 st, 2005. There was some question as to whether the McMaster University Futures Fund (MUFF) amount of \$4,992.66 should really be listed as a liability. The thought was that this was the sum of money MURA received when the MUFF funding finished. Beth undertook to rationalize this item for future statements.

In connection with the budgeting process, Beth distributed forms for committee chairs and others to complete regarding anticipated expenses. The wish is that (whether or not they have anticipated expenses to list) each Council member should submit a form to Beth by November 30th, 2005.

7. Detailed Report from Scheduled Committees

(a) Special Events

Margaret Jenkins had sent her regrets and her report will be rescheduled.

(b) Standing Committee on Pensions - Roman March

Secretary's Note: The original proposals by Roman March and Helen Barton were presented to Council on October 12th and recorded on the last page of the minutes. A motion to approve the document was proposed by Roman March, seconded by Gabriele Erasmi and carried on November 9th. However, since the meeting the wording has been clarified, without changing the substance of the original document, for presentation of the motion which follows:

Motion: that in order to maximize MURA's influence on the entire pension and benefits process, MURA Council authorizes the members of MURA's Standing Committee on Pensions to contact MUFA, MUSA, the Management Group, the Hourly-rated Group and any other relevant entities for the following purposes:

- (1) To enter into formal negotiations With all other McMaster University pension groups in order to establish some form of formal/informal status with each group. The status of individual MURA representatives, and alternates, to range from (a) Corresponding Member (b) Observer/non-voting member (c) Associate Member to d) Member.
- (2) To lobby actively for improvements in the pension plans in so far as they affect MURA members.
- (3) To reform the Indexing Formula of the McMaster University Salaried Pension Plan.
- (4) To receive copies of all briefs, minutes and correspondence relating to pensions from all groups and file all materials collected either in the MURA office or elsewhere on campus.

(Note: If some form of status is achieved with other pension groups, it may be necessary to increase the membership of the Standing Committee on Pensions.)

Moved by Roman March, seconded by Gabriele Erasmi and carried.

8. Information reports from committees and liaisons

- (a) Cards - Joan Morris said that she had sent three sympathy cards.
- (b) Christmas Lunch - Joan Morris has the arrangements well in hand. Brian has invited our special guests and is planning to send a general invitation to members who have e-mailed Joan will enquire whether there will be a vegetarian dish on the menu.
- (c) MURA News -Veronica said that she is planning a publication for January.
- (d) Special Events - Margaret had sent a note saying that she is still working on leads.
- (e) Trips - Anne gave the latest news on her trips, including one to Ottawa, which are being very well supported and gave Brian information for posting on the website. Anne also produced a report on the four trips in this financial year which showed a "profit" of \$264, which is included in the current bank balance of \$1,747. In addition our GIC is now valued at \$2,040.

(f) Web site - Brian has been working with others to update the website. There has been an increase in the number of members who have opted to read the MURA News on the website and no longer need a mailed copy.

(g) University Board of Governors - Brian read highlights from the report which Mildred had provided about a retreat on September 30th and a meeting on October 20th.

(h) MUFA liaison - Gabriele had nothing to report and felt that his position was redundant.

9. Discussion on upcoming scheduled committee studies -.Membership

The discussion centred on an e-mail, dated November 4th, in which Brian had made several suggestions. One was "to develop an approach and method for soliciting voluntary payments from all members, and particularly from those in the non-sponsored groups". Averil said she felt uncomfortable about soliciting voluntary contributions so quickly after considerable publicity about the new funding arrangements and thought that it might be quite confusing to our membership. She suggested that the unclaimed money for "memberships in advance" be used to provide a significant portion of the \$1,500 required for 2006 and the balance be taken from MURA funds.

Bonnie spoke about Brian's suggestion that "the *Access*" data base should be improved and made more instantly useful for any project the Council underlakes". She felt that her present system served her well and that, when her term of office ends in May 2006, there would be an opportunity for changes.

Bonnie asked whether members of non-sponsored groups would be entitled to refunds of membership donations paid in advance. Brian said that it was up to the Membership Committee to make a recommendation on this.

A report on those items considered timely by the Membership Committee will be scheduled for the December meeting.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday December 14th, 2005 at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 220.

11. Adjournment

Gabriele Erasmi moved the adjournment and the meeting ended at approximately 3:40 pm.

Averil Thompson
Secretary

Brian Ives
President