

**MINUTES for COUNCIL MEETING
of McMaster University Retirees Association -
Wednesday October 11, 2006 at Student Centre Room 220**

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Beth Csordas, Geoff Evans, Brian Ives (chair), Michele Leroux, Roman March, John McCutcheon, Mildred McLaren, Veronica Morrison, Kathy Overholt, Pam Penny, Rod Phillips, Anne Sinclair and Marianne Van der Wel

Regrets: Margaret Jenkins, Joan Morris, Joan Parker

Meeting was "gavelled" to order by our chair, Brian Ives, at 1:30PM ☺

Thank You Mildred for getting MURA an official gavel!

1. Welcome & Regrets

- Brian extended our condolences to Rod Phillips with the passing of his wife,
- Brian introduced Marianne to John McCutcheon and Geoff Evans
- Brian extended regrets from Margaret Jenkins and Joan Parker [Joan Morris extended her regrets after the meeting].

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Approval September 13, 2006 Council Meeting Minutes

MOTION

- Geoff Evans motioned that the minutes be approved as presented.
- Mildred McLaren seconded the motion
- Motion carried unanimously.

3. Business Arising

a) Motion re Honorary Membership/Determine presentation at Xmas Lunch

MOTION

- John McCutcheon motioned that Avril Thompson be bestowed honorary membership in recognition of her 10 years of service to MURA as secretary.
- Roman March seconded the motion
- Motion carried unanimously.

During the discussion preceding the motion, Brian explained that bestowing Honorary Membership on a MURA member for extraordinary or outstanding service was not the same as

accepting people outside of MURA as a member (see Article 3, Section 3.04 of our constitution for the description of Honourary Membership)

MURA will invite Averil Thompson and her husband to our Christmas Lunch as our guests (we pick up the tab). At this lunch, Brian will ensure that she will be presented with letter/crest of appreciation, suitably framed or "plaqued".

b) Voluntary Contributions Campaign for Retirees Association members

- The executive will come up with a fund raising campaign for MURA to present a report to Council at the November or December 2006 council meetings so that we can make a full announcement in the January MURA News.

- Beth Csordas is investigating how MURA might obtain Charitable Organization Status to assist in our fundraising efforts.

c) Terms of Reference Documents (Brian Ives)

Any changes, comments? A few paper copies still available.

- The "Terms of Reference" documents are to assist in a smooth transition when a position is passed from member to another.

- Please update as necessary but send any changes to our secretary (Marianne)

- Joan Morris has a document that goes beyond "terms of reference" document for the Christmas Lunch. The new Christmas Lunch committee best contact Joan via phone for this document.

- Until there are changes, this matter is complete.

d) Confidentiality of retiree data (Michele Leroux/Helen Barton)

- Only 1 or 2 retirees in coming months hence a confidentiality release document is not an immediate concern but needs to be done by January 2007

- Michelle and Helen will present the confidentiality release document to the November Council meeting

- MURA Privacy Statement for members - Helen will present a draft MURA Privacy Statement at the next council meeting

e) MURA Member Liability

Helen Barton consulted with a University Risk Officer 2-3 years ago and has a statement of Liability which she will locate and present to us.

4. Correspondence

United Way Representative

- Brian Ives had circulated (via e-mail) memos regarding this year's United Way letter as the University wanted our input. Last year's representative, Dick Rempel, was not available hence Pam Penny volunteered to be this year's.
- Pam Penny circulated the final version to the University Tuesday October 10 (at their request) and this letter was circulated (on paper) at the meeting.
- Geoff Evans **thanked** Pam Penny for an excellent letter and council concurred!
- The phrase "as a member of the Hamilton community" was discussed and we look at that phrase again next year as some MURA members have moved away from our community.

Communication from Stuart Wynn

- Stuart Wynn, the only surviving founding member of MURA, had written Brian Ives a letter of appreciation. Brian read the letter to council.
- Brian suggested we invite Stuart to our Christmas lunch. Council agreed. Brian would send a personal response to Stuart and his wife inviting them to our Xmas lunch. If need be we would assist with transportation as Stuart live in Bath, near Kingston.

5. President's Report

- Brian again thanked everyone who attended the reception for a great job mingling and greeting the new retirees. The reception is a great way to inform new retirees about MURA
- The photos are up on MURA's web site under *Breaking News and Recent Events / Welcomes for New Members* Look for: "MURA Councillors Anne Sinclair and Pam Penny"

or click on the following links:

<http://mse.mcmaster.ca/MURA/pages/news.htm#welcome>

and

http://mse.mcmaster.ca/MURA/pages/MURA_Activities/recept06.htm

- acoustics at the faculty club (where the reception was held) were really bad!
- Marianne will contact the president's office to find out why some MURA council members did not get invitations.

6. Treasurer's Report

- Nothing to report
- Pam submitted receipts for labels and Veronica submitted receipts for ink cartridges
- Budgets for each committee is set at the annual committee. Any individual member can then submit receipts to Beth accordingly for expenses. If something unusual or unexpected comes up and the budget isn't adequate before the next annual meeting, please bring to Brian's attention so that a budget amendment can be discussed at the next council meeting and/or special meeting.

7. "In-depth" Committee Reports

a) Trips Committee (Joan Parker)

- as Joan Parker's was unable to attend the meeting, her "in-depth" trips report was tabled to the November 2006 meeting.
- the trips stats report from 2002-2006, compiled by Anne Sinclair and sent to us by Joan, was distributed (on paper) to all council members present.
- Anne pointed out that prices really haven't changed from 2002 and that participation rates are pretty steady and the same over those years and that a variety of people show interest.

b) Comments/Questions for next month's presentation by Membership Committee (Pam Penny)

- What does an "in-depth" report consist of? The "in-depth" report is an opportunity for a committee to report over and beyond the monthly updates. It is conceivable that, at times, there may be nothing to report as the monthly reports have covered all the news from the committee when its turn comes..
- The "Terms of Reference" document for Membership includes:
 - Researching services **not** currently offered to our membership that may be of value to offer. After doing the research, presenting a potential new service to council and council actually adopts the recommended service, another committee is likely to deliver the new service.
- Ideas for new services that the Membership Committee could investigate are:
 - ...A presentation on financial matters similar to the seminars given to people about to retire.
 - ...We could ask our membership
- What useful information/statistics can we determine from our database...such as "How long have people been retired? People's ages/birthdates are not available hence we cannot determine "age distribution. Pam and Marianne will investigate.

c) Comments/Questions for Christmas Lunch Committee

- Christmas lunch is Dec 7/2006 at Schwaben Inn in Dundas at noon.
- Joan Morris has the Xmas Lunch document which has key information for organizing the lunch.
- Invitations to be our guest (ie. MURA covers their lunch) are to be sent out by Brian. Our guests are:
 - ...University President
 - ...Chancellor and wife
 - ...Dr. A. Bourns
 - ...MUFA President
 - ...CAW 555 President
 - ...Each Hourly Representatives of the 3 groups..Michele will supply Brian with the 3 names
 - ...MURA undergraduate Award recipients (two)
 - ...Stuart Wynn and wife
 - ...Averil Thompson and husband

- Anne presented Pam with a \$100 cheque for door prizes
- The Xmas committee will let us know what task needs doing and who needs to come early that day to help set up.
- There will be a set menu with a few options.
- Council members are expected to pay for their own lunch. Cheques will be separate but we will pass "a hat" for the tip
- Encourage people to attend the Xmas lunch as attendance can be a challenge. Some of the new retirees told council members that they didn't like the Schwaben Inn and hence would not be attending. Should we poll our membership for location suggestions for 2007 ?

8. Information Reports from Committees (*as required*)

a) **Cards** (Joan Morris): No Report

- We discussed who would be notified when the surviving spouse passes. Cards would go to the next of kin as indicated by Human Resources records.
- We talked about an archival data base of retirees who have passed as well as their spouse. Helen and Marianne will examine the benefit and feasibility of such a data base as we do not think that Bonnie kept such records.

b) **Constitution & By-Laws** (Helen Barton): No Report

c) **Membership** (Pam Penny):

- Membership data base continues to be updated weekly. Input from Human Resources is very helpful. We did not receive as many returned September newsletters compared to the June newsletter.

- Printed about 1550 Labels to send out the September Newsletter.
- If anyone needs supplies, call Pam as she has set up an account with Grand & Toy for discounted purchases. They prefer minimum orders for \$50.

d) **MURA News** (Joan Parker):

- Thank you to the newsletter envelope “stuffers”!!!
- Call for more members to come and help stuff
- There were problems getting our September Newsletter printed by McMaster’s Printing Services. The current consideration is “Creative Suites in Design” by Adobe...the educational version is \$216. The full version is around \$900 US. Veronica has also looked at Microsoft Publisher.

MOTION

- Helen Barton motioned that the MURA NEWS committee (Joan Parer, Veronica Morrison and Roman March) in consultation with Marianne Van der Wel, will investigate a software upgrade and make a recommendation for November’s council meeting as to what package is most cost effective, will do the job and will be compatible with Veronica’s computer.
- Pam Penny seconded the motion
- Carried unanimously.

e) **Nominating** (Mildred McLaren):

- As we need to finalize the list of nominated people along with the position by February 2007, Muriel would like suggestions for suitable candidates NOW!

f) **Pension & Benefits** (Geoffrey Evans/Roman March):

- 13 points of concern were identified in June 2006 in consultation with less Robb
- the pension “indexing” formula for salaried staff is being researched
 - ... what is the formula’s background/history. How did it come about 15 years ago? What was the rationale? Who started it?...Apparently one single person started the formula but the person’s name is unknown at this time. If we can find the person, we could ask.
 - ... the committee is also looking at other organizations’ pension formulae such as the teacher’s federation’s COLA formula as a basis of comparison and interest. Michele Leroux cautioned that while COLA (and other formulae) may be more attractive on the surface in terms of indexing, do look at the whole picture such as employee contributions while working which were often much higher than McMaster’s.
 - ... In statistical terms, McMaster pensioners have lost approximately 8.37% of their spending power since 2002 years and another 2% in 2007 as it is unlikely that we’ll get an increase this coming year. If you wish to compare CPI versus Salaried Pension Increases from 1976-2005, visit MUFA’s web page or click on: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/mufa/pensionIndex.html>
 - ... Hourly staff have not seen an increase for 4 years!

- ... Along with MUFA, Les Robb is keeping an eye any changes to the drug formula
- ... Geoff Evans is looking at the Medical Pension Data Base for Pension Distribution

Strategy: DON'T CHANGE UNLESS YOU CAN IMPROVE

h) **Special Events** (Margaret Jenkins):

- The October 10 lunch and McMaster Art Gallery tour was well with 12 people attending
- The November 20th Autumn Dinner at the Chamber of Commerce followed by a talk "Can We Trust the Brain" by Dr. Adrian Upton needs a boost. We will send out an e-mail reminder reaching approximately 600 MURA member. Council also please spread the word!

I) **Trips** (Joan Parker):

Anne Sinclair reported that on the recent Trent-Severn trip she signed up 10 people for the Bermuda Cruise in 2008!

j) **Web-Site** (Brian Ives):

- Oct 4 Reception photos are up (see section 5. President's Report)

9. Information Reports from Liaisons (*as required*)

a) **University Board of Governors** (Mildred McLaren):

- The retreat was for new people and for fundraising promotion
- The David Bradley Phys Ed Building which they toured is really something with all the latest technology!

b) **College & University Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC)** (Brian Ives): No report.

c) **MUFA** (Brian Ives):

- Brian met with Ian Hambleton, MUFA's President. Brian apprised him of the nature of MURA and its broad membership. Ian indicated he may be interested in obtaining MURA's views on possible changes to benefits for future retirees currently under discussion in the joint committee of MUFA and the University Administration.
- Michele indicated that the number of different benefit plans that the university has to deal with is now down to 36 from 42.

d) **CAW (MUSA)** (Helen Barton/Kathy Overholt): No report

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison** (Rod Phillips):

As they say in Wales: llareggub (read backwards) ☺

10. Other Business

- NONE

11. Next Meeting

Wednesday November 8, 2006 at 1:30PM in Student Centre Room 220

12. Adjournment

Geoff Evans motioned for adjournment at 3:30 PM...Carried!