

**MINUTES for COUNCIL MEETING  
of McMaster University Retirees Association -  
Wednesday April 9, 2008, 1:30PM at Student Centre Room 230**

**Present:** Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Beth Csordas, Helen Dietsche, Geoff Evans, Joan Morris, Roman March, Veronica Morrison, Kathy Overholt and Marianne Van der Wel

**Regrets:** Jeff Chuchman, Brian Ives, Margaret Jenkins, John McCutcheon, Joan Parker, Pam Penny, Rod Phillips and Anne Sinclair.

**1. Welcome & Regrets**

Brian Ives is home from the hospital.

The meeting started at 1:35PM and we have a quorum despite many members not being able to come.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

(a) Council Meeting - Mar 12, 2008

When the March minutes were first posted, the year for the fall riverboat cruise in France was given as 2008. This was corrected to 2009 in the second posting.

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that we accept the minutes as circulated in the second posting.
- Beth Csordas **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

**3. Business Arising**

a) Report on scholarship endowment fund raising campaign (Beth Csordas/Helen Barton)

- We're now at \$12,745...not much change from the last month's update.
- A request for donations letter to all MURA members will likely go out early May, 2008. Ellen Ryan has agreed to co-sign the letter, which will focus on the gerontology program and students.
- Beth and Helen Barton have sent out Thank You cards to donors.

b) MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt)

- Kathy showed us a painting of campus near University Hall by Stephanie Lisak. With Stephanie's permission, it could be

used on a card that would be reproduced and sold as a MURA fundraiser. Council thought the painting was beautiful and readily endorsed Kathy's selection.

- The card would be more wide than high about the size of a number 10 envelope. The next step is to investigate the one-time cost of digitizing the painting and then the reproduction costs. This could vary depending on the size of our orders. Our "Thank You" cards cost about \$1.10 for an order of 250. Larger orders may result in bigger savings. We would want cards to sell for \$3.00 or less.

- If we go ahead with producing these "fundraising" cards, we would determine the selling price, the size(s) for bundles and whether or not to explicitly charge for "Shipping and Handling". We could also investigate selling the cards through the campus bookstore.

- Stephanie has indicated that she would be pleased to have her artwork used as her contribution to MURA, with a credit printed on each card. Kathy will confirm this.

#### C) Results for "Opt Out" Campaign (Pam Penny)

- Helen Barton reported that Pam has written a reminder message for the spring MURANews. We have received about 150 "opt-out" cards and a few continue to trickle in each week. We have reduced our postal mailing of MURANews from over 1500 to 1384.

#### 4. Correspondence

- Council Meeting Locations: Next month's meeting (May 14/08) will be in room **220** of the student centre. The June 11/08 meeting will be held at either Joan Parker's or Veronica Morrison's house. Rooms on campus are scarce that week in June since there's a conference being held.

- Representative for the Pension Trust Committee: Lilian Scime sent a letter requesting our recommendation for a representative to the Pension Trust Committee. Geoff Evans has asked Les Robb if he is willing to serve one more year. Les Robb has agreed.

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that we recommend that Les Robb continue to be MURA's representative on the Pension Trust Committee for 2008-2009
- Helen Dietsche **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

- "muramembs-1" e-mail listing: Notices sent out since the last meeting: volunteering for the cancer society, the Chaplaincy's April exam hospitality for students, as well as their "Seeking Meaning in Retirement" seminar series. The first session of this seminar series had 8 paid registrants.

- We received a notice from "Academics for Higher Education and Development" (AHED). It is a new Canadian non-governmental organization (NGO) whose mission is to support countries in need

to build capacity in higher education. They are looking for Canadian volunteers from academic institutions to help these these countries to develop their own academic institutions. Their web site is: <http://www.ahed-upesed.org>. We have put an announcement in the spring MURAnews and may promote this more as we learn more.

-Helen Barton circulated flyers found in the MURA mail for talk by Rabbi Baskin's in May, an Art Gallery event also in May, and the MUFA newsletter.

## 5. President's Report

### Volunteer Bureau/Network:

- John Popham, Alumni Advancement Officer, is assigned to head up our project. A meeting with him and his staff is scheduled for April 28/08. We hope to make an announcement at our AGM that the bureau is ready to launch.

Three Year Funding: We are still waiting for one final approval from the CAW local 555 Treasurer and then all our agreements will be official.

Clinical Faculty Association: Geoff Evans discovered such organization does exist and has talked to some of its members and leadership. They have no financial resources of their own and have never thought of supporting their retirees through a financial contribution to MURA. They will bring up the matter of contributing to MURA at their next meeting.

## 6. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)

- Beth and Anne Sinclair met with Eleanor Gow, our auditor for 2007-2008. Anne has given her financial material to Eleanor and Beth has supplied Eleanor with her data to date.

**- Please send Beth any of your outstanding bills or requisitions right away so she can prepare the MURA finances for our auditor.**

## 7. Information Reports from Committees (as required)

### a) AGM (Joan Morris)

- Arrangements: Joan reported all arrangements for food, tables, and audio/visual equipment have been made. This includes arrangements for the UTS (University Technology Services) photo id booth and their display covering all of UTS' services.

- Parking: We have reserved parking and have a map showing where (to be put in the MURAnews AGM insert). People with mobility impairments can again park in the oval in front of University Hall.

- Rides: We will again be offering rides to people who need one. The details are in the MURAnews AGM insert.

- Advertising Schedule: After some discussion, we decided that we would simply advertise our AGM from noon to 2:30PM, starting with lunch, followed by our speaker and finishing with the business

meeting, rather than specifying start times for each item.

- Our Speaker: A separate article on Brian Henley will appear in the MURAnews AGM insert.

- Handouts (Assembly & Printing) for the AGM will be determined at the next council meeting in May.

- Helen Barton will find out if Cliff Andrews and Les Robb want to speak at the AGM.

**b) Cards (Helen Dietsche):**

- Bereavement cards were sent to the families of William Hodgson (Parking & Transit Services), Danuta-Marie Blondowska (Pathology) and Jean Cotter (Financial Aid & Scholarships). A card was also sent to Dr. Art Bourns, our honorary President, on his wife's passing.

- Helen Dietsche will be away from April 11-May 14 and July/August. Joan Morris volunteered to perform Helen's card duties while she's away. THANK YOU Joan!

**c) Constitution & By-Laws (Joan Morris): - definition of 'retiree'**

- Joan and Helen Barton met and clarified the issues of "MURA membership" that are evolving with changing retirement conditions at the university. For example: Some hourly staff will not belong to a university pension plan as they will have their own self-directed RSSP plans instead. Also will people in the Affiliates who are no longer members of the university pension plan still be members of MURA as in the past?

- Jeff Chuchman is now available to meet with Joan to discuss the issue of "what is a retiree?". One issue to consider is how continue to get information about retirees who are not in a pension plan, for instance, but are still considered MURA members.

- If the membership issue is not resolved by June 2008, Joan has kindly offered to stay with this project even though her term ends in June 2008. Again, THANK YOU Joan!

**d) Membership (Pam Penny):**

- Helen Barton reported that Pam Penny prepared a membership article for MURAnews. There are "dead" e-mails in our "muramembs-1" list for people who are still in our MURA database (hence still members). Pam listed their names in the MURAnews article asking them to contact us with their current e-mail address.

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

- Helen Barton and Veronica reported that most articles are in and are being worked on. The President's Corner is still outstanding but will be submitted within a day. This issue includes a one page flyer about the AGM.

- Our newly found assignment reporter can not continue in the post. He did, however, submit two profile articles for the Spring MURAnews. Jim Stark, one of the people profiled in these articles, has offered to organize a MURA golfing event.

f) **Nominating:** (Brian Ives) - No report

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

- Clinical Staff Pension Dispute: When the salaried pension fund surplus payout occurred about eight years ago, a portion of the payout went to the employees and the rest to the employer (the University). All Clinical Faculty received their calculated share of the employee part of this payout. Clinical Faculty, however, had in the past paid a portion of the University's contributions to the fund. After the first payout, when the Clinical Faculty Association and the University negotiated an agreement for an additional payout to Clinical Faculty based on their contributions toward the University's portion, only the ACTIVE Clinical Faculty (those retiring after 2000) got the second payout, while those retiring on or before 2000 did not receive a second payout, even though those retiring before 2000 had contributed toward the University's portion as well for many years. In the words of Joan Morris, Council agreed **THAT'S NOT FAIR!** Over 80 people are affected. A series of letters have been exchanged with the university to appeal this situation and this issue has reached quite high in the university's administration. However, at this point in time, progress on this is at a stand still. This situation has been reviewed by Les Robb. Les, pending a confirming meeting that Geoff is setting up, believes that MURA should support this group. The Pension & Benefits committee, along with Les Robb, will work on a strategy to assist this group in their appeal. One suggestion made was to consider involving the university Ombuds.

- Malcolm Horsnell submitted a letter to MURAnews and the Pension & Benefits committee stating how nice it was to get a good raise in our pensions (for the salaried staff) this past January, but that he has concerns about future increases keeping up with inflation. With some modifications and Malcom's consent, the letter will be printed in MURAnews under "letters to the editor".

The Pension and Benefits committee will work on producing a chart for the past 10 years comparing various cost of living indices (e.g. Bank of Canada's, and that used by the university in pension increase calculations) to pension increases over the same period.

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

- There was a good turnout for the concert/luncheon event in March. For the dinner with Gary Warner on May 15/08, a reminder will be sent via muramembs-1 3-4 weeks before.

I) **Trips** (Joan Parker): - No report

j) **Xmas Lunch** (John McCutcheon): - No Report

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

- Marianne and Helen Barton are taking care of the web site until Brian feels well enough to carry on with it again.

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

a) **University Board of Governors** (Brian Ives): - No Report

b) **College & University Retirees Association of Canada** (CURAC) (Helen Barton):

- Joan Parker is unable to attend so Marianne will take her place. There is a 2 for 1 deal (as seniors) with VIA rail to/from Montreal so these two will be going together on the train. The dates are May 21-23.

c) **MUFA** (Geoff Evans):

- Geoff received his own personal copy of MUFA newsletter which announces their AGM. Geoff will be attending! The newsletter shows the many university projects and their status which Geoff finds of interest.

d) **CAW** (MUSA) (Kathy Overholt):

- We are awaiting the one approval confirmation to make our funding from CAW official.

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison** (Rod Phillips): - No report.

**9. Other Business**

- Geoff Evans reminded us that Parking has not followed through with information for retirees on the status of installing the electronic gate systems for university parking lots. Helen Barton will e-mail Parking to get information.

**10. Next Meeting**

Wednesday May 14 , 2008 at 1:30PM in Student Centre, Room 220

**11. Adjournment**

Beth Csordas motioned that the meeting be adjourned at 2:55PM