



**McMaster University Retirees Association**

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Marianne van der Wel, Secretary

**MINUTES for COUNCIL MEETING  
of McMaster University Retirees Association -  
Wednesday February 13, 2008, 1:30PM at Student Centre Room 230**

**Present:** Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Beth Csordas, Helen Dietsche, Brian Ives, John McCutcheon, Joan Morris, Veronica Morrison, Kathy Overholt, Joan Parker, Pam Penny and Marianne Van der Wel

**Regrets:** Jeff Chuchman, Geoff Evans, Margaret Jenkins, Roman March, Rod Phillips and Anne Sinclair

**1. Welcome & Regrets**

Since many were away, we counted heads to ensure we had a quorum.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

(a) Council Meeting - Jan 9, 2008 - for approval

- Brian Ives motioned that we accept the minutes as circulated
- Joan Parker seconded the motion
- Carried unanimously

**3. Business Arising**

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

- At end of January 2008, there were 56 donors (up four from the December), with \$12,045 pledged.
- Beth Csordas reported that she and Helen Barton had met with Sarah last Tuesday. There will be no phone campaign in the spring of 2008, they did discuss a theme for a spring letter to MURA members and they felt that the Gerontology program would be a good one. In keeping with this theme, they will look for a retiree who has been a Gerontology student or a senior who has been involved with the program as a volunteer to co-sign the letter with Helen Barton. Ideas of people to contact were: Ellen Ryan (prof), Ted Wilcox who is over 90 and writes for the Hamilton Spectator, seniors who have been interviewed by Gerontology students and/or Marg Maggs.

For the fall of 2008, they are considering "Participation (in this campaign)" as the theme. They will send another letter then as well as do another phone campaign. Students may be able to do all the phoning or, if MURA wants to do some of the phoning, we would need to coordinate with the students to avoid duplication. In any case, we need to book the students early if we want their help.

Sarah Cook will approach President George's office regarding a possible article on our endowment campaign in the president's newsletter; this might attract interest from people outside of MURA.

Another action would be to identify people who could make a substantial donation. We would then need a volunteer to personally talk to these potential donors.

The fundraising could be referenced in the letter to new retirees, but it might be better to wait until a followup letter six months after a retiree's retirement. This followup communication has been suggested before, but does not yet exist.

MURA can contribute to the endowment fund directly from its funds if desired, but the Fundraising Office discourages raising funds through efforts such as the sale of cards or special events because it can create tax receipts complications.

b) MURA Cards (Helen Barton, Helen Dietsche and Kathy Overholt )

- no further action this month

c) Liaison with Athletics & Recreation re fitness and rehab programs (Joan Parker)

- Joan Parker reported that about 30 people attended the Open House on Jan 31 which most found very interesting. It included a tour, walking around the 200m, ergonomically designed indoor track with an excellent instructor, and refreshments. The MURA Madlappers walking program has an enrollment of about 5 which is a disappointment. If this is offered again, we likely need to emphasize that the sessions include instruction on various related topics such as "healthy living", nutrition, shoes, stretching etc, NOT just walking. Also February may not be the best timing.

d) Results for "Opt Out" Campaign (Helen Barton)

- We have about 120 responses to date with most saying they will switch to the web, and two people asking for help. Pam Penny was given the cards to update the MURA database and in doing so will determine whether the person opting out is from CAW, MUFA, TMG, Hourly, etc. The envelopes were passed to Beth to keep track of the postage.

e) Retiree email accounts and UTS retiree webpage (Helen Barton)

- Julia Kraveca from UTS has done a very good job of improving the web pages that affect retirees such as those for e-mail, photo id and mac connect. Currently she is working on the procedure (and

accompanying web page) that allow retirees to add their contact information to the campus phone directory. Retired Faculty still doing research are automatically included but the rest of us are "zapped" from the directory upon retirement.

**f) Menno DeGroot's 100 Birthday Celebration**

- Brian Ives received word from Menno Jr, Menno DeGroot's son, that his father has been moved to a home closer to his daughter.

**4. Correspondence**

- CURAC: the response to the CURAC medical/dental/paramedical benefits survey is almost ready to submit; still waiting for a bit of information from Jeff Chuchman
- CURAC has asked for group presentations or topics for discussion for the May conference (about 10 minutes). Helen Barton will send an e-mail to council asking for suggestions but we need to respond to CURAC soon (end of Feb.).
- E-mails sent to muramembs-1 since last meeting: MESS basketball & Dundas Valley golf offer, United Way lottery, Athletics & Rec Open House, MESS theatre and CAW555 bonspiel
- Referred a faculty member to University planning documents regarding a query about green space.
- Three MURA members sent in membership fees. These will be kept as donations, but Beth will send notes, explaining that membership fees are no longer required with an offer of a refund.
- Helen distributed event flyers found in our GHB108 mail box to council.

**5. President's Report**

**a) Funding for next 3-year period:**

- MUFA have said okay;
- Cliff Andrews and Helen Barton met with Ted Mansell from SEIU. Ted wanted lots of details with documentation about MURA, its membership breakdown, its finances and its activities including MURAnews. The meeting went well and we're encouraged. Ted will now take our request to their executive. If SEIU does contribute for its membership, only about 9% of MURA's members will not be supported namely, the Affiliates, Clinical Faculty and Research Associates.
- Kathy Overholt and Helen Barton met with CAW Local 555 president and vice-president which went well. Tomorrow they will meet with the entire executive and make a presentation.

**b) Volunteer Network - A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.**

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

Beth circulated and reviewed the draft budget for the next 3 years as well as the notes on the budget that she had prepared.

For NOTE 14: We are not double counting the Secretariat supplies.

For NOTE 11: We discussed the budget estimate of \$250 for Special Events as this is a very "soft" estimate. We discussed the idea of using some surplus from Trips help with possible Special Events overages. We need to think about how we deal with "Special Events" and "Trips" which are supposed to be self supporting and the AGM and Xmas Lunch which are not. We determined that we do not have clear guidelines for dealing with surpluses.

For NOTE 15: We normally budget for 1 person to attend the annual CURAC conference. If the cost of attending is low, sometimes we may send 2.

See the council virtual office web site for the circulated draft budget and notes.

These budgets will be finalized at the March meeting.

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

### **a) AGM (Joan Morris)**

- Joan has requested convocation hall for May 28 but does not yet have confirmation.
- Joan has requested the same arrangements as last year adding as many round tables as possible.
- After much discussion, council felt that we should stay with last year's format:
  - ..Lunch,
  - ..Speaker followed by a short
  - ..Business Meeting.

We had two suggestions for a speaker to talk for 15-20 minutes about the heritage/changes in a local region. They were: Brian Henley and Ken Cruikshank. John McCutcheon will ask Brian Henley first.

Other ideas we thought would be beneficial:

- 1) Have a setup for retirees to get a McMaster Photo ID.
- 2) Set Up a Display Retiree Perks
- 3) See if we can use "Go Carts" to help retirees that need assistance. To find out about "Go Carts" try the Conference Office, first.
- 4) Use cars to ferry people around
- 5) Obtain Parking's co-operation again this year

Council felt we should not have a bus tour but should investigate having a special event after the business meeting e.g. visit to Business School Stock Exchange, planetarium or 3D movie theatre.

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

- Helen Dietsche sent bereavement cards to the families of: John Kassner (Physics & Astronomy), Lillian Miller (Financial Services), Shirley McGill (Faculty of Social Sciences), Gerda Loomans (Financial Services), Margaret Bamford (Assistant VP Admin) and Douglas Davies (Biology)

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

- Joan Morris has not yet met with Jeff Chuchman

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

- We now have 1802 members
- Pam will be busy processing the "Opt Out" cards to switch people to MURAnews via the web.
- Membership report for February 2008 is posted on our virtual office web site.

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

- Joan Parker reported that the stuffing session for the winter MURAnews went well despite some difficulty getting everything into the envelope.
- We have one offer of an assignment reporter, John Harvey.
- The next deadline for the spring MURA news is **April 9, 2008** so that we can get it to printing by April 14 in time to notify our membership of the AGM. Please send your articles and ideas to the MURAnews committee!
- Since Roman March is no longer on the MURAnews committee, Joan suggested Marianne Van der Wel take his place as she has been a consultant to the committee for some time. No one objected.

**f) Nominating: (Brian Ives)**

- The nominating committee will be meeting this week and will have its report ready for the March council meeting.

**g) Pension & Benefits (Geoffrey Evans/Roman March): No Report**

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

- Even though Margaret was away she did send word that:
  - ...Two people have signed up for the luncheon in on March 25 and four signed up for the dinner with Gary Warner in May.
  - ...Geoff Evans isn't back yet from his trip and he may have received more people for the March lunch.
  - ...In any case, Margaret will send an announcement to 'mura-membs-l' the first week of March regarding the lunch.
  - Similarly, she will announce the May dinner in April.

**i) Trips (Joan Parker):**

- Joan announced on behalf of Anne Sinclair that Anne intends to donate a portion of her bonus from the Coach Company to MURA.

j) **Xmas Lunch** (John McCutcheon):

- followup on tipping: deferred
- followup on offer from Peter George re subsidy: deferred

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

- Send photos of events to Brian!!!
- Brian commented on the perks listed in the handouts that were circulated of the DRAFT web page for Pension & Benefits and list of employee discounts through Purchasing. Marianne explained that pages 2-4 of the DRAFT web page handout were for the same web page shown on the first page but with additional comments as to what has been done and current status for each link/perk. We'll need a lot of research/negotiations for at least a few links such as "Discounts/Special Offers" and "Title Bookstore / MicroComputer Centre" as there are contradictions and "retirees" are not explicitly mentioned.
- If council knows of any missing perks or thinks a listed perk should be left out, please let Brian know.

## **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):  
- No further report beyond the medical survey (section 4)

c) **MUFA** (Geoff Evans): - No Report

d) **CAW (MUSA)** (Kathy Overholt):  
-No report except for the scheduled meeting with CAW555 executive committee on Feb 14/08.

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

## **9. Other Business**

- About 20 people have opted out of 'muramembs-1'. Brian will send Helen Barton a list to investigate.

## **10. Next Meeting**

Wednesday March 12, 2008 at 1:30PM in Student Centre, Room 230

## **11. Adjournment**

Kathy Overholt **motioned** that the meeting be adjourned at 3:50PM