

**MINUTES for COUNCIL MEETING
of McMaster University Retirees Association -
Wednesday March 12, 2008, 1:30PM at Student Centre Room 230**

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Jeff Chuchman, Beth Csordas, Helen Dietsche, Geoff Evans, Brian Ives, Margaret Jenkins, John McCutcheon, Joan Morris, Veronica Morrison, Kathy Overholt, Joan Parker, Pam Penny, Anne Sinclair and Marianne Van der Wel

Regrets: Roman March and Rod Phillips

1. Welcome & Regrets

Rod Phillips is home from the hospital.
The meeting started at 1:35PM

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

(a) Council Meeting - Feb 13, 2008

There were four corrections:

- ① Page 4: About 3/4 down the page, remove "Kathy Overholt will investigate" from item 1) under section 7a) AGM.
- ② Page 5: Near top of the page under section 7b) Cards: Change "Social Services" to "Social Sciences".
- ③ Page 5: Approximately half way down the page, under section 7e) MURANews, change "Noone objected." to "No one objected."
- ④ Page 5: About 3/4 down the page, under section 7h) Special Events, change "lunch" to "luncheon".

- John McCutcheon **motioned** that we accept the minutes as corrected
- Geoff Evans **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

3. Business Arising

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

- At end of February 2008, there were 58 donors (up two from the January), with \$12,245 pledged. Helen, Beth and Sarah Cook from the advancement office are working on the letter to retirees to be sent out in April 2008.

There may have been some donor recording errors as there are some questionable entries on the donor list provided by Sarah for the purpose of sending "Thank You" notes. We're investigating.

b) MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt)

- no further action this month

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

- No new news to report this month. The MURA MAD Lappers Walking Program (all seven participants but one are from Council) continues each week with those who can make it.

d) Results for "Opt Out" Campaign (Pam Penny)

- The Postal Mailing list is now down to 1389 from 1537.
- There are 718 people on our e-mail list of which 36 are outdated email addresses.
- We will put a reminder article for people to fill in their "opt-out" card in the Spring 2008 MURAnews
- Marianne did assist one person, Dr. E. Hillman from Newfoundland, to make the switch to MURAnews on the web. Another person, Linda Cheung, requested assistance but the e-mail address she provided doesn't work and she's not in the phone directories. Marianne will have Pam check the information on this person again.

4. Correspondence

- CURAC Conference: Thanks to those who sent suggestions of topics for discussion. Helen will ask these questions at the conference. Information on the conference proceedings and registration has arrived.

- General Enquiries: We've had two enquiries about tax receipts which were referred to Sarah Cook of the advancement office, and one about parking.

- E-mail to our Members: Margaret Jenkins sent an E-mail to muramembs-1@mcmaster.ca last week announcing the March 25th luncheon. Later this week, Helen will send an announcement regarding the need for volunteers for the Cancer Society Daffodil Campaign. Next week a reminder will be sent about the 'Finding Meaning in Retirement' workshops.

Brian emphasized that such announcement must be addressed to: muramembs-1@mcmaster.ca Do not add anything to or remove anything from this address. This address, in case one forgets, is under "Contact Council Members" on our private web site at the end of the right hand column at:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/contact.html>

- Flyers: Helen drew Council's attention to an event flyer regarding a March 15 event dealing with "global citizenship" found in our GHB108 mail box.

5. President's Report

a) Funding for next 3-year period:

- MUFA had already agreed last month to extend funding for another 3 years. CAW555 executive has verbally agreed to continue funding retirees for the staff groups they

represent. SEIU's full council will not meet until May 2008 so we will not have an answer from them until May or June.

- We will proceed with getting an agreement signed by MUFA, CAW555 and the President's Office based on the same \$10750 annually for the next three years as we have done in the past three.

- If SEIU does agree later to support their retirees, we will re-open this matter at that time and proportionately lower the contributions of MUFA, CAW555 and the President's Office.

b) Volunteer Bureau

- Pam Penny, Joan Parker and Helen Barton met on February 21 with Karen McQuigge from the Alumni Advancement office. Karen has assigned two staff members (John Popham, a former MSU President, and Laura Escalante) to work on project. This clearly shows support from our University President, Peter George. Helen emphasized the need for this volunteer bureau to have a unique "retiree" identification and that it not be seen as an alumni or advancement organization. Karen's and her staff are working out a plan for setting up and running the bureau, which will be reviewed with us before proceeding. The goal is to have the volunteer bureau set up and ready to "roll out" around August/September 2008.

6. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)

Beth circulated and reviewed the proposed final budget for the next 3 years. It is basically the same budgetd expenditures as the draft circulated at the February meeting, except that some numbers were rounded or slightly shaved off. Thanks to the success of Anne Sinclair's trips, we have been able to budget for an annual income of \$500 from the Trips fund. See our private web site, for budget details at:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/reports/treasurer/treasurer.html>

- Beth Csordas **motioned** that we accept the three year budget as circulated

- Geoff Evans **seconded** the motion

- **Carried** unanimously

Beth explained the reasons "Other Communication" expense in 2007-2008 was \$1468 - we sent a separate AGM invitation letter to retirees, printed a large quantity of MURA cards to be used primarily for Thanking and Bereavement, and also had expenses for the opt-out forms and return envelopes.

Geoff Evans will find out if there is a "Clinical Faculty" group that we could approach for financial support for retirees from that group.

7. Information Reports from Committees (as required)

a) AGM (Joan Morris)

- ARRANGEMENTS: Joan has secured convocation hall for May 28. Joan has requested the same arrangements as last year including audio and an LCD projector and adding as many round tables as possible. Joan will also request fresh coffee for the end of the AGM. Please let Joan know of any special request by April 30 including any food requests.

- BACKUP: Joan is away May 1-23 and Beth Csordas is the backup during that period.

- THE PLAN:

- ..Lunch at noon,
- ..Speaker, Brian Henley, at 1PM: He will talk about the "History of Westdale & McMaster"
- ..A short break at 1:45PM
- ..Business Meeting at 2PM.

We decided that this there would not be any tours after the AGM this year.

- NAME TAGS: Pam Penny will bring tags for the retirees to fill in; Marianne will bring the tags for council

- SIGNS: Marianne will bring signs for Gilmour Hall directing people to the AGM and signs for the kiosks directing people to parking

- DISPLAYS/TABLES/BOOTHES:

Anne Sinclair will have a display for travel.

UTS (University Technology Services) likes the idea of setting up their PHOTO ID equipment at our AGM so that retirees can update their ID at that time. UTS is investigating the feasibility of moving their PHOTO ID equipment to Convocation Hall for May 28. They also hope to have staff on hand to answer questions about all the perks available through UTS.

Pam Penny will set up a booth/table that will let MURA members check/update their contact information on our data base. We will also have donor cards available for our endowment campaign and cards for opting out of receiving MURAnews through the post.

We will not be promoting the idea of other displays, although it's possible that Human Resources or Parking may want one and will be accommodated if they do.

We will need to investigate the best location for these booths/tables/displays.

- PARKING:

Cliff Andrews will approach Parking to request arrangements

similar to last year. Helen Barton will e-mail Cliff last year's correspondence dealing with parking, plus the ideas that were discussed as improvements.

Cliff will also ask Parking if they want to do a display this year.

- ADVERTISING: We will put an invitation to the AGM, with all necessary information, in the April MURAnews, on a separate sheet of paper in a different colour than the rest of MURAnews. This means all information must be ready by April 9 (our next council meeting). For those receiving MURAnews via e-mail, we will send the invitation separately.

We will send a reminder e-mail to muramembs-1@mcmaster.ca closer to May 28 (about 2-3 weeks beforehand) but not an extra mailing to the retirees that receive MURAnews through the post.

- THANK YOU to John McCutcheon for arranging our speaker, Brian Henley. John will also check with Brian Henley as to equipment he will need, and will write up a short description of the speech topic for the AGM advertising.

b) Cards (Helen Dietsche):

- Helen Dietsche sent bereavement cards to the families of: Raymond Gillan (Electrical & Computing Engineering), K. Vincent Rudnick (Family Medicine), Alan McNabb (Medicine), K. Ross Parker (Family Medicine) and Fred Carson (Physical Plant)

Arthur Bourne's wife, Marion, died and Helen Dietsche will send a card on our behalf.

Jeff Chuchman mentioned that someone over age 65 but still working had died. His spouse would be eligible for a pension. This may be another example of a possible need to revise MURA membership definition.

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

- Joan Morris and Jeff Chuchman will meet as soon as Jeff has time.

d) Membership (Pam Penny):

- We now have 1800 members
- Membership report for March 2008 is posted on our virtual office web site.

e) MURA News (Joan Parker):

- Submission deadline is Wednesday April 9 (Our next council meeting)

- Our new assignment reporter, John Harvey, will have an article for our April newsletter which will include a request for readers to contact him directly with ideas for retiree "profiles".

f) Nominating: (Brian Ives)

- Brian Ives circulated the nominating committee report and **motioned** that it be accepted for presentation.
- Joan Morris **seconded** the motion
- Carried unanimously

Nominees (Helen Barton, Joan Parker and Margaret Jenkins) present at this council meeting left the room. While our president and vice-president were out of the room, Brian Ives (past-president) took over the chair.

Those remaining discussed the nominee list. Brian mentioned that the committee members came up with the names and all agreed on their final selections. Geoff Evans complemented Brian and his committee for their fine work. John McCutcheon commented that February is a difficult time of the year to find nominees as so many retirees are away.

- John McCutcheon motioned that the 2008 nomination report be accepted as circulated.
- Pam Penny **seconded** the motion
- Carried unanimously

Marianne Van der Wel will send a letter to all new nominees informing that council has approved their nomination.

Helen Barton, Joan Parker and Margaret Jenkins returned to the meeting and Helen Barton resumed the chair. The names gathered but not put forth for nomination at this time will be kept for future years. The nominating committee is not sending rejection letter to those who were not nominated.

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

- Les Robb sent a report to Geoff Evans and Helen Barton on the last Pension Trust Committee meeting, stating the returns on our pension investments are not encouraging so far this year. Our indexing formula which averages the past 5 years will help out the salaried retirees because of last year's very good returns.

Once every three years, the university is required to file an actuarial evaluation with the federal government to determine the university's contributions to our pension funds. However, it can choose the year within that three year period. Les reported that the university is considering filing their actuarial evaluation this year to take advantage of the good investment returns in 2006-07. This would likely result in the university making less contributions to the pension fund than if they waited until next year, since the 2007-08 returns aren't looking as promising as 2006-07. Council will take no action on this at this point in time; Les will report further developments to Council as they occur.

- Geoff Evans will confirm with Les Robb that he is willing to continue for another year of excellent service to MURA!

- Cliff Andrews reported the actuarial evaluation for Hourly retirees was done in July 2007. There are enough funds to sustain the pension plan for current hourly retirees. Many future hourly retirees are being directed to individually administered RRSPs and will not impact the current hourly pension funds.

h) Special Events (Margaret Jenkins):

- 24 people have signed up for the March 25 luncheon
- 12 people have signed up for the dinner with Dr. Gary Warner, May 15/08
- Margaret will contact Graham Davis, Manager of the University Club, to find out why our dinner in May is more expensive than a comparable dinner to be held for the Alumni.

I) Trips (Joan Parker):

- Anne Sinclair reported that the March 18 "Winds and Windshields" trip is fully booked as is the April 5-16 trip to the Carribean on the Queen Mary II
- There are only 11 tickets left for the October 9/08 Shaw Festival "An Inspector Calls"
- Anne is planning a trip end August/early September 2009 for a River Boat cruise in Burgundy, France. Seventeen people are already signed up. Anne wants to keep the group relatively small.
- Anne is planning a trip to the Canon Theatre January 4, 2009 to see "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"...a musical that starred Dick Van Dyke many years ago. This musical is coming from London, England

j) Xmas Lunch (John McCutcheon): - No News!

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

k) Web-Site (Brian Ives):

- Send photos of events/people to Brian so he can continue to change the home page of the web site every 7-10 days!

- Anyone at the meeting who has a current McMaster Photo ID or the old blue ID with them, please stay after the council meeting so Brian can take pictures for his web article encouraging retirees to update to Photo ID.

- Currently (March 12), the lunch bunch is featured on our home page. This is a bunch McMaster retirees who get together once a month for a social lunch. New retirees are welcome! Contact Pam Penny to join. For photos, see:
http://mura.mcmaster.ca/Pages/MURA_Activities/lunchbunch.htm

- The Pension and Benefits page is revised and now also includes all confirmed Perks. See: <http://mura.mcmaster.ca/Pages/pensions.htm>

- Pam Penny, Marianne Van der Wel and Helen Barton will meet to find information on perks not listed such as discounts or special

events offered to retirees that have not been confirmed...in particular CAW Local 555, purchasing and the campus bookstore/microcomputer centre. Also we need to report on the progress of adding our names to the campus "Phone Directory".

- Helen Barton discovered another perk...as a retiree we have access to all staff lounges. If your "up to date" photo ID doesn't grant access, call UTS and they will set your record in the ID card data base to allow entry. We need to add this perk to our list of perks on the web page.

8. Information Reports from Liaisons (as required)

a) **University Board of Governors (Brian Ives):** - Brian did not attend the most recent meeting. Nothing to be discussed at that meeting affects retirees

b) **College & University Retirees Association of Canada (CURAC) (Helen Barton):**
- No further report beyond the arrival of the conference proceedings....see section 4 Correspondance.

c) **MUFA (Geoff Evans):** - Geoff has not yet been able to arrange a meeting with Peter Sutherland.

d) **CAW (MUSA) (Kathy Overholt):**
-No report

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

9. Other Business - none

10. Next Meeting

Wednesday April 9 , 2008 at 1:30PM in Student Centre, Room 230

11. Adjournment

Joan Parker motioned that the meeting be adjourned at 3:40PM