

**MINUTES for COUNCIL MEETING
of McMaster University Retirees Association -
Wednesday May 14, 2008, 1:30PM at Student Centre Room 220**

Present: Helen Barton (chair), Jeff Chuchman, Beth Csordas, Geoff Evans, John McCutcheon, Veronica Morrison, Kathy Overholt, Joan Parker, Anne Sinclair and Marianne Van der Wel

Regrets: Cliff Andrews, Helen Dietsche, Margaret Jenkins, Roman March, Joan Morris, Pam Penny, and Rod Phillips.

1. Welcome & Regrets

- Brian Ives' Memorial Service, arranged by the Engineering Faculty, is on May 23, 2008 at 3:00PM in Convocation Hall followed by a reception at the University (formerly Faculty) Club. MURA has been asked to participate in the service. Regretfully Helen Barton is away at CURAC that day hence Joan Parker will read a memorial passage written by Veronica Morrison. Helen read the passage to Council. We will publish a version of this testimonial in the MURAnews. We will miss you Brian!

- The MURA constitution is silent about replacing Brian as past president. Generally, the past president is not replaced but Helen Barton will check with Joan Morris.

- Since this was Jeff Chuchman's last MURA council meeting before Michele Leroux returns from maternity leave, Helen Barton presented Jeff with a \$25 gift certificate from Council for 'Goodness Me'. We sincerely thank Jeff for filling in for Michele and we are glad to know Jeff will continue to work on our behalf in Retirement Support Services.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

(a) Council Meeting - April 9, 2008

On page 3, three quarters of the way down, change "University all" to "University Hall"

MOTION

- Joan Parker motioned that we accept the minutes as corrected.
- Beth Csordas seconded the motion
- Carried unanimously

3. Business Arising

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

- Beth Csordas reported that we are now at \$13,245 up \$500 from last month which is approximately 41% of our goal. Someone had indicated to Helen Barton that they were donating \$500 to the fund on behalf of Brian Ives. This month's \$500 donation may very well be that.

- Helen Barton circulated a sample letter signed by Ellen Ryan (Gerontology Retiree) and herself describing the Gerontology program and its students, and requesting donations to our endowment fund. The letter will be sent out to retirees in May 2008. To see the sample, select:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/reports/fundraising/MURA%20Fund%20Spring%202008%20Letter.pdf>

b) MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt)

- Kathy showed us a finished card complete with a nice acknowledgment on the back to the artist, Stephanie Lisak. **The card is absolutely beautiful!!!** The photography was done free of charge by Pat Vinton, a McMaster photographer. Cards are being printed and will be ready on the 26th-27th of May in time for sale at the AGM. The cards will sell for \$1.50 each, which will give us approximately \$1.00 profit on each card. Kathy will figure out how to present bundles of these cards, say groups of 10, though they will be sold individually as well. THANK YOU Kathy!

c) Appointment of Secretary and Treasurer for 2008/09 (normally done in March with nominating Committee Report)

MOTION

- John McCutcheon motioned that Beth Csordas be re-appointed as MURA treasurer and Marianne Van der Wel be re-appointed as MURA secretary for the year 2008-2009
- Geoff Evans Seconded the motion
- Carried unanimously

4. Correspondence

- With regret, Helen Barton read Veronica Morrison's resignation letter as MURA's newsletter editor. Veronica's service as our editor for ten plus years has been invaluable!

We will be advertising the post amongst council, at the AGM and in the June MURAnews. The MURAnews editorship might even be shared

between two people. Veronica will help while we find and "break in" a new editor or editors.

- MURA as well as Pam Penny received a "thank you" letter from the United Way for the letter Pam signed (as a McMaster retiree not as a MURA council member) encouraging retirees to donate to the United Way.

- "muramembs-1" e-mail listing: Notices sent out since the last meeting: The Spring MURAnews edition and the AGM, Brian Ives' death, The Travel & Learn program in Quebec and the Spring dinner (which was ultimately postponed til the fall).

- Doug Wilson, a Clinical Faculty Retiree, sent us an e-mail regarding the spring MURAnews saying "Very well done. You have put a lot of time and effort into this, and it is appreciated. Thank you."

- We had an inquiry from a McMaster student regarding her grandfather, now deceased, who had worked at McMaster. The granddaughter (student) didn't know much about what her grandfather did at Mac and she wanted to "retrace his steps" while studying here. Since Helen Barton's Spectator carrier is a McMaster retiree and knew the grandfather, Helen was able to supply the granddaughter with some information. We could also check with Rod Phillips for more information.

- An invitation for the MURA President and a guest to attend the convocation dinner has arrived. No action has yet been taken.

5. President's Report

G.H. Basement Flooding: Joan Parker had received a call that the basement of Gilmour Hall had flooded. Fortunately there was just a small puddle in the MURA office and none of our supplies and other stuff stored on the floor were damaged but neighbouring offices were more severely affected. As a precaution we need to move our supplies/other stuff and store them on shelves off the floor.

Volunteer Network: Pam Penny, Joan Parker and Helen Barton met with Karen McQuigge, John Popham and staff on April 28/08. The volunteer network project is moving ahead full steam including a manual, the hiring of someone to develop a web site, and plans for a workshop to help departments develop volunteer opportunities. Though we hope to make an announcement at our AGM that the project will be launched soon, this may not be feasible by May 28.

Three Year Funding: The three year agreements has been signed by CAW local 555, MUFA and the President's Office. Helen Barton will contact SEIU again about joining the funding agreement; the SEIU executive board meets in June or July and will discuss financially supporting their McMaster retirees at that time.

Telecom Phone Directory: UTS is still working on providing a mechanism that allows retirees to add their contact information to this directory. Retiree Support Services has agreed to be the "authorizing department" for retiree requests. A question was asked re whether RSS will use updates submitted for the Telecom directory as a source to also update their database and inform MURA and others of retiree address changes. Jeff indicated that RSS would investigate this as plans for getting retirees onto the telecom directory proceed.

Member Driven Special Events: We have had two offers from MURA members to organize activities, a lawn bowling event and a golf day. How should MURA be involved with such offers? We need a mechanism for handling the logistics of member driven events. How would the finances be handled? Helen Barton will approach Margaret Jenkins once she fully returns to her special event duties.

6. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)

- Beth circulated the year end financial statement to be presented at the AGM. Eleanor Gow has audited this statement and agrees with it. We have a deficit this year of \$525.37 because our donations are considerably less this year than last and we spent almost \$1500 on other communication (2007 AGM Invitation, Printing of "Thank You" cards and the "Opt-out" card mailing). See:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/reports/treasurer/Draft%20FS%20for%202007%202008.pdf>

- Ann Sinclair circulated her financial statement to be presented at the AGM for trips. This has also been approved by our auditor, Eleanor Gow. See:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/reports/trips/trips.fs.2008.pdf>

7. Information Reports from Committees (as required)

a) AGM (Joan Morris)

- Arrangements, Parking, Rides for those who need, Our Speaker, Name Tags and Signs have all been taken care of or assigned...see the April 9/08 minutes.

- Handouts will consist of:

- Program/Agenda
- Minutes from 2007 AGM
- 2007-2008 MURA Financial Statements
- Auditor's Report of 2007-2008 MURA Finances
- 2007-2008 MURA Trips Financial Statement
- Auditor's Report of 2007-2008 MURA Trips Finances
- 2008-2009 Nominating Committee Report

Note that Eleanor Gow will not be able to attend the AGM.

Veronica will arrange for 100 copies of the material to be back printed and collated by Printing Services in time for the AGM.

To see these reports go to the "Annual General Meeting" on our private web page.

- For our table at the AGM, Marianne will bring "Opt-Out of the postal mailing" cards for MURAnews, Beth will bring fundraising forms for our endowment fund and Kathy will bring the new MURA card to be sold for \$1.50 each.

- Les Robb will give a short report at the AGM on the salaried pension status. Helen is still checking with Cliff Andrews but we assume he too will give a short talk on the hourly pension plan.

- Marianne will bring slips of paper for voting in case we need.

b) Cards (Helen Dietsche):

- Veronica reported on behalf of Joan Morris (who is filling in for Helen Dietsche) that bereavement cards were sent to the families of Alec Kosubovich, Library Clerk, Health Sciences Library; John McDougall, Senior Manager, Nuclear Reactor; Brian Ives, Professor, Materials Science & Engineering; Stanley Stencil, Locker Room Attendant, Athletics & Recreation; and John Basmajian, Professor, Medicine. A card was also sent to Margaret Jenkins on the passing of her husband Ray.

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

- Helen reported that Joan Morris and Jeff Chuchman met to work on the definition of a McMaster 'retiree' and to determine what retirees are not being reported. For example: Some McMaster University appointed employees are not paid directly by the university. Instead the university pays another institution such as the Hospital who in turn pays the employee. Even though such employees are university appointed, hence qualifying for MURA membership upon retirement, they are not reported upon retirement having been marked as "unpaid" employees. We need to find a mechanism to identify these retirees and capture their information which is now not being done.

d) Membership (Pam Penny):

- Helen reported for Pam that, in addition to retirees not being reported as defined in our constitution, there are other retirees missing from our database and other mismatches. These were found when Pam and Helen met with Jeff Chuchman to compare MURA's data base with that of RSS (Retirement Support Services).

- Pam Penny received 6-7 responses from MURA members to the spring MURAnews article requesting current e-mail addresses for people whose e-mail no longer worked.

e) MURA News (Joan Parker):

- No report other than Veronica's resignation.

f) Nominating: (Vacant)

- We need to check our constitution and find out how to fill the role of chair of this committee next year.

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

- Parking Automation: See McMaster Daily News for reports on the automation of parking lots. While we have received information of the physical location of the sites and how to use a transponders, we have NOT received information that can be passed on to retirees on the timing of implementation (this has already started on west campus) and how to get a transponder. We expect word from Terry Sullivan soon.

- 10 year salaried pension increase/cost of living comparison chart: Thanks to Jeff Chuchman's figure "churning", Geoff was able to circulate a chart comparing cost of living with pension increases for salaried staff. See: <http://mura.mcmaster.ca/justcouncil/reports/pension.benefits/10yearcomparison.pdf>

Jeff explained that not only is the indexing formula for hourly staff different than that for the salaried group, leading to a less favourable comparison of increases to the cost of living index, but also some "ad hoc" increases made for the hourly pensioners over the past ten years makes the comparison more difficult to present. Jeff will, however, put together a chart similar to the one for salaried employees comparing cost of living to pension increases.

Once both charts are ready, we will put them up on our public web page and publish in MURAnews.

- Clinical Faculty Pension Distribution (see April 9/08 council minutes):

Since the last Council meeting, Geoff Evans and Helen Barton met with Les Robb, John Gately and Carl Moore to discuss this situation.

MOTION

- Geoff Evans, as chair of the Pension & Benefits Committee, **motioned** that Helen Barton, as president of MURA, along with a suitable representative such as Les Robb meet with the university president, Peter George, to express MURA's concerns about the clinical faculty pension distribution and request information to help resolve the current impasse.
- Joan Parker **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** Unanimously

Because of the sensitive nature of this matter and until further notice, this matter needs to stay within council.

h) Special Events (Margaret Jenkins):

- The dinner with Gary Warner has been postponed until October 15 or October 23, 2008

i) Trips (Joan Parker):

- There was a strike meeting at the Toyota plant hence the "Wings & Windshield" trip was cancelled.
- 37 people joined the Queen Mary II cruise and had a great time. When the group landed in New York, they got an unexpected tour of the city and still got to the ship on time.
- Anne is planning a trip in August to Orillia; they will see "Are You Being Served"
- "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" is still a go for January 2009
- Anne's working on a Christmas trip and also a "British Pub Show" in Brantford
- Uniworld has contacted Anne with very good pricing for the fall 2009 River Boat cruise in Provence & Burgundy, France. This cruise is full already and Anne may need to arrange a second cruise.
- Anne received a Queen Mary II report from the Ockendens
- Anne will send a photo from the Queen Mary II trip for the web page and MURAnews.

j) Xmas Lunch (John McCutcheon)

- tipping; offer from Peter George re subsidy (to be removed from the agenda until the fall)

k) Web-Site (Vacant):

- Marianne and Helen Barton are taking care of the web site until a replacement for Brian is found. The web site will stay on the Materials Science server for now. If we need to move the site in future, we could likely go to a UTS server. Currently, the MURA web site is also being backed up on Marianne's personal web site (www.atinyshift.ca)

8. Information Reports from Liaisons (as required)

a) University Board of Governors (Brian Ives):

- Helen Barton has contacted Bruce Frank and relayed the news of Brian Ives' passing. We need to appoint a new MURA representative to start in September but until we do, we are welcome to send a representative to the June meeting. Joan Parker thought it unlikely that Mildred McLaren would be interested. Lorraine Allan, though not a council member, has expressed interest in representing us at the Board of Governors. We will discuss this further at the June Council meeting.

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

- Marianne and Helen Barton will attend the CURAC conference in Montreal, May 21-23.

c) MUFA (Geoff Evans):

- Geoff Evans and Helen Barton attended the MUFA AGM and met the new incoming president, Richard Stubbs and the new incoming vice-president, John Berlinsky. Helen and Geoff expressed our interest in finding competent volunteers for MURA council from the faculty retirees, and in working with MUFA on matters of mutual interest.

Both the MUFA president and vice-president said they were interested in working with MURA and would pass us news of interest to retirees. John Berlinsky, talked about his interest in supporting TMG (the Management group) and helping them improve the strength of their working relationship with the University and their position with regards to benefits.

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

- no report

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison (Rod Phillips):** - Geoff Evans spoke with Rod Phillips who was in the process of arranging "meals on wheels" and was starting to get out a bit.

9. Other Business

- none

10. Next Meeting

Wednesday June 11, 2008 at 1:30PM at Joan Parker's home

11. Adjournment

Geoff Evans motioned that the meeting be adjourned at 3:40PM