

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
April 8, 2009, 1:30PM
Student Centre Room 220**

Present: Al Fraser, Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Jeff Chuchman (Human Resources), Beth Csordas, Helen Dietsche, Geoff Evans, Margaret Jenkins, Joe Laposa, Kathy Overholt, Kathy Ryan, Pam Penny, Joan Parker, and Marianne Van der Wel

Regrets: Mike Hedden, Michele Leroux, Wayne Rouse and Anne Sinclair

1. Welcome & Regrets:

Helen called the meeting to order at 1:34PM. She welcomed Jeff Chuchman, from Human Resources, who was filling in for Michele Leroux.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

a) The following corrections were made to the Council meeting minutes for March 11, 2009:

- Present/Regrets Section at the start: Pam Penny was listed as present and absent. Pam was indeed away.
- Page 2, middle of second paragraph: "Kathy sent him several" was changed to "Kathy is going to send him several".
- Geoff Evans found the wording of Helen Dietsche's motion on page 3 awkward. It has been reworded from "Helen Dietsche **motioned** that MURA make a \$250 donation to the "MURA Endowment Fund" in 2010 in honour of MURA's 25th Anniversary. And in addition that MURA make a \$250 donation as soon as possible in 2009 to the "MURA Endowment Fund" in memory of Stuart Winn." to "Helen Dietsche **motioned** that MURA will make a \$250 donation to the "MURA Endowment Fund" in 2010 in honour of MURA's 25th Anniversary. In addition, MURA will make a \$250 donation as soon as possible in 2009 to the "MURA Endowment Fund" in memory of Stuart Winn.".
- Page 4, last section in section 4 "Correspondence": the spelling of the name "Aaron" was changed to "Erin".

MOTION

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that the minutes be approved with the above corrections.
- Joan Parker **seconded** the motion.
- **Carried** unanimously

3. Business Arising

(a) Scholarship Endowment Fund (Beth Csordas): Beth investigated the figures reported in March. Due to an error the figures were too high by \$500. Including the \$250 donation in Stuart Winn's memory, the current total is now \$25,578.

- Helen Barton and Beth Csordas met with the advancement office to plan the letter for the spring campaign to be sent out in May/09. The letter will address the future of Gerontology at McMaster to answer questions retirees may have after reports in the media about possible cancellation of Gerontology programs.

- A Reported Issue about the handling of "In Memoriam" and "In Tribute" Donations: Helen Dietsche described her concern about the Advancement Office not promptly acknowledging "In Memoriam" and "In Tribute" donations. She personally made such donations in mid January 2009. The charges to her account were made in mid February, but by late March no acknowledgements had been received by either party she made the donations for. After making many phone calls to the advancement office the "In Memoriam" donation was acknowledged 2.5 months after Helen made the original donation. The "In Tribute" donation acknowledgement was still outstanding as of April 8/09 although it was reported as being in the mail. Helen Dietsche will followup with the Advancement Office regarding this very poor service. As this could be a general problem, Beth will make an inquiry regarding the acknowledgement of the "In Memoriam" donation we have made in Stuart Winn's memory.

- Future of the Gerontology and the MURA endowment fund: Helen Barton had sent a letter to Dean Yates and the Provost office with a copy to the University President's Office enquiring about the future of the Gerontology program at the University and MURA's endowment fund that will support our annual scholarship and prize in Gerontology. This was in response to enquiries from our members after they read the March 20/09 Hamilton Spectator article that Gerontology at McMaster was being "shelved". We received a prompt response from Dr. Peter George, the University President, which Helen has already circulated to Council. It stated that the Gerontology program is not disappearing from McMaster but is being re-packaged as a specialty within the Health Studies degree program. The letter from Peter George also indicated that our scholarship and prize in Gerontology will continue to be awarded. Council agreed that no further action need be taken at this time. Helen Barton will write about the future of Gerontology and the MURA Endowment fund in her "President's Corner" in the Spring 2009 *MURAnews*.

Since the article in the Hamilton Spectator, there have been many letters to the editor from the general community protesting the "shelving" of Gerontology at McMaster. There was a Spectator followup article on April 3/09 that wasn't as pessimistic, and an article by Dean Yates in the McMaster University Daily News that describes a "transformation" of the Gerontology program. Geoff Evans commented that the hospital Geriatrics program depends on recruiting students from the McMaster University Gerontology program.

One student of the "McMaster Students Save Gerontology" committee approached Marianne Van der Wel to let us know about a rally with speakers on April 6. Marianne responded to say she would make Council aware on April 8.

(b)MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt): Kathy had no report. Beth Csordas reported that the Bookstore bill for the MURA note cards they had ordered is now paid.

(c)Volunteer Network (Helen Barton)

A few more projects want to come aboard. Two faculty members volunteered as judges and seven MURA members volunteered for general duties at the Bay Area Science Fair. MURA members who are not sure what to volunteer for can approach the Advancement Office to discuss where they might best fit. We want to do more promoting and Helen Barton will write an article for *MURAnews*.

(d)Telecommunications Online Directory (Helen Barton) - This is not yet ready but UTS is working on a "portal" which will allow MURA members to add and update their own contact information on the directory. To do so, you will need "Mac ID" name and password which would be the same as your McMaster e-mail if you have such an account. Retirees can apply for a Mac ID using the 'Retirees Email and MAC ID Account Request Form' found at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/appforms/index.html>.

e)CURAC/Waterloo Insurance (Joe Laposa/Joan Parker): Helen Barton circulated samples of the brochures which will be included with the spring *MURAnews*. Waterloo Insurance will pay for any extra postage. The brochure is also on our web site at: <http://mura.mcmaster.ca/Pages/Waterloo.Insurance.Brochure.pdf>

The Waterloo Insurance brochures to be distributed at the 2009 AGM will be different from the one being sent with the *MURAnews*.

Joan and Joe will write an article about the CURAC Waterloo Insurance for the spring 2009 *MURAnews*.

f)2010 - 25th MURA Anniversary: If you have further ideas on how to celebrate this special anniversary, please bring them to council's attention.

4. Correspondence

- CURAC CARP Membership agreement is a better deal than the one CARP negotiated with MURA. The CURAC deal offers a 25% saving off the subscription price. Hence we will be advertising the CURAC CARP deal in the *MURAnews*. Not only are the subscription prices better with the CURAC deal, current subscribers can also take advantage. CARP subscription fees will go up substantially April 1/09 but CURAC has negotiated an extension of the current pricing until May 31/09.

Jeff Chuchman mentioned that Human Resources provides a MURA/CARP handout to new retirees. Helen Barton asked Jeff for a copy.

Jeff will also send a complete package of other information handed out to new retirees. One item is a benefits summary sheet that informs retirees about their post-retirement benefits, and the differences between pre- and post- retirement benefits.

- Audcomp Computer Equipment Purchase Program: McMaster retirees with a

valid "Mac ID" (see 3.d. for information re the "Mac ID") are eligible to buy equipment under this program. UTS has developed a "portal" for this purpose but it is not fully functional yet. Hence we will not advertise this program in the Spring 2009 MURAnews. We may do so in the Summer issue.

- Hospital Elder Life Program: We will advertise this program in the Summer 2009 issue of the MURAnews as it's too late to advertise now for their April program.

- Through muramembs-1, we had a call for poems.

- We had an unsolicited compliment on MURA's web site from the McGill University Retirees Association along with queries about how we started, how we maintain the site and its cost. Helen Barton has responded.

5. President's Report (Helen Barton)

Clinical Faculty Pension Supplementary Pension Surplus Distribution: Helen Barton and Les Robb are in the process of writing their report with recommendations. Target date for completion is the May Council meeting.

6. Treasurer's Report: (Beth Csordas)

Beth Csordas presented draft 6 of the budget (lilac sheet) with notes and explained her modifications and re-calculations. Beth discussed the postal rates with Mail Services and the apparent discrepancies have been cleared up. We do pay 1/3 of the GST, as we had assumed in our estimates; we had not accounted for the USA and Overseas postage rates.

The scholarship fund line item now includes the \$250 donation in Stuart Winn's memory. Since Marianne Van der Wel will be able to attend the 2009 CURAC conference in Moncton New Brunswick, the CURAC meeting amount will be revised from \$0 back to \$1000. There will be a projected deficit of -\$236 for 2009/2010.

MOTION

- Beth Csordas **motioned** that the Draft 6 budget be the adopted as the final budget for 2009/2010 to guide our spending in the next fiscal year.

- Helen Dietsche **seconded** the motion.

- **Carried** unanimously

7. Information Reports From Committees

a) AGM (Pam Penny) -

LOCATION and PHOTO ID SET UP:

MOTION

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that Celebration Hall in KTH (which holds a maximum of 200 people) be the location for the 2009 AGM. He also

motioned that the UTS Photo ID service not be set up at the AGM because of space and time restrictions. Instead we will advertise the opportunity of getting Mac photo ID cards in Burke Science Building, Room 245 where UTS is now located.

- Joan parker **seconded** the motion.
- **Carried** unanimously

FOOD ARRANGEMENTS:

Pam Penny has ordered a lunch consisting of sandwiches, pickle tray, cookies, coffee and tea. She has also ordered fruit and Canadian cheese trays, ice water, juice, soft drinks and china service. For 150 people the bill will be \$2416 just under the \$2500 we have budgeted. If more than 150 people come (to a maximum of 200), it will cost approximately \$10 more per person, to a maximum of \$500.

We will be asking people to RSVP by May 15, 2009 so that we can give accurate numbers to Hospitality Services to avoid waste.

SPEAKER'S NEEDS:

- Audio Visual screen and microphone will be provided by Hospitality Services.
- Computer and projector will be supplied by Helen Barton

PROGRAM PACKAGE:

The package will consist of:

- Program Events (Helen Barton and Marianne Van der Wel will put this together)
- Last Year's AGM Minutes (Marianne Van der Wel)
- MURA Financial Report (Beth Csordas)
- Trips Financial report (Anne Sinclair)
- Two Auditor's Report (Eleanor Gow)
- 2009 Nomination Report (Marianne Van der Wel)

Please give all material to Joan Parker. Beth and Joan will compile and print.

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS:

Because of the RSVP, Pam can prepare most guest name tags beforehand.

Marianne Van der Wel will make signs directing people to Celebration hall. She will need help this year to put them all up.

Kathy Overholt will be arranging to sell MURA note cards.

Pam Penny will organize remaining tasks over e-mail including getting a transport chair if needed.

PARKING:

Parking Services will be supplying complimentary parking in lots B, C, D and E. "Exit Passes" will be given to attendees who do not have transponders that will "pay" for their time parked on campus. Helen Barton will pick up these passes.

There will be reserved parking for people with mobility challenges in parking lot C near the ramp to the DeGroote business building, which has elevator access to the KTH basement.

HANDOUTS include:

- Speakers' handouts
- Waterloo Insurance brochure
- Kathy Ryan gave Helen Barton a Municipal handout for consideration
- Jeff Chuchman will give Helen Barton a handout on benefits also for consideration
- Pam Penny ordered 50 copies of "A Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario" and "A Guide to Advance Care Planning" from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat.

PRIZES:

We discussed having a door prize for attending and a prize for "opting out" of the paper version of MURAnews. Al Fraser offered to donate a wine rack as a prize.

b) Cards (Helen Dietsche) -

Helen Dietsche sent bereavement cards to the families of Dorothy Horn (Psychiatry), Matthew Bazoian (Anaesthesia), Alicja Mika (Chemistry), Patrick Nicholson (Metallurgy and Materials Science) and Iwao Takahashi (Biology). Our oldest member, Menno DeGroot also died although we have not yet had official notification.

c) Constitution (Chair: Helen Barton; Joan Morris Consultant) - We still need to examine our definition of MURA membership. One questionable area is those who leave McMaster before retirement but leave their pension contributions with McMaster (deferred pensions). Also, do spousal survivors of McMaster employees, who at the time of their death are not retired but past the rule of 80, qualify for associate membership? And how will hourly and management employees who have self directed RRSPs instead of being in the pension plans impact our definition of membership? This work is not urgent but we do need to meet with Michele and Jeff to discuss this.

d) Membership (Pam Penny) - We now have 1898 members. We have 1380 regular members who receive MURAnews via the post. Approximately 300 members are currently "opted out" of the postal mailing and only read MURAnews via our web site. Over 700 members are notified via muramembs-1 when a new issue of MURAnews is posted to the web

The 2009 April membership report is at:

<http://mura.mcmaster.ca/MURA.council.meeting.records/membership/membership.html>

e) MURAnews (Joan Parker) -

We are continuing to get good feedback from our readers. The committee met March 26 to plan the Spring issue. Kathy Ryan has added a "Your Money" feature. Helen and Marianne have started putting the MURAnews together. Articles for submission are due today, April 8. In order to reach our membership 30 days before the May 27 AGM, we will be stuffing MURAnews for postal mailing on April 23.

f) Nominating (Helen Barton) - No report

g) Pension & Benefits (Geoff Evans) - There was an enquiry from a retiree about finding a personal physician that Geoff Evans dealt with. Other than this, there was no report.

h) Special Events (Margaret Jenkins) - Thirty five people attended the

Planetarium trip and some had to be turned away. Hence, we'll reschedule a second showing for May 12. For the fall, we plan a visit to the Nuclear Reactor, and the Gage Park greenhouses. We will also have the "Group of Seven" presentation in November (the day of the faculty and librarians lunch).

The golf event with lunch, organized by John Harvey, will be on Thursday June 18/09 at the Ancaster Golf club. There will be a lunch only option.

i) Trips (Joan Parker/Anne Sinclair) - Joan Parker reported for Anne Anne is meeting with Eleanor Gow to review the 2008-2009 trip finances. The July trip (Camelot) is 2/3 sold and the October 9 trip (Brigadoon) is half sold. Anne has organized a train trip through the Credit Valley for September.

j) Christmas Lunch (Pam Penny) - No report except that Pam has cancelled the University Hall booking in favour of the booking at Celebration Hall.

k) Web Site (Marianne Van der Wel)

CIRA Ownership: The change over of ownership to MURA is turning out to be complicated. We are working with Nicholas Solntseff to have this resolved.

8. Information Reports from Liaisons

a) **University Board of Governors (Lorraine Allan):** We distributed Lorraine's report (blue sheet). Benefits of future retirees is the major current issue of interest to retirees. The university president's report was circulated on-line prior to the meeting.

b) **Colleges & Universities Retirees Associations of Canada (CURAC) (Helen Barton)** - See sections 3e) for news on the CURAC/Waterloo Insurance deal, sections 4 for news on the CURAC/CARP deal, and section 5 announcing that Marianne Van der Wel will be attending the CURAC conference in May.

CURAC is surveying representatives from the various associations to find out how they can improve their newsletter.

c) **MUFA (Geoff Evans)** - There is a public town hall meeting on April 16 to discuss the qualities needed in the next university president. In addition, items such as remuneration, benefits and exit/severance packages of future university presidents will be discussed.

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

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison (Al Fraser)** - No report

10. Other Business - Pam Penny is placing an order with Grand & Toy on April 9/09. If you need anything, please let Pam know.

11. Next meeting

Wednesday May 13, 2009 at 1:30PM in the Student Centre, Room 220

12. Adjournment

Geoff Evans motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:25PM