

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association  
May 13, 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, Mike Hedden, Margaret Jenkins, Joe Laposa, Kathy Overholt, Pam Penny, Joan Parker, Wayne Rouse, Anne Sinclair and Marianne Van der Wel

**Regrets:** Michele Leroux and Kathy Ryan

**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/changes were made to the Council meeting minutes for April 8, 2009:

- Page 1, section 2 under MOTION: "Evan" should read "Evans"
- Page 2, 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: "Gerontology programs possibly being cancelled" was changed to "possible cancellation of Gerontology programs"
- Page 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: "in memoriam" was changed to "In Memoriam" in two places and "in tribute" was changed to "In Tribute" in one place.
- Page 2, middle of 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph: "had already" was changed to "has already"
- Page 2, 4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph: "April 3/09 there was" was changed to "April 3/09"
- Page 3, 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: "Two faculty member" was changed to "Two faculty members"
- Page 5, under Other Arrangements: "Kathy Overholt will be arranging" was changed to "Kathy Overholt will be arranging to"
- Page 6, under Constitution: "but to leave" was changed to "but leave" and "RSSPs" was changed to "RRSPs"
- Page 6, under Pensions and Benefits: "there's" was changed to "there"
- Page 7, 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: "group of seven" was changed to "Group of Seven"
- Page 7, under Trips: "parker" was changed to "Parker"
- Page 7, under Christmas Lunch: "hall" was changed to "Hall"
- Page 7, under MUFA: The last sentence was deleted and replaced by: "In addition, items such as remuneration, benefits and exit/severance packages of future university presidents will be discussed."

**MOTION**

- Mike Hedden **motioned** that the minutes be approved with the above corrections and changes.
- Geoff Evans **seconded** the motion.
- **Carried** unanimously

### 3. Business Arising

(a) Scholarship Endowment Fund (Beth Csordas): The current total is now \$25,708, an increase of \$130 over the previous month. Helen Barton and Beth have written a letter for the spring campaign encouraging retirees to donate. This has gone to the Advancement Office for their approval and printing. Hopefully, this will be mailed out next week. Advancement may need our help with stuffing the letters into envelopes.

(b) MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt): Last month the United Way bought 550 cards to be used as thank you notes for McMaster United Way donors. Kathy sold an additional 40 cards, 30 of them to alumni who were notified of the cards' availability by an article in the Alumni electronic newsletter.

Forty additional cards were given out as gifts or promotion: 10 to the Alumni office and 30 to Joan Parker to be used as AGM speaker gifts.

Kathy will approach the Alumni office again at a later date to ask if the MURA cards could be featured in their printed newsletter.

We have now taken in as much money as the cards cost. From now on, whatever we sell is profit for MURA.

(c) Telecommunications Online Directory (Helen Barton) - No report

(d) Audcomp Computer Equipment Purchase (Helen Barton) - This program allows anyone with a McMaster Account (MACID & Password...the same as your e-mail) to buy HP (Hewlett Packard) computer equipment at university pricing. The web site is at:  
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/audcomp/>

We may publish the availability of this program in the summer MURAnews without recommending it. We will recommend that people shop around and decide for themselves if this new program is good for them.

(e) Update on process used for In Memoriam and In Tribute donations (Helen Dietsche): Helen Barton and Helen Dietsche met with Karen McQuigge from Advancement. Advancement currently processes tax receipts and acknowledgements for donations each month, as part of their month-end process. Month-end accounting is completed first, then tax receipts are produced and, lastly, "In Tribute" and "In Memoriam" acknowledgements are sent to the third parties. This process is further delayed for donations made early in a new calendar year because the large year-end volume of donations is processed first and the December month-end accounting completed before any of the new year's donations are processed. Thus acknowledgements can take from six weeks to two months (depending on when in the month the donations are made and if they are sent in at a year end.) This time frame is longer than other organizations that Helen Dietsche had checked, some of which send out their acknowledgements within a week.

Karen McQuigge said there were no plans to change this process in the short term, but that she was planning to add a review of the "In Tribute" and "In Memoriam" process to the portfolio of one of her experienced staff.

f) 2010 - 25<sup>th</sup> MURA Anniversary: There weren't any new ideas.

#### 4. Correspondence

REPRESENTATIVE TO THE PENSION TRUST COMMITTEE:

- We had a request from the Assistant Vice President (Administration) for a recommendation of a representative to the Salaried Pension Trust Committee.

#### MOTION

- Mike Hedden motioned that Les Robb be recommended for appointment to represent MURA on the Salaried Pension Trust Committee for 2009-2010.
- Kathy Overholt seconded the motion.
- Carried unanimously

JUNE 11/09 CONVOCATION DINNER INVITATION:

Joan Parker and Helen Barton will attend this dinner to represent MURA.

HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION PACKAGE FOR NEW RETIREES:

Jeff Chuchman has provided Helen Barton with the information package that is handed out to new retirees. It includes:

- Welcome Letter from MURA's President
- Latest issue of *MURAnews*
- MURA's CARP brochure. (This has been stopped. Currently the Spring 2009 newsletter describes the CURAC/CARP deal. When the summer 2009 *MURAnews* comes out we will have a CURAC/CARP brochure, either provided by CURAC or one we will make ourselves, in place to put in the package.)
- Government Services brochures
- A description of the person's retirement benefits plan and how it differs from their pre-retirement plan. This varies according to a retiree's benefit group.

TERMINATION OF TWO LONG STANDING LIBRARIANS

We received forwarded correspondence from the MUFA listserve about the termination of two long time librarians who were apparently employees in good standing. They are taking legal action with MUFA's support. There was a comment that we may see more of this type of dispute as the university attempts to downsize.

PARKING:

Retirees with transponders were sent a letter explaining the renewal of their transponders for the year starting September 1, 2009. There was no mention in of the process that will be put in place for retirees who have "RR" parking permits to pay for morning parking after September 1. We are assuming that Parking will send a second letter later explaining this.

MOHAWK RETIREES NEWSLETTER:

Helen Barton circulated a copy of the Mohawk retirees' association's latest newsletter which she had been received recently.

CURAC/LITERARY REVIEW OF CANADA:

CURAC has negotiated a deal for a 40% price reduction on subscriptions to the "Literary Review of Canada." Marianne will post this information on our web site and we may put an article in the summer *MURAnews*.

PHOTOS FROM ALVINE LAWSON:

We received another batch of photos from Alvine Lawson taken at the 2008 Christmas Lunch. Helen Barton will scan them and use them in the slide show for the 2009 AGM.

MURAMEMBS-L:

This past month we sent e-mails to muramembs-l regarding *MURAnews*, a CAW pension rally, parking data conversion, a planetarium tour reminder, the Mac presidential search survey, and a reminder about the AGM.

## **5. President's Report (Helen Barton)**

Clinical Faculty Supplementary Pension Surplus Distribution: Helen Barton and Les Robb have almost completed their report. They hope to finish it early June so that it can be discussed at the June council meeting.

Last Meeting of Current Council: As this is the last meeting of the current council and Helen's last as President, Helen thanked everyone for the support they gave her and MURA!

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

### MURA COUNCIL FINANCES

As a preview for council, Beth Csordas presented a draft of the financial statements (a blue sheet) that will appear in the AGM package. Eleanor Gow has audited the books until the middle of April. There are still a few adjustments (additions and reclassifications) that need to be made which will be incorporated into this draft for the final AGM report.

Beth and Helen Barton explained the history behind our funding agreement with MUFA, CAW Local 555 and the University (President's Office). We have in the past tried to get funding from the main hourly union, SEI, but have not been successful because the McMaster unit is no longer an independent local and it is difficult to get approval for a local initiative from the national level of the union.

### MURA TRIPS FINANCES (Anne Sinclair):

Anne Sinclair circulated copies of the trips financial report (white sheet) she submitted to Eleanor Gow (this year's auditor) that will appear in the AGM package once approved.

### BOTH FINANCIAL REPORTS:

While we expect the information in the final reports in the AGM package to be the same or close to the statements circulated at today's meeting, the format may change once our auditor (Eleanor Gow) has reviewed them.

## **7. Information Reports From Committees**

### **a) AGM (Pam Penny) -**

- **Facilities:** When Pam reviewed our contract with Hospitality Services, she was surprised to find a \$155 fee to use the microphone/speaker system. Pam approached Al Fraser and he was able to borrow the Operations & Maintenance sound equipment pro bono. Hence our anticipated cost is still \$2416.36 for 150 people.

- **Program:**

Helen Barton circulated the AGM Program Event's page (green sheet) for our comment and information. Everyone was happy with the outline of the day's events.

Joan and Beth are waiting for the final financial statements and the auditor's reports and can then print the program package.

- **Task Assignments:**

Pam circulated a detailed schedule with times, tasks and people assignments (yellow sheet). Everyone was asked to arrive at the AGM at 10:30AM. The speakers are scheduled to arrive at 11:15AM.

A few tasks still needed staffing/clarification. They were:

*Putting up direction signs:* Wayne, Anne and Joe will help Marianne

*Handing Out Name Tags at the Registration Desk:* Mike Hedden and Geoff Evans

*Handing Out Exit Passes for Complimentary Parking:* Cliff Andrews

*Opt Out Cards and Entering Tickets for Draw Prizes:* to be determined by Pam

*Trips Desk:* Anne Sinclair

*Selling MURA Note Cards:* Kathy Overholt

*Setting Up Speakers and Microphone:* Al Fraser and Cliff Andrews

*Printing and Handing Out Program Package:* Joan Parker and Beth Csordas

**Many thanks** to Al Fraser for making and contributing a wine rack and remote control holder box to be used for draw prizes. These items are made of wood taken from the old Arthur Bourns Cafeteria.

- **RSVP:** We have 75 respondents which include the entire council (Pam is assuming all council members will attend. Let Pam know if you are not!) Helen Barton will send out a "final call" e-mail to RSVP by May 15 via muramembs-1.

### **b) Cards (Helen Dietsche) -**

Helen Dietsche sent bereavement cards to the families of Menno DeGroot (General Science), Nellie Mann (Hospitality Services), Setsuko Tsuchida (Residence Halls), William C. Noble (Anthropology) and Marjory Wilson (University Library)

### **c) Constitution (Chair: Helen Barton; Joan Morris Consultant) - No Report**

**d) Membership (Pam Penny) -** We now have 1894 members. Of the almost 1900 members, approximately 320 have opted out of receiving MURAnews by

postal mail. Sixty members and 40 associate members have opted out of receiving the MURAnews altogether. We mail the Spring MURAnews issue that announces the annual AGM to the 60 members since our constitution requires we send all members an AGM notice 30 days in advance.

The 2009 May membership report is at:

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

**e) MURAnews (Joan Parker) -**

The deadline for the summer issue is June 10/09, our next council meeting.

**f) Nominating (Helen Barton) -** No report

**g) Pension & Benefits (Geoff Evans) -** Les Robb has notified Helen Barton that the universities are in discussion with each other and the Ontario Government about the possibility of amalgamating all the Ontario university pension plans. Current retirees would not be affected.

**h) Special Events (Margaret Jenkins) -** The May 12 Planetarium trip (with 30 people registered) was cancelled because the Planetarium projector broke. Luckily the University Club did not hold us liable for the afternoon tea. The event will be rescheduled in the fall.

Sandy Darling is involved with historical presentations of Christ Church Cathedral that includes a lunch. Margaret asked council their opinion about setting up such a trip. Some suggested a concert at the cathedral along with a lunch may entice people. Margaret will investigate this possibility.

The golf event with lunch, organized by John Harvey, will be on Thursday June 18/09 at the Oak Gables Golf Club in Ancaster. There is also a lunch only option. To date, the response has been slow. Helen Barton will send out an email reminder message about this next week.

**i) Trips (Joan Parker/Anne Sinclair) -** Both the Stratford and Shaw Festival trips went well. There are only seven seats left for the September train trip.

Anne is planning a starlight trip to Stratford at Christmas time. Without knowing the price or the date, she already has people signed up after she announced this trip to people participating in the Shaw trip. She also polled the same people about a Washington, D.C. trip for Spring 2010 and got a favourable response.

**j) Christmas Lunch (Pam Penny) -** The Christmas Lunch will be Monday, December 7, 2009. We have received the \$1250 contribution from the University President's Office for this luncheon. Peter George has the date in his calendar. This will be the last time he can attend as University President as he is retiring next year.

**k) Web Site (Marianne Van der Wel)**

**CIRA Ownership:** We have contacted Nicholas Solntseff again to have the ownership changed over to MURA.

## **8. Information Reports from Liaisons**

a) **University Board of Governors (Lorraine Allan):** We distributed Lorraine's report (lilac sheet) covering the May 7/09 Board of Governor's meeting. In this she mentions and gives a link for the campus survey for qualities desired in a new University president and any comments on terms of employment. The university President's report to the Board of Governors for May was circulated on-line prior to the meeting.

b) **Colleges & Universities Retirees Associations of Canada (CURAC) (Helen Barton) -** A survey asking "What CURAC Should Be Doing in Future for its Member Associations?" was sent to all their contact people. Helen forwarded the survey to the MURA executive and a few other council members to ask them to fill in the survey. The compiled results of this survey will be presented at the CURAC conference in New Brunswick, May 20-21/09.

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

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

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison (Al Fraser) -** There are rumours about a retirement buy out for hourly workers who are past the rule of 80. Helen Barton will ask Michele Leroux or Jeff Chuchman for information.

**10. Other Business -** Marianne Van der Wel is attending a conference "My Charity Connects" in Toronto on June 8 and 9. This conference will explore the use of today's tools on the Internet to promote non-profit organizations. She is attending this on her own.

Mike Hedden enquired about a comparison of "Out of Province" health insurance coverage. There was a web site that did that; Helen Barton will try to locate it. There was also an article in the Toronto Star approximately three years ago on this subject. CARP may have some good rates as does the CAA. Also check with one's travel agent.

## **11. Next meeting**

Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at 1:30PM in the Student Centre, Room 220

## **12. Adjournment**

Geoff Evans motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:22PM