



McMaster University Retirees Association

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Wayne Rouse, Secretary

Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
Wednesday February 10, 2010, 1:30 PM at the Student Centre Rm 224.

Present: Lorraine Allan, Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Helen Dietsche, Al Fraser, Mike Hedden, Joe Laposa (Chair), Michele Leroux, Stefania Miller, Kathy Overholt, Pam Penny, Wayne Rouse, Marianne Van der Wel, Marianne Walters.

Regrets: Beth Csordas, Joan Parker, Anne Sinclair.

1. Welcome & Regrets:

Joe Laposa called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM...

Goodbye To Marianne

Marianne Van der Wel has resigned as a Council member effective immediately. During the 3.5 years that Marianne was with Council she has acted as secretary, web master and has played a very major editorial role in the production of MURAnews. She has also provided many different types of valuable information for MURA members. Marianne will be leaving MURA council in stages. She wishes for someone to take over the duties of responding to messages left on MURA's phone immediately. She will be involved with the editing of Spring 2010 MURAnews but that will be her final involvement in this role. She has very kindly offered to provide "off-site" computer and communication support for as long as necessary while MURA finds people to replace her. Marianne described her evolutionary role in supporting MURA. One of her contemporary goals is to develop computer skills that can be passed on to MURA for easier manipulation of the web site.

Marianne is joining a group of young engineers in North York who are volunteering to develop a web site that will allow churches to better share resources thus reducing waste and to also find a way for churches to better interconnect.

Joe wished farewell to Marianne Van der Wel as a Council member and thanked her for all of her efforts.

Joan Parker

Joan Parker has found it necessary to take an extended leave of absence for health reasons. Joe Laposa, as vice-president, will be acting chair at meetings until Joan is able to return.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved by Mike Hedden and **seconded** by Marianne Walters that the provisional Council meeting minutes for January 13, 2010 be adopted as corrected. **Motion carried.**

3. Business Arising

(a) Update on academic awards and endowment fund raising campaign (Helen Barton reporting in Beth Csordas' absence)

As of Feb 10, the scholarship endowment had achieved \$ 37,088 , \$ 5,088 above its original objective of \$32,000. The revised goal for this endowment is \$40,000. It is hoped that this can be achieved by the 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM). It was suggested that one more fund raising letter before the AGM might help reach the \$40,000 goal.

(b) Update -2010 – 25th MURA Anniversary (Mike Hedden)

Mike discussed efforts to get appropriate historical photographs to help celebrate MURA's 25th anniversary. So far these have been difficult to come by. Chip Inkster has contributed one photograph which may have been taken at the first MURA annual general meeting in August 1985. Helen Barton will check the MURA office for photos. Mike Hedden will be unavailable to work on organizing a display for much of the time prior to March 14th. Joe Laposa and Kathy Overholt will identify people to help in planning on the 25th celebrations for the AGM during Mike's absence.

(c) Update re Supplementary Pension Benefits for Clinical Faculty

(Helen Barton/Les Robb)

There is still no update on this problem. A response from Roger Couldrey, the Interim Vice-president of Administration is still being awaited at the time of the meeting.

(d) Facilitating paid employment positions via MURAmembs-I (Michele Leroux)

Michele has made informal inquiries on this matter. There are various avenues which can be used by university departments to seek temporary help. Michele noted that departments have the option of posting temporary positions on MacTRAC (McMaster's Tracking Recruitment Requisitions, Applicants and Career Opportunities). https://workingatmcmaster.hua.hrsmart.com/ats/job_search.php?view_all=1&clear=1 . If MURA wanted to pursue the possibility of posting McMaster temporary casual positions at the request of a department, Michele suggested a conversation with key individuals in Human Resources be arranged to discuss the implications.

4. Correspondence (Joe Laposa)

Chip Inkster has sent a photograph of the first MURA Council general meeting as discussed in 3(b) above.

5. President's Report (Joe Laposa)

Items arising from executive meeting, Feb. 3, 2010.

(a) Need for a policy for allowing retirees to use MURA as a vehicle for advertising non-MURA trips.

The following recommendation was agreed upon by the executive. MURA generally does not support advertising of non-MURA travel trips on its information outlets to members. If a trip is to be led by a McMaster retiree and if it has educational content, then the executive would make decisions in order to expedite matters. Where there was a 'grey' area then Council could be consulted. During discussion Cliff Andrews cautioned that the 'grey area' might cause subsequent problems. The recommendation was accepted by Council in a 'straw' vote.

(b) Back-up for strategic positions on Council.

After discussion the executive agreed that we need documentation on all of our major portfolios with respect to the responsibilities of the portfolio and its ongoing activities. Such documentation should be incorporated a.s.a.p. on the MURA web site and updated regularly. It was further agreed that Joan Parker will select appropriate Council members and request that they act on the above agreement. Initially this can be simply a worksheet with point form about the duties and activities which can then be incorporated into an Activities Portfolio on the MURA web site. It is hoped that the leader will take responsibility for regular updating of the site and provide an initial format within the next month. This is seen as extremely important for back up of the portfolios so that, in case of need, a deputy member can step in and maintain continuity.

In terms of need for lead and back up positions, the following order of priority for MURA was determined.

- Web Site updating and maintenance
- MURAnews
- MURAmembs-I
- Membership data base
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Trips
- Special Events

There was general agreement by Council to pursue this course of action.

(c) Need of technical people for Council vacancies.

With respect to nominations and renewal on Council there was discussion about the need for Council members (or others) with specific skills and interests to

maintain our capabilities to fulfill our obligations to our members. The need is particularly acute with respect to Marianne Van der Wel's resignation from MURA Council. She has been maintaining and upgrading the MURA website, as well as undertaking the primary role in editing and publishing MURAnews. As is evident in 5 (b) above these are the highest priority items for MURA and their need will probably accelerate over time. There was general agreement by Council with proceeding to address this need.

(d) AGM.

Alvin Lee has graciously accepted the invitation from Helen Barton to be the feature speaker at this year's AGM. Dr. Lee, who was the University President at the time of the founding of MURA, will be discussing changes in McMaster over the past 25 yrs to help celebrate MURA's 25th anniversary.

(e) Peter George's reception.

It was agreed that we recommend to Council that Joe Laposa should represent MURA at Peter George's retirement reception which will occur on Tuesday March 21 at Hamilton Place and that MURA should financially support this gesture. Helen Barton would be back up.

After a full discussion by Council, this was agreed to in recognition of Dr. George's substantial support of MURA during his tenure as University President.

(f) Marianne's Van der Wel's decision to resign and consequences.

Marianne presented her many-faceted activities within MURA, how they interrelated and some of the difficulties she has faced, particularly in piecing together MURAnews. She emphasized that communications within organizations of this type are paramount to success. She suggested that a Communications Committee to coordinate all of the multi-faceted aspects of MURA communication activities might be a good move. Council felt that the issue of a Communications Committee should be shelved until the nominating committee makes its report.

(g) Volunteering

When MURA gets requests for on-campus volunteers and sends out the information on MURAmembs-1 and/or MURAnews, responses to these requests should be directed to Laura Escalante in the Alumni Development Office. The Alumni Development Office is positioned to screen the applicants and to put them in touch with the requesting departments (agencies). There was no discussion in Council on this item.

6. Treasurer's Report: (Beth Csordas)

Beth, who was unable to attend the meeting, circulated two statements re MURA finances prior to the Council meeting. The first presented a spreadsheet that details

the current balances against the budgeted amounts for the financial year. The second comprised a MURA budget preparation form for the next financial year that begins May 1, 2010. Beth requests that feedback on next year's budget be provided to Beth by email and for a March 3 deadline. The treasurer's report elicited a discussion on how to get more MURAmembs to receive MURAnews electronically, since it represents the largest single item in the budget.

7. Information Reports from Committees

(a) Christmas Luncheon Report (Pam Penny)

No Report

(b) AGM (Pam Penny)

Pam noted that the organizing committee needs to meet with Larry Marsh, the manager of Paradise Catering in Hospitality Services to help plan the AGM.

(c) Cards (Helen Dietsche)

The following death has been acknowledged with a card.

Clara Stephen, University Library, January 28, 2010

(d) Constitution and By-Laws (Helen Barton)

No Report

(e) Membership (Pam Penny/Joe Laposa)

Total (Feb 14, 2010) = 1937

Note: This number is 2 persons less than the estimate for Jan 10. This discrepancy results from name duplication which was found by Pam Penny and Kathy Overholt during the MURAnews addressing.

(f) MURAnews (Kathy Overholt)

The February edition of MURAnews was mailed out Thursday February 4. The next MURAnews committee meeting will be held in March to plan for the April issue.

(g) Nominating (Helen Barton)

Helen reported that the nominating committee will report to Council at the March meeting. She notes that there are good prospects for Council renewal members in general but that the prospects for editor of MURAnews and Web Master are less evident at this time.

(h) Pensions and Benefits (Marianne Walters)

Marianne reported on this complex situation and her efforts to resolve the position of the retirees with respect to the \$10,000 once-in-a-life time medical emergency payment during travel abroad. The policy is with Sun Life who has farmed it out to Europ Assistance. It is still unclear how this policy might be implemented and Marianne awaits a definitive report from Sun Life.

(i) Special Events (Helen Barton)

Helen reported on her recent ½ hour telephone conversation with Patrick Deane, the incoming President of the University. During the conversation she outlined the purpose and activities of MURA. She awaits a written response from Dr. Deane to the question "How do you view the relationship between a university and its retirees, and what role do you envision Mac's retirees playing in the future of McMaster?"

(j) Trips (Joe Laposa)

Joe noted that all of the scheduled and planned trips can be found in the February edition of MURAnews.

(k) Web Site (Marianne Van der Wel)

No Report

8. Information Reports from Liaisons

(a) University Board of Governors (Lorraine Allan)

The next meeting of the University Board of Governors will not be until after the March Council meeting.

(b) College and University Retirees Assoc. of Canada (CURAC)

No Report

(c) MUFA (Lorraine Allan, Marianne Walters)

Lorraine and Marianne are still involved in determining the most beneficial nature of a MURA-MUFA liaison process. At this stage they feel that a MURA representative on the MUFA Pension Committee could be beneficial to both parties. This could be readily achieved through a mutual agreement. A MURA representative on the MUFA Remuneration Committee could also be useful to both parties but this would require a change in MUFA bylaws. They felt that they should meet with the MUFA President and Vice-President to establish working relationships. They also suggested that MURA could be helpful in putting together the articles on retiree benefits that appear in the MUFA newsletter.

These proposed ideas and initiatives were strongly endorsed by Council

(d) CAW (MUSA)

No Report

(e) Hourly Staff Liaison (Al Fraser)

No Report.

(f) Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

No report will be available until the March MURA Council meeting.

(g) Salaried Pension Committee (Les Robb)

No Report.

9. Other Business

(a) Bookstore Discounts (Pam Penney)

Pam raised the possibility of discounts for seniors at the McMaster Bookstore (*Titles*). She has talked to Dave Ryan, manager of *Titles*, and is expecting a statement from him of the policy, if any. She will report on this initiative at the March Council meeting.

(b) University anti-virus licensing agreement (Lorraine Allen, Helen Barton).

As has been documented in MURAnews (Winter 2010, p. 1) the university anti-virus licensing through *Sophos that was offered free to retirees* has been terminated. The newly licensed agreement using **Trend Micro** software is available to McMaster retirees through the McMaster book store *Titles* for an annual fee of \$10.

Discussion centred on why the university did not offer this freely to retirees, as it was in everyone's self interest to prevent the spread of computer viruses. Helen and Lorraine will draft a letter, to be sent through Joe Laposa, requesting information from John Kearney at UTS on the whats and whys of university policy regarding anti-virus software for retirees.

10. Next Meeting.

The next meeting of Council meeting will be March 10, 2010 at 1:30 P.M. in MUSC 224.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Helen Barton that the meeting be adjourned. Carried at 3:34 P.M.