

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
Wednesday, April 9, 2014, 1:30 pm in MSC-230**

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Dianne Coventry, Beth Csordas, Linda Grocott, Kathy Heywood, Joe Laposa, Mary Johnston, Michele Leroux, Betty Ann Levy, Shari Mercer, Kathy Overholt, Janice Rischke, Harold Siroonian, Marianne Van Der Wel, Marianne Walters (chair), Bob West

Regrets: None

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of February 12, 2014 (for approval)

Moved by Joe Laposa, **seconded** by Brian Beckberger

“that the minutes be approved”

Carried.

3. Human Resources Report (Michele Leroux)

Michele reported on item 6.2 – the meeting with Justin Gunter. In his new position as Manager, University Affiliates & Associations at McMaster, Justin reports to Roger Couldrey. He is responsible for the university’s financial relationships with MURA and other independent affiliate organizations plus 45 student organizations. His role is one of data gathering and record keeping and will not change MURA’s relationship with the administration. He has asked for a copy of our financial statement. Though not required, it can be provided when we have the audited financial statement in May or June.

4. Business Arising – updates on

4.1 Academic awards and endowment fund raising (Beth Csordas)

The endowment fund total at \$61,465 is an increase by \$325 over the past two months. From October 1st until today, the fund has increased a total of \$6,773.

4.2 CURAC 2014 Conference (Mary Johnston, Helen Barton)

The organizing committee met yesterday (Apr. 8). Plans are proceeding. The catering agreements are now in place. There are 26 registrations with another 3 in the mail today. Mary plans to contact more southern Ontario university and college retiree associations by email to encourage them to register.

Marianne Walters and Joe Laposa have reached the fund-raising goal of \$20,000. Council was reminded that anyone who wants to volunteer to work at the Conference should email Heather Grigg (grigghm@mcmaster.ca) to do so.

4.3 HR Pre-retirement seminar (Mary Johnston)

Mary reported that she was very impressed with the presentation which stressed the “pillars of retirement funding”. She said that the same company provides other seminars on campus.

4.4 Response to requests to receive *MURAnews* electronically

Linda reported that to date 82 members have switched from print to the online version.

4.5 Discussion with CURAC President, Sandra Pyke

Marianne reported that Sandra seemed surprised at the detail with which we responded to her questions about issues facing MURA and matters that MURA would like CURAC to pursue. She was advised that Mary is willing to serve on the Conference and Finance Committees and that we will likely have names of people who might serve on the Pensions or Benefits Committees at the CURAC AGM.

5. Correspondence (Marianne Walters)

5.1 Ellen Ryan

Ellen is planning a panel discussion on the concepts of Aging in Community, which will follow the AGM at 3:30 in MDCL 3024 (Michael DeGroot Centre for Learning and Discovery, near Health Sciences - Third Floor).

Ellen has submitted an article for the Spring newsletter.

5.2 MURA communications group (Mary Johnston)

MURA received a request to advertise an off-campus job. The communications group conducted an internal poll to see if we thought we should agree to this. It was decided that in the short term there will be no advertisement of outside jobs, but that there should be a review of the terms of reference for the web site, the newsletter and other forms of communication. Mary will try to get the communication committee together in the fall to update the documentation related to this issue.

5.3 Response to Patrick Deane re our Jan meeting

Marianne wrote to Patrick to explain that his reception for new retirees had been the only avenue for MURA Council to meet them. The President proposed a new subsidy for our Christmas Lunch to allow new retirees to attend without charge. This could result in more new retirees attending, and those who do could be identified by their name tags which would give an opportunity to Council, as well as other members, to encourage them to get involved in the work of MURA.

Patrick would like to encourage faculty members to participate in the Discovery programme. Marianne and Betty Ann met with the Director of the programme, Jean Wilson. This is reported on in item 6.5.

5.4 Nominating Committee Report and Council vote

Joe reported that the Nominating Committee proposed the following slate of candidates for Council positions:

President (one year, to 2015):	Mary Johnston
Vice-President (one year, to 2015):	Betty Ann Levy
Councillor (three years, to 2017):	Dianne Bird
Councillor (three years, to 2017):	Kathy Heywood
Councillor (three years, to 2017):	Pam Penny
Councillor (three years, to 2017):	Peter Sutherland

Because the March Council meeting had to be cancelled, Marianne asked that we conduct an email vote on acceptance of this slate. The motion was **carried**.

5.5 Request to Pension & Benefits Committee

Marianne asked Betty Ann to prepare information about the \$10K insurance to be communicated to our membership on the web site.

She also reported that Geoff Burman, who assisted MURA during travel insurance discussions with the University, has sold his company to Away Care and now works for them.

Mary will be shopping for travel insurance in the near future and agreed to be a test case for insurance quotes, as did other Council members.

6. President's Report (Marianne Walters)

6.1 Proposed changes to the funding of CURAC

CURAC proposes to change the per member fee from 50¢ to 75¢ with a minimum of \$25 and a maximum of \$300. We felt that the percent increase should apply to all associations equally. The draft CURAC document still shows the original minimum and maximum. The MURA viewpoint will be raised at the CURAC AGM.

6.2 Meeting with Justin Gunter

This item was dealt with in item 3.

6.3 Meeting with Roger Couldrey and Michele Leroux

Marianne asked Betty Ann to accompany her to this meeting. Roger said that there is no possibility of changing the formula for pension increases as long as the University Pension Fund is in a state of insolvency. While sharing our concern with respect to the low pensions received by very long-term retirees, he believes it is unlikely that the university would be able to implement an increase for them. Nonetheless, he will investigate to see how many people would fall into this category.

Regarding the extension of the term of the travel insurance, Michele reported that there are no comparators as the industry standard is 30 days. Extending the term to 60 days would cost between \$60,000 and \$100,000 per year and thus it would not receive approval. She informed us that there are 60 current employees who are older than 69 years.

6.4 Memorandum of Agreement re funding of MURA

Marianne reported that she has passed the signed Memorandum of Agreement to Beth for safe-keeping.

6.5 Report on meeting with Jean Wilson

Jean Wilson is the Director of the Arts & Science Programme which runs the Discovery Programme. She was very open to MURA input and said that people can volunteer to give lectures or make lunches or be drivers. Jean would like a MURA member on their Board, and we concurred. For this initiative to get off the ground, we need to identify a person who will either take over the MURA volunteer network or be a member of this committee with the Discovery Programme as their main responsibility.

Some students in the Discovery Programme have indicated that they would like to take a regular undergraduate course. Nearly all of these would register as mature students. MURA faculty retirees might offer to mentor such students. The possibility of offering to mentor any interested mature student also arose. This should be followed up in the fall.

6.6 Sharing of any CURAC conference surplus

It was suggested that the first \$2000 of a surplus (presuming it exists) would be split 75% (MURA) and 25% (RAMC) to reflect the respective contributions by the 2 organizations. Any remaining surplus would be split 50-50 but RAMC first pays back any registration subsidies (estimated to be \$1600).

The registration of 37 delegates in St. John's resulted in a surplus. We expect between 50 and 70 delegates. The deadline for registrations is May 21st.

Asked if the refund would go back into the budget, Marianne said that is a Council decision.

Moved by Linda Grocott, **seconded** by Betty Ann Levy

“that the proposal for distribution of any CURAC conference surplus be approved”.

Carried.

7. **Treasurer's Report** (Beth Csordas)

The annual audit is fast approaching and Beth is having great difficulty accessing the new MOSIAC accounting system. HR is our sponsor for access to the system and Beth has authorization to access it remotely but is having difficulty doing so.

Because of the March meeting cancellation, Marianne asked that a motion be circulated to Council via email to re-appoint Beth Csordas as Treasurer for the 2014-15 fiscal year. The motion was **carried**.

8. **Information Reports from Committees**

8.1 Christmas Party (Janice Rischke)

We have a hold on December 3rd from 10:30 to 3. Mary has received a package from the Student Centre to complete the booking.

8.2 AGM (Janice Rischke)

Susan Denburg is the featured speaker. Marianne Van Der Wel has donated (with the provision that she may borrow it if needed) video equipment for computer projection, etc. Beth mentioned that she had arranged for the printing of the programme last year. Janice mentioned that she needs help monitoring the buffet tables to make sure that platters of food are replenished when needed and also that tea and coffee are served to all tables.

8.3 Cards (Shari Mercer)

The following cards were sent in the past 2 months:

Leila Sabean	January 26/14	Facility Services
Dr. James Dale	February 13/14	English
Elena Radia	February 12/14	Facility Services
Dr. Vivienne Walters	November 22/13	Sociology
Prof. Boris Stein	March 10/14	Social Work
Dr. Alwyn Berland	March 1/14	English
Dr. C. B. Mueller	February 13/14	Surgery

Still awaiting HR notice for:

Stephen Threlkeld	January 14/14
Bill Stephens	January 12/14

8.4 Constitution and By-laws (Dianne Coventry)

No report

8.5 Membership (Linda Grocott)

Linda reported the current membership is 2230 which is an increase of 5.

8.6 *MURAnews* (Kathy Overholt)

Kathy reminded Council that the dates for the Spring edition are:

Submissions	Apr. 9
To printing	Apr. 23/24
Stuffing	Apr. 30/May 1

8.7 Nominating Committee (Joe Laposa)

See item 5.4.

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Betty Ann Levy)

Betty Ann said that an important function of the committee is to provide information to the membership.

Les Robb's chart from several years ago is to be updated for the *MURAnews* summer issue. It is hoped that Mike Hedden and Brian Beckberger will look at travel insurance

with a planned article for *MURAnews*, perhaps in the fall. There is much confusion regarding quotes and whether the \$10K may be used as a deductible.

8.9 Trips (Shari Mercer)

Shari reported the following trips:

April Stratford
June Walters Family Dinner Theatre - may have to be canceled
July Les Mis

And 3 trips are in the works for the fall.

8.10 Web Site (Marianne Van Der Wel)

Marianne reported the updates she has made. She has added a link for the Hamilton Association for the Advancement of Literature, Science and Art. There is a blurb about *MURAnews* and a page of information about the upcoming CURAC conference.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy)

There will be a meeting next week. At the March 6th meeting, the annual report from the McMaster Children's Centre indicated that the day care centre has moved to a portable at the back of parking lot O (which is on the west campus near the old softball diamonds). The report states that the university is planning to end a 39-year agreement of providing space at a nominal charge. Increases in university rental will require further fee increases to parents. New space for the Centre is to be located in T28-T29.

The featured speaker was Dr. A. Ahmed, Associate VP (Teaching & Learning) and Director of the new McMaster Institute of Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

9.2 CURAC (Marianne Walters)

No report

9.3 MUFA (Marianne Walters)

No report

9.4 UNIFOR (Janice Rischke)

No report

9.5 Hourly Staff Liaison (Dianne Coventry)

No report

9.6 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

Cliff said there will be a meeting next month. He said that the union staff are concerned that all their work is being contracted out.

9.7 Salaried Pension Committee (Bob West)

Bob reported that things have improved a lot and are going in the right direction. He said that the estimates of longevity must be changed as it appears that university retirees live longer than others. New numbers will come out on July 1st.

10. Other Business

No other business.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:20 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.