

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 1:30 pm in KTH-103**

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Dianne Bird, Dianne Coventry, Beth Csordas, Linda Grocott, Mary Johnston (chair), Michele Leroux, Betty Ann Levy, Kathy Overholt, Peter Sutherland, Marianne Van Der Wel, Marianne Walters, Bob West

Regrets: Heather Grigg, Shari Mercer, Pam Penny

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of May 14, 2014 (for approval)

Moved by Betty Ann Levy, **seconded** by Brian Beckberger

“that the minutes be approved as amended”

Carried.

3. Human Resources Report (Michele Leroux)

There are no outstanding issues to report. The most frequent questions HR gets relate to taxes and addresses. Mary suggested that we do a Q&A in the *MURAnews* to address these issues.

Cliff asked if there is any news on the negotiations between McMaster and the Building Union of Canada. Michele said that there is no agreement yet.

Betty Ann reported that the Summer issue of *MURAnews* will contain an update from Les Robb, with input from Michelle, detailing the extent to which increases to our pensions are keeping up with inflation.

Action: The *MURAnews* Committee to consider working with Michele on a Q&A column for the newsletter.

4. Business Arising – updates on

4.1 Academic awards and endowment fundraising (Beth Csordas)

The endowment fund total, at \$61,785, has increased by \$220 over the past month.

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To a question about what interest rate McMaster gets on the fund, Bob West said that it would earn the same rate as the University's investments.

4.2 CURAC 2014 Conference (Mary Johnston)

There has been much positive feedback about the conference. There were about 60 registrations in total. The final budget has not been figured out yet, so it is impossible to say how large the surplus is but the conference did not lose money.

Action: Mary to write a follow-up report on the conference to send to the CURAC Board.

4.3 Response to requests to receive *MURAnews* electronically (Linda Grocott)

In response to the latest campaign, 135 MURA members have requested to change from receiving the newsletter by post to receiving it by email. The request for more people to make this switch will run regularly in the newsletter. New retirees will continue to receive their first few newsletters by post but will be asked to provide us with an email address so that they too can switch to the online version.

4.4 Discovery Program (Betty Ann Levy)

Betty Ann and Marianne W. have recruited MURA member Barb Carpio, formerly of the School of Nursing, to represent MURA on the Discovery Program council and have connected Barb with Jean Wilson, Director of the Arts & Science Program.

There is a need to find more volunteer work that appeals to retired faculty members. In general, the volunteer bureau needs to be re-energized.

5. Correspondence (Mary Johnston)

5.1 Senior College, University of Toronto

We will pass on information from the University of Toronto's Senior College to MURA members in the Toronto area, who are invited to attend seminars hosted by the College. The Senior College supports and fosters the scholarly, professional and creative activities of retired faculty, librarians and senior administrators.

5.2 Invitation to retirement celebration

We received an email invitation to a retirement party for an individual in the Research Finance Department. After some discussion it was decided that MURA should not forward such an invitation to everyone on our list-serve and that we are not able to do so to a targeted group.

Action: Mary will communicate this to the sender of the email.

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5.3 United Way

Retiree Christina Tellier will join the McMaster United Way committee and has promised to keep in touch with MURA. Helen reminded us that MURA does not promote the United Way. Because we are not advocating for it, the retiree on the committee is not a MURA representative.

Action: Mary will contact Christina to clarify her role vis-a-vis MURA and to let her know that we appreciate having a retiree on the United Way committee. As in the past, MURA will accept letters from the United Way committee for publication in *MURAnews*.

6. President's Report (Mary Johnston)

Council members were invited to consider what role they wish to play in MURA over the coming year. Mary will be in contact with each Council member to discuss membership on MURA Committees and representation with other organizations. Council members can find information about the committees and liaison roles on the MURA website. A good place to start is with the button "Who We Are".

There is nothing on the MURA website about the volunteer bureau. It should be added.

Mary and Betty Ann will represent MURA at the Spring Convocation Dinner.

**Action: - Mary to contact all Council members.
- Marianne Van der Wel will send an email to new councilors with site address and private password for the Just Council section of the MURA web site.**

7. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)

No report.

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 Christmas Party

No one has been identified yet to handle this.

8.2 AGM

No one has been identified to handle this but it was agreed that the June 2-4 period is appropriate for next year's meeting.

8.3 Cards (Shari Mercer, by email)

The following cards were sent in the past month:

Murlis Cooper	April 30/14	Engineering
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Hallie Groves Medicine	April 30/14	Pathology & Molecular
Joseph Turley	May 4/14	Purchasing Services
Frank Jones	May 22/14	Sociology
Roderick Phillips	April 29/14	Physical Plant
Ann Booth	May 2/14	Human Resources
Pierre Conlon	March 31/14	French
Marlene Rogers	January 24/14	Education Services

8.4 Constitution and By-laws (Dianne Coventry)

No report

8.5 Membership (Linda Grocott)

The current membership is 2223, which is a decrease of 3.

8.6 *MURAnews* (Kathy Overholt)

Kathy explained that Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting has joined *MURAnews* as the production editor. She reminded Council that we voted to send the agenda and accompanying documents to the news editor, Wayne Rouse, each month with a standing invitation to attend any Council meeting which may be of interest, as an observer. Kathy said that she would like Council to extend this to Phyllis as well.

Moved by Marianne Walters, **seconded** by Helen Barton

“that the Secretary send all meeting documentation plus an invitation to attend meetings to the production editor”

Carried.

8.7 Nominating Committee (Marianne Walters)

No report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Betty Ann Levy)

Betty Ann reminded us that she was contacted by a MURA member who reported that he was informed that an audit has discovered that he had been receiving a benefit to which he was not entitled (see item 8.8 in Council minutes from May 2104). She reported that this member is satisfied with the treatment he received from the University.

Betty Ann suggested that the Pension & Benefits Committee review the MURA website to update information related to pensions and benefits. This may involve removing any out-of date information listed under <http://www.mcmaster-retirees.ca/MURAnews.Benefits.archives.html>

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Action: P&B Committee to review information about pensions and benefits on the MURA web site and inform Marianne V of changes they would like made.

8.9 Trips (Shari Mercer)

All pertinent information was distributed through the list-serve earlier in June.

8.10 Web Site (Marianne Van Der Wel)

Marianne has updated the Trips page.

In response to a concern raised by a CURAC conference delegate, she reported that when she “Googled” the McMaster retirees association, the search came up with an outdated website address. She has asked Computing and Software to remove the pointer to our old web site address so that searches point users to our current web site.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy)

At the June 5th meeting, the Board approved revisions to Plan 2000 regarding normal retirement dates and increased contribution rates for the coming year.

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/link.php?link=employee-health:Pension+Plan+Texts+>

It was also pointed out that, although the financial health of the university has improved, challenges still remain due largely to pension and benefit costs.

9.2 CURAC (Marianne Walters)

No report

9.3 MUFA (Marianne Walters)

No report

Action item: Kathy to send MURA Council agenda to MUFA for their information

9.4 UNIFOR

With Janice Rischke’s retirement from Council, this liaison position needs to be filled. Liaison people do not need to be councilors.

9.5 Hourly Staff Liaison (Dianne Coventry)

No report

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9.6 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

Cliff said that most pension plans are doing well. He remains concerned about the proposed switch to an Ontario pension plan in the future.

9.7 Salaried Pension Committee (Bob West)

Bob said he had nothing new to report. He reminded us that we are likely to receive a good increase in January 2015.

10. Other Business

No other business.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:10 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.