



MCMASTER UNIVERSITY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

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Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 1:30 pm in MUSC-220

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Dianne Coventry, Beth Csordas, Heather Grigg, Linda Grocott, Michele Leroux, Betty Ann Levy (chair), Shari Mercer, Kathy Overholt, Pam Penny, Peter Sutherland, Marianne Van Der Wel, Marianne Walters, Bob West

Regrets: Dianne Bird, Mary Johnston

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of June 11, 2014 (for approval)

Moved by Marianne Walters, **seconded** by Marianne Van Der Wel

"that the minutes be approved"

Carried.

3. Human Resources Report (Michele Leroux)

3.1 Update on negotiations with Building Union of Canada

Michele reported that discussions and negotiations between the University and the Union are ongoing. She said that there will be no lockout through the month of October.

Michele will forward contact information for the BUC representative by mail to Dianne Coventry, with a copy to MURA.

3.2 Q&A column for *MURAnews* on frequently asked questions from retirees

The most frequently asked questions are not really interesting (e.g change of address, change of tax exemptions, when are T4As coming). Once the new HR system is up and running, retirees will be able to use the online services. An article on the new system and how to use it would be more useful once it is available.

3.3 Audit of HR databases to identify any new retirees who signed release forms but whose names were not passed to MURA

There will be a lot of audits conducted in anticipation of the new Mosaic software installation to make sure people are in the correct benefit plan, co-pay plan etc . Michele's staff, as requested, is also reviewing retirees since January 2012 to find any who signed consent forms whose information has not been passed to MURA.

3.4 ID Numbers for Surviving Spouses and Payment of Death Benefits

Linda mentioned that frequently when an employee dies, no new ID number for the spouse is reported to us. Michele will check this with her staff.

To a question of whether death benefits are released automatically, Michele said that HR needs a copy of the death certificate and to talk to the beneficiary for the SIN and bank information.

4. President's Report (Mary Johnston)

4.1 Approval of Committee Chairs and Liaisons

Mary asked that Council members review the list of Standing Committees, Liaisons and Special Projects for corrections, omissions or changes of heart.

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Helen Barton

"that the lists be approved as submitted"

Carried.

4.2 Revision of letter to new retirees

The Council list accompanying the letter no longer supplies contact information. It was suggested that MURA's email address and phone number be added to the list to counter this. It was noted that Helen's and Brian's names do not appear on the list and should be added as "other councilors".

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Helen Barton

"that the letter and list be approved as amended"

Carried.

5. Correspondence (Betty Ann Levy for Mary Johnston)

5.1 Proposal from Geoff Burman

Geoff Burman would like to offer a discount program to MURA members on eyeglass lenses manufactured by Rodenstock, a German company. Program participants would receive a card enabling them to receive a 30% discount at opticians & optometrists who use these lenses.

This would be a perk much like others itemized on our website. It was pointed out that the perks on our website are only those recognized by other groups (e.g. CURAC) or segments of the university community. Discussion indicated Council is not in favour of promoting "MURA-only" perks as it could easily proliferate out of control.

ACTION: - Mary to contact Mr. Burman to suggest that he contact other campus groups (e.g. Purchasing, Alumni) to offer this discount to a broader community.

6. Reports on Special Projects

6.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Beth Csordas)

The endowment fund total, at \$62,690, has increased by \$905 since June. Planning is underway for a fall campaign. The plan is for Alumni/Advancement to do a mail-out for us in October, and to include information in the upcoming *MURAnews*.

6.2 Archives

Mary would like one or more people to look after the MURA archives. This is information which gives new retirees an historical perspective of the organization. It has been started on the website but isn't up-to-date. There is a lot of information just sitting in the office. Perhaps it should be organized. Beth will talk to Mary about this issue.

6.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (Dianne Bird)

Shari has just purchased 40 cards from the fundraising card stock to be used for sympathy messages to bereaved families.

6.4 Volunteer Bureau

Betty Ann and Marianne W. met with Susan Searls Giroux, the Associate Vice-President (Faculty), who is enthused about getting volunteer opportunities on campus. Faculty Deans will provide details of opportunities for faculty, staff, etc. They will provide detailed definitions and specifications of what the jobs entail. Job opportunities may require the need for additional training (e.g. WHMIS) and this will be made clear.

Betty Ann has set up a small committee which includes herself, Marianne Walters, Marianne Van Der Wel, Helen Barton and Barb Carpio. Volunteer opportunities in the Discovery program will come through Barb. As well, researchers on aging issues will look for volunteers from the MURA membership.

All volunteer opportunities will be posted on the Volunteer Bureau website, so that everything will be in one place.

Dr. Giroux has asked for a monthly meeting to consider proposals from either side.

Betty Ann will ask Barb Carpio to talk to Marianne W. to discuss the issue of offering mentoring to continuing students.

7. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas)

Beth provided a report on the current status of the budget for information.

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Pam Penny)

Pam will book Celebration Hall for early June (June 2, 3, or 4).

8.2 Cards (Shari Mercer)

Cards sent since June meeting are:

James Hunter	June 7, 2014	Parking Officer
Caroline Bayard	Sept 9, 2014	French
Richard Burger	June 30, 2014	Operations and Maintenance
Philip Gardner Ashbaugh	Aug 7, 2014	Science (Physics)
Mary (Mamie) Hunter	July 23, 2014	Grad Studies
Norman Lane	Aug 6, 2014	Math & Stats
Ivan Anthony Bracalenti	June 25, 2014	Family Medicine
John C. Sinclair	May 2, 2014	Pediatrics
Ethel Cosmos	Aug 19, 2014	Neuroscience

8.3 Christmas Lunch (Pam Penny)

The lunch is scheduled for December 3rd. New retirees are to be invited to attend for free. The question is how do we identify these people. Those details are to be determined and so the committee needs to meet and report back to Council. Information on this needs to be ready for the next issue of *MURAnews*.

8.4 Communications (Heather Grigg)

Heather has several goals in mind and needs to call a committee meeting. She said that some other non-Council people have expressed their interest in participating in the process.

The first job needs to be an overhaul of the website. It should be easier to navigate, compatible with mobile devices and easily accessible. She is looking at several options. The process may take a year but at the end it should be easier to use and maintain.

Then, she would like the committee to work on the email distribution lists.

The new Canadian anti-spam legislation requires that we put a disclaimer on any e-mail with commercial content, but Heather feels that it doesn't hurt to include it on all e-mail correspondence with members.

8.5 Constitution and By-laws (Dianne Coventry)

Dianne will call a meeting of the committee in October. She said that it needs to come up with a new definition of what a retiree is, and to understand what changes might be needed if our funding model changes.

8.6 Membership (Linda Grocott)

The current membership is 2252, which is an increase of 29.

8.7 *MURAnews* (Kathy Overholt)

The schedule for production of the fall issue is:

Deadline for articles: October 10
To printing: October 23/24
Mailing: October 30/31

Linda reported that we have achieved the goal of 200 members opting out the mailing of paper newsletters. We will continue to ask our members to consider the electronic option to further ease the budget.

8.8 Nominating Committee (Marianne Walters)

No report

8.9 Pensions and Benefits (Peter Sutherland)

Mike Hedden has forwarded an article about the \$10,000 travel insurance for the fall newsletter, prepared by he and Brian.

8.10 Trips & Special Events (Shari Mercer)

Shari reported that there are no trips scheduled for the remainder of the year. There is a problem of travel agencies requiring a hefty deposit up front. She plans to meet with her committee to plan for 2015.

8.11 Web Site (Marianne Van Der Wel)

Marianne continues to update the website as necessary.

She assured Council that she plans to stay with us until the new site is up and running.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy)

Betty Ann said the next meeting of the Board is September 26th.

9.2 CURAC (Mary Johnston)

No report

9.3 MUFA (Betty Ann Levy)

Betty Ann said that she plans to schedule a meeting with the new president.

9.4 UNIFOR (CAW/MUSA) (Dianne Bird)

No report.

A benefits issue raised by a UNIFOR retiree was referred to the Pension and Benefits Committee.

9.5 Hourly Staff Liaison (Dianne Coventry)

No report

9.6 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

Cliff reported there was a meeting of the committee on September 9th at which there was no quorum. The committee is still working on revisions to the plan.

He also reported that the returns look good which may result in a slightly higher increase in January.

9.7 Salaried Pension Committee (Bob West)

Bob reported that the January increase will be the full increase in the CPI (2.5%) plus a supplement at 'catch-up' amount yet to be determined.

10. Business arising from Council meeting in June not covered above

No other business.

11. Other Business

11.1 McMaster 'Glitter' Sale for Charity

Marianne V. reported that the Chaplaincy Centre is organizing a fundraising sale to benefit the Hamilton Native Women's Centre and Atzin Mexico, in support of marginalized women. They are looking for donations of gently used jewellery, handbags and scarves. Marianne will provide a copy of the advertising poster for distribution on the listserve.

11.2 Council photo

Helen said that it is traditional for Council to have a picture taken before the October meeting. She asked that everyone arrive at 1:15 pm with a smile.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:32 pm

"that the meeting be adjourned"

Carried.