



MCMaster UNIVERSITY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

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Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, January 11, 2017, 1:30 PM in MUSC-230

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Brian Beckberger, Dianne Bird, Gail Britton, Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting, Anna Fleming, Nora Gaskin, Heather Grigg, Helen Barton, Mary Johnston, Les King (chair), Betty Ann Levy, Peter Sutherland

Regrets: Dianne Coventry, Beth Csordas, Carolyn Rosenthal, and Marianne Van Der Wel

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting – December 14, 2016 (for approval)

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

“that the minutes of December 14, 2016 be approved”

Carried.

3. President’s Report (Les King) – no report

4. Human Resources Report (Anna Fleming) – no report

5. Treasurer’s Report: (Helen Barton for Beth Csordas)

Beth and Helen will be working on the budget this month.

6. Reports on Special Projects

6.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton for Beth Csordas)

The fund now stands at \$76,028 up by \$1550 since the last meeting.

6.2 Archives (Mary Johnston)

Marianne is in the process of scanning the older paper records and putting them up on the site. As a result, the bulk of our archives are now on the web site. Brian has a small scanner that is portable should anyone need it for scanning records.

6.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (Dianne Bird) – no report

7. Information Reports from Committees

7.1 AGM (Gail Britton)

Council discussed possible guest speakers for the AGM. A tie-in to Canada's 150th birthday could be a theme. Names and topics that were mentioned included:

- Stephen Heathorn, Dept. of History – Brexit
- Ann Herring, Dept. of Anthropology -- Plagues and diseases in nineteenth century Hamilton
- Nancy Bouchier & Ken Cruickshank, Dept. of History – *The People and The Bay*, book on Hamilton Harbour
- Mehran Anvari, Scientific Director & CEO, Centre for Surgical Invention & Innovation (CSii) – robotic surgery, minimal access surgery

7.2 Christmas Lunch (Gail Britton)

Council will set the date for the 2017 Christmas lunch at the next meeting

7.3 Communications (Heather Grigg)

UTS Services & Website meetings are coming this month, so no report until next month

7.3.1 Card report (Dianne Bird)

Cards sent:

- Selina Ferrie, Custodian, DOD November 12, 2016
- Robert West, Director Financial, DOD November 30, 2016
- Derek Walton, Physics & Astronomy, DOD November 17, 2016
- Alexander Bain, Professor, MUFA, Chemistry, DOD December 28, 2016

7.4 Constitution and By-Laws (Dianne Coventry) – no report

7.5 Membership (Helen Barton)

Print newsletters will be sent to 290 fewer members as a result of the policy to send by email when possible.

7.6 MURANews (Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting)

7.6.1 There was a discussion on revising the *MURANews* policy about what sources to accept as authoritative when deciding whether or not to publish information about the death of a retiree.

Moved by Nora Gaskin, **seconded** by Mary Johnston

“that for publication of a retiree death in MURANews, the MURANews committee will accept information from either a notification by McMaster Human Resources, or a notice in the McMaster Daily News or in any major public news source, subject to verification and agreement by the MURANews committee”

Carried.

The policy for sending condolence cards will continue as is, i.e. notification must come from McMaster Human Resources.

7.6.2 The deadline for submissions for the Winter edition is Jan. 13; stuffing date is Tuesday Jan. 31.

7.6.3 The two action items from last month’s minutes have been dealt with, namely: 1. that *MURANews* will publish something on the importance of instructing one’s survivors to report one’s death, possibly including it as part of a will, and giving details on the appropriate HR contact information; and 2. to amend the *MURANews* and website to indicate that the MURA voicemail is checked once a week rather than twice.

7.7 Nominating (Mary Johnston)

The committee’s January 10th meeting was postponed to January 13th due to weather.

7.8 Pensions and Benefits (Peter Sutherland) – no report

7.9 Trips & Special Events (Mary Johnston)

A new MURA member has expressed interest in joining the committee: Sarah deSilvio from Health Sciences, who would like to help with trips, though she doesn’t want to take the lead. Shari Mercer is willing to continue as a committee member for the time being.

7.10 Volunteering (Betty Ann Levy) – no report

7.11 Web Site (Marianne Van der Wel) – no report

8. Information Reports from Liaisons

8.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy)

Though the meeting was interesting, there wasn’t anything particularly relevant to MURA. More details in written report.

8.2 CURAC (Mary Johnston) – no report

8.3 MUFA (Betty Ann Levy) – no report

8.4 Unifor (CAW/MUSA) (Dianne Bird)

- Dianne is planning a meeting. There is no news on the proposed retirees' chapter. Council discussed possible items for the meeting agenda:
 1. the retiree's chapter – we could help them publicize it by displaying flyers on a table at the AGM
 2. ask them what their retiree members are saying to them about benefits
- Dianne and Mary last met with UNIFOR Local 5555 President Emily Heikoop on March 24th, 2016. At that time the union was preparing to negotiate a new contract with the University.
- The agreement between Local 5555 and the University for Non-Academic Administrative, Professional, and Technical Employees (Unit 1) runs from May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2019.
- Unifor 5555 also represents Employees of Parking & Transit Services (Unit 3) and Special Constables (Unit 4). Collective agreements for these two groups end on September 15, 2018 and October 1, 2019, respectively.

8.5 Hourly Staff Liaison (Dianne Coventry) – no report**8.6 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews) – no report****8.7 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)**

- The next meeting is set for March.
- Brian has been invited to a workshop being held for the committee on Feb 1.
- There was a short discussion about the proposed federal legislation Bill C-27: An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, which as Peter Sutherland noted CAUT is keeping a watching brief on. The Act would allow employers with federally regulated private pension plans to convert defined benefit pension plans to target benefit plans (TBPs). TBPs are a blend of defined contribution and defined benefit plans, which set a target benefit, but allow for a reduction in benefits if the fixed contributions are not sufficient to fund the plan. It's not clear that this will affect only future retirees. In 2013-2014 the New Brunswick government passed laws to convert public sector defined benefit pension plans into TBPs, which resulted in significant pension reductions and decreased benefit security for New Brunswick government employees.

9. Other Business -- none

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:16 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.