



MCMaster UNIVERSITY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Gilmour Hall Room B108
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON, L8S 4L8, Canada
(905) 525-9140 ext. 23171
email: mura@mcmaster.ca
www.mcmaster-retirees.ca
Nora Gaskin, Secretary
gaskinno@mcmaster.ca

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 1:30 PM in MUSC-220**

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Brian Beckberger, Beth Csordas, Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting, Helen Dickman, Nora Gaskin, John Horsman, Mahendra Joshi, Betty Ann Levy, Kathy Overholt, Carolyn Rosenthal
Regrets: Heather Grigg, Les King, Shep Siegel

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting September 12, 2018 (for approval)

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

“that the minutes of September 12, 2018 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Brian Beckberger has volunteered to chair the Pensions and Benefits Committee.

Moved by Kathy Overholt, **seconded** by Mahendra Joshi

“that Council approve the appointment of Brian Beckberger as Chair of the Pensions and Benefits Committee”

Carried.

3.2 **Action:** The new welcome letter will be updated and sent out, with the word “vacant” in the AGM, Christmas Lunch and Trips and Events listings.

4. Human Resources Report (Helen Dickman)

- HR has cross-checked their retiree records to a list of active retirees provided by MURA, and gave dates of death for deceased retirees.
- There is a reorganization in process at HR that should positively impact the flow of timely information to MURA.
- MURA confirmed that we want to participate in the November 27 employee retirement workshop. The workshop proper will be from 10:30-12, with the period from 12-12:30 designated for a Q&A. MURA representatives, one or two people, can attend either at the beginning or at the end of the workshop, but preferably at the end, so that we can talk to anyone who has questions after the workshop ends.
Action: Helen D. will send more details in an email.
- Topics our reps will cover: What does MURA do; what does being a member of MURA mean; advice, if any, about the retirement process, and life after retirement.
- The mailing address on the Sun Life paper form has changed in recent years; the HR retiree web page has a link to a page that links directly to the form at Sun Life.
 - **Action:** Nora will add a link to that page on the MURA web site.
 - **Action:** *MURAnews* will publish an alert about the new address.
 - **Action:** Helen D. will prepare a presentation for Council on the 3 different ways to make a Sun Life Claim.

5. President's Report (Helen Barton for Heather Grigg)

5.1 New Retiree Lunch: Helen thanked everyone who attended the New Retiree Lunch. 31 guests, 11 council members, and 2 HR representatives attended. Expenses totalled \$1,123.03. Many of the new retirees commented that they enjoyed the lunch, and found the presentations informative. Carolyn suggested keeping the list of attendees as possible recipients of future calls for volunteers for council activities.

5.2 Meeting with HR: Heather and Helen met with Wanda McKenna and Nancy Vukovich from HR about the definition of a retiree. They learned that a new structure is being implemented in HR and a new position, director of client services and systems, reports to Wanda McKenna. They are drawing back from the distributed system where everyone did everything, and have already switched to a dedicated phone answering staff and front desk person. They have handed the pension calculation area over to specialists. The advisors for the different areas are still handling exit interviews. They are redoing the benefit booklets, preparing to provide online statements and T4s, and getting a new system called Pension Pro Plus, which, among other things, will include a tool to calculate what one's pension will be.

Regarding the definition of a retiree, the university now has a draft definition, which will cover both defined benefit and defined contribution retirees. Factors in the definition will include age and length of service. Everyone except CUPE (Teaching Assistants, etc) and clinical faculty would be included in the definition.

They are close to finalizing the definition. The current total number of University employees is about 14,000, including groups such as temps, casual, sessional.

6. Treasurer's Report (Beth Csordas) – no report

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Beth Csordas) The fund is currently at \$83,215. It hasn't gone up a lot since the spring; there will be a blurb in the upcoming issue of *MURAnews*.

7.2 Archives (Mary Johnston) – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (Beth Csordas) – no report

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (TBA) – we will defer setting the date for the AGM until November or December

8.2 Christmas Lunch (Helen Barton)

- We have a contract with the MSU group for the hall, and one for the food with Paradise Catering.
- We know how much it will cost, and still have a full subsidy for new retirees and a \$10 subsidy for everyone else from the President's Office.
- We will stick with a price of \$17.50 per person, same as last year. Council approved this.
- Parking will be the same as last year, lots B, C, D and the underground stadium lot.
- **Action:** We will be sending the invitations out to the new retirees within the next week, and Nora will take care of special invitations that haven't already gone out.
- Alvin Lee has agreed to give some short remarks about retirees and the University to give a unifying feel to the event.
- **Action:** Alvin should be contacted again before the lunch to confirm this arrangement and thank him for agreeing to do it.

8.3 Communications (Helen Barton) – lots of emails have gone out to the listserv

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Helen Barton) – written report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin) – added University Club to McMaster Perks

8.4 Constitution and By-Laws (Brian Beckberger) – no report

8.5 Membership (Helen Barton) – written report; negative numbers are due to new influx of previously unknown deceased retirees

8.6 MURAnews (Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting) – deadline is Friday, stuffing party is Wed. Oct. 24

8.7 Nominating (Les King) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

- Hospitality Services offers a meal plan that gives a 10% discount when you put money on your photo ID card to pay for food.
 - **Action:** Brian will write something about this for the winter newsletter
 - **Action:** Nora will add it to the web site.
- Regarding Microsoft Office not being available to retirees, UTS entered into a contract that it would be available as a site license product to all employees, but not for retirees. We've had correspondence from 2 retirees since then who said UTS told them emeritus status faculty get the site license, but no one else.
 - **Action:** Helen will ask Brian to ask UTS for information and follow up based on that information.

8.9 Trips & Special Events – Helen will follow up on 2 possible special event volunteers

8.10 Volunteering (Betty Ann Levy)

- All calls for volunteers come in through email to Communications and are sent out via email.
- McMaster Community Engagement is quite active, but tends to use only students.
- On campus, there's really no role for retirees.
- The Alumni Association still has the now out-dated McMaster Retirees Volunteer Network web site.
 - **Action:** Helen will contact Alumni Association to take down the McMaster Retirees Volunteer Network web site.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy) – written report

Things are changing with regard to the role of observers. Up until 2 or 3 years ago the observers got all of the documents in written form; now there is an observer's package of several hundred pages sent electronically, making it difficult for aging eyes to read. At the end of the meeting, there is now a special meeting for board members only. Observers have always been allowed at

closed sessions, but this is different. This year the board retreat had a sparse agenda, but the day before the board retreat there was a special orientation for just board members, followed by a dinner. Betty Ann thinks they went through all the strategic items there, because there were few or no new board members at the retreat, and there was very little substance to the sessions. She thinks that the retiree group is not viewed as a significant employee group. Helen noted that Alumni Development is one body on campus that acknowledges retirees and proactively sends offers and opportunities to MURA.

9.2 CURAC (Heather Grigg) – no report

9.3 MUFA (Carolyn Rosenthal) – Carolyn has a meeting next week with Michel Grignon; this is a negotiation year; they are planning a survey of their members about pension and benefits; retired faculty might be asked to participate in the survey.

9.4 Unifor (Mahendra Joshi) – the retirement chapter has activities and workshops for their members, but Mahendra hasn't yet arranged a meeting with the union leadership to continue the relationship between MURA and Unifor and explore topics that may be of mutual interest.

9.5 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.6 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews) – there may be a small increase, but not equal to inflation

9.7 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)

- The restatement has been forwarded to financial services and is slated for approval by the BOG in the next few months.
- There is a good possibility that we will get an increase next year.

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:19 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.