



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
mcmaster-retirees.ca
Nora Gaskin, Secretary

Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, June 16, 2020, 2:00-3 pm (Zoom)

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Brian Beckberger, Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting, Nora Gaskin, Heather Grigg, John Horsman, Hank Jacek, Mahendra Joshi, Betty Ann Levy

Regrets: Alison Forler, Mary Gauld, Mary Law, Kathy Overholt, Debbie Weisensee

2. Annual General Meeting

AGM: If we can't meet in person, a virtual AGM should be held before the end of November, even if we can only notify those for whom we have an email address. If possible we will notify our 600+ retirees for whom we have only a postal address. **Idea:** ensure that everyone who attended the past 2 AGMs and 2019 Christmas lunch are either emailed or phoned. We will need to make a final decision on this in September.

Length of term for newly elected people: Consensus was that if the virtual AGM is held in November, 6 months is too short a period of time for newly elected councillors and executive members to serve until the next AGM, and that a term of 1.5 years for executive members and 2.5 or 3.5 years for councillors would make more sense. The decision whether to go 2.5 or 3.5 years for councillors could take into account how many councillors' terms of office are due to expire in any given year. If there is an objection to this during the AGM, we can have a vote of the membership on the topic.

Action: Mention the altered terms of office in the notice of AGM, and speak to the newly elected councillors about their preferred term of office.

Finding an auditor: Heather has someone who may be available in the fall.

3. MURA Funding

- **SEIU:** Still no response from SEIU about this year's payment or new 3-year funding request. **Action:** Helen will follow up.
- **Unifor:** No further response since May 11 from Unifor on new 3-year funding; their exec had not met due to Covid. **Action:** Helen will follow up.

4. Definition of a Retiree

No further info or action, haven't heard from HR on this since Jan. 20. TMG reported that they had been consulted and that they supported the policy, which doesn't give supplementary benefits to people who retire before the age of 65 with the group RRSP, regardless of the number of years of service. MUALA reported informally that they didn't remember being consulted and didn't support the proposed policy, but were to provide something in writing and haven't yet. Neither Unifor nor SEIU have responded on this either. **Action:** Nora and Helen will follow up.

5. Academic Awards

No action taken. Helen has not contacted Karen McQuigge re working on new campaign yet.

6. Email System Migration

The MURA test group (Helen, Nora, Brian, Debbie and Heather) have had a few Zoom meetings with Mary Taws, Janice Tsang, Carmalita Larkin and others from UTS regarding the migration of our McMaster email accounts from MacMail, hosted on a campus server, to McMaster Mail (powered by Microsoft 365) hosted in the cloud. All of the test group have migrated to the new system, mostly without problems, though a few discrepancies were identified between the documentation/instructions and what actually happened during migration.

We made suggestions for modifications in the web and email documentation and instructions both before and after our migration experiences. UTS has already incorporated some of the suggested modifications, and they continue to work on more. They have also set up a retiree-specific email migration suite of web pages. There are 3 distinct groups of retirees affected differently by the migration: emeritus professors, who will migrate with their departments, and may have continuing access to the full Office 365 suite of applications; recent (and some not-so-recent) retirees, who may still have access to Office 365, but will lose it with this migration; and everyone else, who don't have access to Office 365. The latter two groups will migrate in stages from July 15 to August 15. All email communications regarding the migration will come directly from UTS, not from MURA.

There were problems migrating Debbie, and we would like to understand why that happened. **Action:** Brian will follow up with Mary Taws.

There is also a problem in the new system with marking junk mail as "not junk". A popup invites you to send a report to Microsoft after you mark the item as "not junk", so they can fine-tune their junk mail filters, but if you send the report, the item is reported as junk instead. Nora submitted this to UTS as a service request, and also emailed the UTS migration group about it, but there has been no resolution to date and the problem persists.

7. Member survey

All results "tidied up". Final downloads need to be done before end of June. Hank is doing an interim report for the Summer *MURAnews*, encompassing two areas: the activities of retirees, who are twice as likely to volunteer outside of McMaster than within McMaster; and how to reduce ten barriers to retirees volunteering within

McMaster. A further report could deal with the individual retiree's relationship with MURA as an organization.

8. Board of Governors Report (Betty Ann Levy)

The June 4 meeting was 4 hours long. Highlights included a long discussion on academic planning on how to run courses during the pandemic, and how to respond to Black Lives Matter. The Spring and Summer sessions were all run online very successfully, and enrolment was higher than in any previous year. In the fall, the plan is to be completely online and make everything as interactive as possible for the students, allowing them to form bonds with each other and with the university. First year students will have a Welcome Week and first year engagement with the university. The concern was that enrolment wouldn't meet targets, but we have double digit increases in enrolment both for domestic students and for international students, though there is always a no-show rate. So we may not in fact have the loss of enrolment money that was feared. The Winter term may be online or hybrid. Tuition fees will not change.

Pre-pandemic, financially the situation was very good, but after the pandemic started, a big budget deficit was projected, however after the double-digit enrolment increases in Spring and Summer terms, the projections indicate there shouldn't be any major problems.

The Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute (SCC-RI) has closed, which is a surprise. Operations hadn't been going well, and all efforts to solve the problems were unsuccessful. It is a big loss.

9. MURAnews

Article deadline is July 10; the issue will be online-only as printing and mailing services are not operational. Helen Ayre will be editor with the help of Mary Johnston. Nora Gaskin joined the MURAnews Committee.

10. CURAC Non-Medical Benefits Survey 2019/2020

The report on this survey is out and available at the CURAC web site. We're not sure who responded on behalf of MURA. It would have been some time in late 2019 or early 2020. **Action:** Nora will check files and follow up with Mary Johnston.

11. Mail and Cards

Phyllis is going to the Services building to check the mail once every two weeks. If Heather needs more cards, someone will need to go get them. **Action:** Nora will pick up another pack of 40 cards and envelopes and mail them to Heather.

12. Pension Trust Committee

The committee will be meeting on July 16, and they want a biography from Brian, since they want to find out more about the backgrounds of the committee members. Cliff hasn't been asked for one so far. Brian was supposed to have heard from someone on how the pension is doing, but hasn't yet.