



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, October 14, 2020, 1:30 PM on Zoom

1. Welcome & Regrets

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

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

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting September 16, 2020 (for approval)

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Cliff Andrews

“that the minutes of September 16, 2020 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising – none

4. Human Resources Report (Alison Forler) – no report

5. President’s Report (Helen Barton)

Annual General Meeting

- Thursday, November 26 1:30 pm. Zoom meeting – online or by phone. Will require registration.
- See the accompanying document of *MURAnews* material.
- Need to –
 - Approve agenda.
 - Approve method of registration.
 - How to handle voting, nominations from the floor, questions.

Auditor

- Nancy Gray has agreed to conduct the MURA audit for the 2020-21 year.
- Her appointment requires approval of Council.

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Heather Grigg

“that Nancy Gray be appointed as MURA auditor for the 2019-20 fiscal year”

Carried.

Three-Year Funding

- Response received from Unifor. They will commit to only \$4,500 of the \$6,743 request. No response from SEIU (\$432), or to 2020 invoice
- We will need to review revenue sources and budgeted expenses. The shortfall in income will be \$2,675 in (approx. 20% of \$12,500 budget)
- Have not yet issued a contract for signatures.
- First invoices for the new agreement to be issued in January 2021 for the calendar year.

Definition of a Retiree and Retiree Supplemental Benefits

Wanda McKenna has responded to an inquiry. The definition and other policy work, which has had to take a back seat since the spring, are scheduled to resume soon. She offered to set a time to connect via a Zoom meeting or conference call. She also said it “would be helpful to hear how our retiree community may be doing and any other questions you may have.”

Unifor

Beth Couchman, President of Unifor 5555 wrote “ ...discussed this with Wanda and it is as I anticipated about cost savings. This is their policy and program and they do have the right to change it. ...this is unfortunate, truly, and unfair, but I don’t see a way to change the University’s decision.”

MUALA

Reports “MUALA would definitely support MURA’s recommendation of a retiree definition that considers both age and service time. ...[not] able to offer much practical support... with everything else that’s going on.”

SEIU has not responded to our inquiries.

Missing Faculty Retirees

MURA has not received information on almost half of the new faculty retirees reported in MUFA’s annual list of retirees. Kathy sent a list to Alison, who responded that HR had released information on only one of the eleven names sent. Some on the list are quite prominently known as very active in the Mac community, so it’s puzzling. Were they not offered the opportunity to sign the MURA release form? Should we email these people to ask if they, as retirees, would like to be receiving MURA’s communications? **Action:** Kathy and Helen, possibly Hank and Mary L. will draft an email to send to the missing faculty members.

Survey and Strategic Planning

A final report on the survey results and planning for a strategic planning exercise are still pending.

6. Treasurer's Report (Debbie Weisensee)

- Query what "Liabilities: Due to McMaster University -- \$11,302.20" is. **Action:** Helen will ask Debbie and/or look into it and send the explanation out to Council.
- We received another cheque from Medoc Travel Insurance through our CURAC affinity program.

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton)

The new fund to provide scholarships to graduate students researching technological advances related to seniors is now established. The initial goal is to raise \$25,000 as soon as possible, which will support an annual \$1,000 award. The fund is already at \$6,000, thanks to an allocation from MURA's undesignated funds and a couple of early gifts from fellow retirees.

7.2 Archives (Mary Johnston) – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards – no report

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Helen Barton for Mary Gault)

- The AGM Notice of Meeting was circulated prior to the Council meeting. The guest speaker will be Dr. Lori Burrows, Associate Director of the M.G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research and Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences.
- Pre-registration for the AGM will be required with distribution of the link and password to registrants via email or phone.
- We have acquired a copy of Alvin Lee's new memoir, and will get a \$25 gift certificate for Amazon or Chapters (or either at the winner's choice) for draw prizes.
- We also will need a speaker gift. **Action:** Helen will send a note to Mary Gault to see if she has any idea what Lori would like.
- **Action:** All Council members should proofread the AGM agenda.

8.2 Christmas Lunch (Mary Gault) – The lunch is cancelled; we will send email greetings to members; Betty Ann will write the message.

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Heather Grigg) – no report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin)

UTS Website

UTS has done some work to restore retiree service information to their newly designed web site, uts.mcmaster.ca that was missed when the redesign was done, and Nora has updated most of the links from MURA's web site to UTS with the exception of a form that has gone missing and may have been eliminated. The new UTS web page for retiree services is <https://uts.mcmaster.ca/retiree-services/>, but there is no link to it from the main UTS page yet. Further follow-ups with Sue McKinlay are planned when she returns from vacation at the beginning of November.

ID Cards

Jacob Westerhof, Security Technology Administrator, Security & Parking Services, sent an update about changes to the photo ID format and process.

- The card format has changed slightly to include the bar code on the front of the card instead of the back (only for new cards). All old cards with the bar code on the back will still work.
- Card will no longer indicate "Retiree". People will continue using the same card as when they were employees, and only data in the system will change (all access except employee lounges removed and "Retiree" added to an internal field)
- The kiosk in Gilmour Hall is closed, and new or replacement ID cards are only available at T32 – Parking Office, by appointment only.

The MURA web site has been updated with the new information.

MURA web site council minutes

Council decided to add the following explanatory note to the MURA website listing of Council minutes to explain why 2019-20 Council runs from June 2019 to November 2020: "The 2020/21 Annual General Meeting had to be postponed to November 26 2020 due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the 2019/20 Council year is prolonged, and the 2020/21 Council year shortened."

8.4 Constitution and By-Laws (Brian Beckberger) – Definition of a retiree is still pending.

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – no report

8.6 MURAnews (Phyllis DeRosa-Koetting) – Hoping to mail on Oct. 21. Impressive will do the printing of the newsletter and labelling of envelopes, Nora will deliver envelopes to them, then pick up newsletters and envelopes and deliver to Mail Services. Denise has been working with Tim Nolan re accessibility of newsletter. We think that website and PDF version, along with a Word version that will be distributed, will cover everybody's needs, but will stand ready to do more if needed in the future. We need more envelopes. **Action:** Nora will send new MURA logo to Phyllis and Helen for production of more envelopes.

8.7 Nominating (Heather Grigg)

The Nominating Committee report that was prepared in the spring has been replaced by a revised report for this AGM.

Moved by Heather Grigg, **seconded** by Cliff Andrews

“that Council accept the Nominating Committee report for the 2020/21 year”

Carried.

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger & Mary Law) – There was one query about end of life planning which was answered with references to articles in *MURAnews*, and one regarding a temporary delay in pension deposits, which was passed along to HR.

8.9 Trips & Special Events (Mary Gauld)

Still considering having a Zoom get together for new retirees.

8.10 Volunteering (Betty Ann Levy)

Thanks to Ellen Ryan, two volunteer positions will be posted in *MURAnews*.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

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

- In the BOG report the description for “International” was lost; it is “due to travel restrictions, international engagement is somewhat limited, but the university is still developing relationships with international students”.
- Brian queried how votes are counted in BoG Zoom meetings. Answer: your vote is assumed to be positive unless you indicate negative in the chat room.

9.2 Community Engagement Committee (Betty Ann Levy) – no report

9.3 CURAC (Helen Barton)

The AGM was on Sep 30, and Helen Barton attended virtually. Revenue from affinity programs is good. CURAC is in good financial shape. McGill will have a full conference in May 2021, but virtually. Best practices: best way to recruit executive and council members? Need a nominating committee with wide knowledge, younger and newer retirees on Council. They are going to set to work on an inclusive language policy for CURAC. **Action:** Helen will send notes. We sent out an email to our membership re the UofT Senior College virtual events.

9.4 MUFA (Hank Jacek) – no report

9.5 Unifor (Mahendra Joshi)

Unifor Retiree Chapter is active. No contact with the active Chapter.

9.6 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.7 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews) On Nov. 9 will have final report for the year with news of any increase. Both Cliff and Brian are invited to prepare a short statement for the AGM

9.8 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger) – Meeting on Sept 7, next one Nov. 12 with audited reports. May not have much to say for the AGM due to confidentiality regarding an increase. Subcommittee meeting Oct. 6 and Oct. 23. Questions regarding agreement for sharing expenses between the pension fund and McMaster University retroactive to 1997, signed in 1998, grew out of court case in 1995 with the faculty. “Administrative expenses” is not defined in a consistent way. Have there been any changes to that agreement since 1998?
Action: Brian will send a copy of the agreement to Helen and Nora.

9.9 Age-Friendly University Committee (Mary Gauld) – Mary sent a list with links that came from that committee of the University’s COVID initiatives and age-friendly initiatives.

10. Other Business

Hank is working on a project to track the number of occasions that would call for the lowering of the flag to half-staff when there is a funeral of a McMaster retiree, from July 2020 for the period of one year. He expects no more than 2-3 instances per month, and hopes to use the data to advocate for a change of university policy, which currently does not acknowledge retiree deaths.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:19 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.