



McMaster University Retirees Association

Gilmour Hall Room B108
1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4L8, Canada
(905) 525-9140 ext. 23171
mura@mcmaster.ca
www.mcmaster-retirees.ca

Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, November 10, 2021, 1 PM (Zoom)

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Denise Anderson, Helen Ayre, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Susan Birnie, Barry Diacon, Nora Gaskin, Mary Gauld, Nancy Gray, John Horsman, Hank Jacek (chair), Michelle Jubinville, Betty Ann Levy, Kathy Overholt, Phil Wood

Regrets: Cliff Andrews, Barb Carpio, Dina LoPresti

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting October 13, 2021 (for approval)

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

“that the minutes of October 13, 2021 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising – none

4. Human Resources Report (Michelle Jubinville)

- Jordan Roberts, program manager for benefits, is working with Dr. Link on the information he requested.
- **Cataract surgery benefits:** Jordan provided some written information on what is covered. Each plan has a different level of coverage; make sure you're looking at your booklet, or contact Sun Life directly if you're unsure of what is covered. In general, in Ontario, the basic surgery, ultrasound diagnostic tests and lenses are paid for by OHIP. Additional measurements and exams, e.g. IOLMaster (laser) exams, are not covered by either OHIP or Sun Life. OHIP will cover the lens implants that the physician considers medically necessary, but not extras, like multifocal lenses. The difference between basic lenses and upgraded lenses may be covered by Sun Life, but not for all plans. **Action:** Michelle will email what Jordan wrote up about this to us.
- In the plan descriptions, there should be a **differentiation between regular contact lenses and implant lenses used in cataract surgery.** Brian requested a

rewrite when the plans are rewritten to make this distinction. **Action:** Michelle will pass that information along to Jordan for the next re-write.

- **Tuition assistance:** **Action:** Michelle is waiting for a list of questions from Helen B. after which we will set up a meeting.
- **MacCheck:** Michelle assumes that all questions have been answered. Nora asked for and got verification that the MacCheck team are the first point of contact for people needing support. Helen B noted that we don't have a phone number for the MacCheck team. **Action:** Michelle will get in touch with Deb Garland about getting a phone number where the MacCheck team can be reached.
 - Barry asked why retirees can't use the Ontario QR code vaccine passport for access to campus. Michelle said the team hasn't set up MacCheck that way. **Action:** She will ask them about it.
 - Brian noted that the website is misleading in that it says anyone without a MACID should register as a visitor, but retirees have MACIDs and must still register as visitors. He requested that the website information be clarified.
- **Retiree death notifications:** There is a big backlog of retiree death notifications coming from Human Resources, making it hard for us to keep our records straight and provide timely condolences. Michelle said that we are welcome to copy Tim and Beata on any death notices that we send to HR, since they don't report to Michelle any more.
- Brian asked for confirmation that the person whose **drug benefits were dropped** was an isolated case. **Action:** Michelle will follow up with Tim.

5. President's Report (Hank Jacek)

Updated MURA Welcome Letter for HR

Moved by Nora Gaskin, **seconded** by Betty Ann Levy

"that the updated MURA welcome letter for new retirees be approved"

Carried.

Next of kin email address on release form

Denise raised an idea we talked about in the past, of asking HR to request new retirees provide an alternate email address for next of kin on the release form that allows MURA to contact retirees, to make it easier to contact spousal survivors or other next of kin in the event of their death. **Action:** Helen B. will find the email we sent to Michelle on the topic and follow up.

Pension and benefit problems for members

Hank got a phone call from a member who had been trying to contact HR on a pension issue for a month and was frustrated that they had been unable to get an answer to a question or talk to anyone with knowledge in the area. Brian also dealt with a person who got no response from a query about having her drug benefits dropped. **Action:** Susan will put together a draft email request to Michelle giving examples of people who have contacted HR and gotten no response, and requesting some kind of action.

MUFA & Pension Administration

MUFA had a meeting with Wanda McKenna, Assistant Vice-President and Chief Human Resources Officer, and Saher Fazilat, Vice-President (Operations and Finance), who asked them to agree to getting rid of the MoU. MUFA replied that they were negotiating as part of a group of all employee groups and wouldn't do so individually. There was also some indication that the impetus to change the MoU came from a member of the Board of Governors.

6. Treasurer's Report (Nancy Gray) – Written report, and approve the revised budget

Moved by Helen Barton, **seconded** by John Horsman

“that Council approve the 2021-22 revised budget”

Carried.

7. Reports on Special Projects**7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton)**

We had another \$1000 donation to the new scholarship fund, so are over half way to our \$25K goal. Have been working with Lori Moulden on a new solicitation to get more donations, and hope to have Hank as the signatory to the letter, as well as quotations from 4 of our previous undergraduate scholarship winners who have gone on to do graduate work. We may hit the full \$25K by the end of the year; we have over \$14K now. As soon as we reach the \$25K, the fund has to sit for 2 years to earn enough interest to award any scholarships, so we may come to Council to ask for a top up, but that's very optimistic.

7.2 Archives (John Horsman) – no report**7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (no report)****8. Information Reports from Committees****8.1 (Mary Gauld)**

- **Date:** If we follow the pattern from last year, the date will be Tuesday June 14 or Wednesday June 15. We need to find out when convocation will be if we have an in-person AGM.
- **Speaker:** Ideas welcome.
- **Venue:** An off-campus venue isn't possible because the constitution specifies that the AGM must be held on campus. On campus, CIBC Banquet Hall, subdivided is likely the best choice, since Celebration Hall is closed during construction on the new addition to the DeGroote School of Business. Other possible venues: Divinity College, Council Chambers.
- We need to make a decision by mid-January, the deadline for the next issue of *MURAnews*.

- **Action:** Nora or Helen B. will look up the number of attendees from the last few in-person meetings, and send it to Mary.

8.2 **Holiday Lunch** (Mary Gauld)

Regarding a possible April late Holiday lunch on campus, Council agreed it won't be practical unless the university accepts the provincial QR code passport, since the MacCheck system is too complicated technically for many retirees. Council decided to leave the decision on this until the next meeting.

8.3 **Communications** (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Barb Carpio) – Barb reported via email in advance of the meeting that she is sending cards as she gets notification from HR.

8.3.2 **Web site** (Nora Gaskin)

Updates since the last meeting:

- current council contact lists uploaded to Council-Only area of web site
- links and listings on the Other events page
- Parking Services:
 - all references to the Parking Services retiree web page URL change
 - listing of lots to which retirees have access
 - added clarifying language “retiree permits are not transferable to other people (spouses, family members, friends, etc. when not accompanied by the retiree who owns the permit)”
- added an item on member submissions to *MURAnews* to the News and About *MURAnews* sections
- added reminder for end-of-life planning to Contact page

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

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – there have been a lot of changes to the database this month, and a lot of changes to accommodate the changes in mailing *MURAnews*, so no report

8.6 **MURAnews** (Helen Ayre)

- The latest *MURAnews* went out a short while ago and we're starting to make plans for the next one
- getting lots of interest from members in submitting items for Members' Corner.
- Helen B., regarding our appeal for people receiving the paper version of *MURAnews* to opt in to the email version: Have heard from about 70 people, evenly split between people who wish to continue receiving a paper copy, and those who are willing to get the electronic version. We have almost 500 more people to hear from. The people who have emailed have received an email response back. The phone calls should be returned and Helen is looking for volunteers to make the calls. Susan also received 14 postal mail requests, and Helen will look for phone numbers for them. Helen Ayre, Mary and Betty Ann

volunteered. We will have to reword the announcement in the next print version of *MURAnews* to take into account the possibility that we have already heard from some recipients.

8.7 Nominating (Helen Barton) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

Three queries:

- a question about out of province/country insurance
- one person who was dropped from the drug plan
- a question about vision benefits exceeding the limit: you have to wait 731 days from your last vision benefit before claiming another one

8.9 Trips & Special Events (Mary Gauld) – no report

8.10 Volunteering (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 Age-Friendly University Committee (Mary Gauld) – written report. **Action:** Mary will report to the committee the difficulty of coming on campus for older adults.

9.2 Community Engagement Committee (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9.3 CURAC (Hank Jacek) – no report

9.4 CURAC Later Life Learning Committee (Barb Carpio) – no report

9.5 MUFA (Hank Jacek) – see President’s Report

9.6 Unifor 5555 (Barry Diacon) – Unifor 5555 and the Labour Council did a clothing drive for Afghan refugees.

9.7 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.8 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.9 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)

Upcoming meeting scheduled for November 11.

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

Betty Ann noted that her original report had an error – the annual financial report does not say that the projected post-retirement benefits obligations have decreased. However there is a reserve fund accruing interest that can pay down the ongoing deficit for post-retirement benefits.

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:51pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.