



McMaster University Retirees Association

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**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
Wednesday, October 13, 2021, 1 PM (Zoom)**

1. Welcome & Regrets

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

Regrets: Michelle Jubinville

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting September 8, 2021 (for approval)

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Barry Diacon

“that the minutes of September 8, 2021 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising – We are still awaiting clarification and a summary from HR on what is and what is not covered under our benefits plan regarding cataract surgery and its associated expenses. Council noted that once we have that information, it would be a good topic for an article in *MURAnews*

4. Human Resources Report (Michelle Jubinville) – no report

5. President’s Report (Hank Jacek)

Hank spoke with the new president of MUFA, Nicholas Kevlahan, to see if there had been a meeting of the Joint Committee about the retirement of the 1998 MoU and issues around pension administrative expenses and governance. There had not. Nicholas had also been incorrectly told that MUFA had agreed to the proposed changes. There has been correspondence between the MURA executive, Wanda McKenna, and Saher Fazilat, the new Vice-President Operations and Finance, to set up a meeting about it.

Action: Helen will send an email to Wanda and Saher asking them to confirm that their intent is to include all of the representatives of MURA, MUFA, Unifor 5555 and the Clinical Faculty group. She will also send to the whole council a copy of the memorandum

dated June 7 from Roger Couldrey regarding plan governance and administrative expenses.

As Hank sees it, the issues are that the university has a conflict of interest as employer and plan administrator. Hank thinks amending the current MOU, or having an additional MOU can remedy any problems that may exist. The original MOU resolved conflicts and achieved consensus. Dispensing with the original MOU would lead to distrust by the plan beneficiaries and reintroduce the likelihood of conflict. In meetings, we need to educate the current leaders about the collegial model of governance that has worked very well at McMaster historically.

6. Treasurer's Report (Nancy Gray) – written report

Regarding the budget from May 1, 2021 to April 30 2022, Nancy requests that Councillors who have responsibility for expenditures, e.g. *MURAnews* printing and postage, web site, CURAC annual meeting, etc., verify or update projected expenses for the upcoming year. Helen thinks we need to revisit a number of the budget lines. **Action:** Helen and Mary will look at special projects, Nora will do web site, and the *MURAnews* committee will look at printing and postage.

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton)

The money coming in hasn't changed much; Helen and Barb have scheduled a meeting with Lori Moulden to plan a fundraiser mailing.

7.2 Archives (John Horsman) – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards – no report

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Mary Gauld) – we will revisit setting a date for the next AGM at the next Council meeting

8.2 Holiday Lunch (Mary Gauld) – no report; the Fall newsletter will announce the cancellation of the 2021 Holiday lunch

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Barb Carpio) – no report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin) – no report

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

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – written report

8.6 MURAnews

The team is currently putting the finishing touches on the next issue, which will go out in the next 10 days. There will be a notice in the next two printed versions, Fall and Winter, letting people know that if we don't hear from them, we will stop sending the printed version to them, and giving them the option to switch to an unabridged email version. One of the options for asking to continue is by phone, so there may be more phone messages on the MURA voicemail.

8.7 Nominating (Helen Barton) – no report**8.8 Pensions and Benefits** (Brian Beckberger)

- There was a query about out of country health insurance coverage.
- There was contact from a person who was concerned about auto insurance.
- Regarding campus access via the SafetyApp and MacCheck, we have had several inquiries. If you go on campus, you may have to show not only your SafetyApp certificate, which is a QR code, but a hard copy or photo of the vaccine certificate and additional identification. There is no option for visitors to fill out the health questionnaire.

8.9 Trips & Special Events (Mary Gauld) – no report**8.10 Volunteering** (Dina LoPresti) Dina will an email to Ashley Shinde, now the only contact for the Office of Community Engagement. Sheila Sammon has retired, and Dave Heidebrecht has been seconded to another department.**9. Information Reports from Liaisons****9.1 Age-Friendly University Committee** (Mary Gauld) – no report**9.2 Community Engagement Committee** (Dina LoPresti) – no report, not sure if the committee still exists**9.3 CURAC** (Hank Jacek)

The report of the CURAC AGM and other meeting in June by Mary Johnston was sent only to Hank and Helen. **Action:** Hank will forward to Nora for Council.

9.4 CURAC Later Life Learning Committee (Barb Carpio) – no report**9.5 MUFA** (Hank Jacek) – covered under President's report**9.6 Unifor 5555** (Barry Diacon)

Barry noted that Unifor also represents 3 groups of hourly employees: Parking and Transit Services, Unit 3 (3 full time Parking Control Officers and part time Officers, many of whom are students of McMaster University); Security Services, Unit 4 (about 20 Special Constables), and Operations & Maintenance, Unit 5 (physical plant staff, the former Building Union of Canada (BUC) comprising custodians, electricians, plumbers and other trades, and drivers,

about 300 people all together). Retirees from those groups, even if they were with a previous union when they retired, are also members of the Unifor Retirees Chapter.

9.7 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.8 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews) – there was a meeting in September that indicated the plan was doing well.

9.9 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)

- There was a meeting in September. The Chair is Deidre Henne, Assistant Vice-President (Administration) and Chief Financial Officer, and the Vice Chair will be Dave Feather, who is the Alumni Association representative to the Board of Governors.
- Fund seems to be doing well, but will see audits in November.
- Nancy asked whether McMaster is still looking at the University Pension Plan (UPP). Brian's understanding is that it would be more expensive and deliver fewer benefits. Nancy and Barry think it would be an improvement for most employees because 1) there would be a greater likelihood of getting CPI adjustments, and 2) it would improve the pension for Unifor new hires, who are currently getting 30% less than previous hires due to an arbitrator's decision.
- Q. Are they still discussing divestment from oil stocks? A. Two percent of investments are in petroleum, and the plan is slowly moving toward zero.

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

- The retreat was a full board meeting; the deans were there, and stayed for the full meeting. The return to campus was handled very well. It's clear that McMaster is now being run as a corporation, and it's very impressive. Everything is very well planned and measured. The old academic institution we used to know, where faculty were at the forefront, is no more. A big fundraising drive is in the works.
- The fun part was the McMaster Innovation Park (MIP), also a very impressive presentation.
- The residence on Main St. will start construction within the next few months.

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:43 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.