



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, September 8, 2021, 1 PM (Zoom)

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Denise Anderson, Helen Ayre, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Susan Birnie, Barb Carpio, Barry Diacon, Nora Gaskin, Hank Jacek (chair), Michelle Jubinville, Betty Ann Levy, Dina LoPresti, Phil Wood

Regrets: Cliff Andrews, Mary Gauld, Nancy Gray, John Horsman, Kathy Overholt

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting June 9, 2021 (for approval)

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

“that the minutes of June 9, 2021 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising – none

4. Human Resources Report (Michelle Jubinville)

- **Eye claim coverage question:** Michelle hasn't heard anything further. **Action:** she will raise it with the new program manager for benefits, Jordan Roberts
- Individual who was given a letter in 1998 indicating that they could **change their benefit plan by upgrading** from one plan to another: this is still available and is being done; Nancy Vukelich is taking care of that along with Wanda McKenna; **Action:** Michelle will follow up with them
- **Tuition assistance/waivers:** we will be asking Michelle to convene a meeting to clarify what is available and how to apply. **Action:** We will give her a summary of the issues prior to the meeting. We would like to provide retirees with an informative statement about it but don't have sufficient information yet.
- **Cataract surgery:** Hank requested a clarification of what is, and what is not covered. There are 2 different procedures for measuring the focal length of the eye, and various options for lenses, some fully covered by OHIP and some not. **Action:** Michelle will ask Jordan to summarize what is covered, and to include

anything that may not be covered under eye claims, but may be covered under other benefit categories, such as devices.

- **MacCheck, digital tool for verifying vaccination status**
 - Several retirees have tried and failed to use the tool, getting a message that they don't have access to the app. **Action:** Michelle will look into it and find out what the process would be for retirees. System development was by UTS, partnered with HR. There's a new team of 10 called the Validation Team, who will be overseeing the validation process.
 - Susan noted that wording on the web site for visitors said to upload the vaccination status no more than 1 hour before your visit, which is incorrect; it's the questionnaire about current health status that should be referred to in that instruction. **Action:** Michelle will check that wording is correct and consistent.
 - There's no option to load the pdf version of the certificate issued by the Ontario government web site, and many retirees won't know how to convert a pdf to a jpg. In addition, many retirees will lack the technical capabilities or equipment necessary to upload anything at all, so will need some sort of non-digital solution. **Action:** Michelle will find out if there's any non-digital way to do it.
 - **Question:** Who reads the vaccination certificates? **Answer:** The 10 people on the Validation Team are the only ones who will review the certificates and then code them into the system. Once the Ontario Government gets a vaccine passport, McMaster may start incorporating that into their system, or use it instead.
 - **Question:** If a visitor uploads all the information and goes on campus, how is their status verified? **Answer:** It's an honour system. You could be asked at any time for your day pass. You can show a printed version, or show it on your smart phone.

5. President's Report (Hank Jacek)

- Volunteer activities and Community Engagement: Dina and Phil both have an interest in this area. Hank has suggested that they communicate with each other about how to proceed on this.
- Checking MURA voicemail: Hank will do it for the time being
- Picking up MURA postal mail from Mail Services in the Campus Services Building, phoning once every week or two to see if there's anything that needs to be picked up: Susan Birnie volunteered to do it. **Action:** Helen B. will send Susan info in an email about procedures for picking up postal mail. **Suggestion:** we can ask Mail Services not to deliver mail to our office, but just keep it at Mail Services for us to pick up at the loading dock.

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Susan Birnie

"that the lists of Council members, liaisons and delegates for 2021-22 be made official"

Carried.

6. Treasurer's Report (Nancy Gray) – written report; Helen B. noted that all of the income will come in January

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton) – no report

7.2 Archives (Mary Johnston) – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards – no report

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Mary Gauld) – no report; Hank noted that the AGM was successful

8.2 Holiday Lunch (Helen Barton for Mary Gauld) – We have to make a decision about whether or not to have an in-person lunch by the *MURAnews* deadline of Oct. 8. Twenty percent of our membership (570 people) get news only through the print version of *MURAnews*. Do we want to put all the arrangements in place (number of people who can attend, price, vaccine passport information, etc.) and maybe have to walk it back if conditions change? In discussion, Council decided, owing to the degree of uncertainty, and difficulties for some members regarding the vaccine mandate, not to have a Holiday Lunch, and hope perhaps to have a lunch in the spring.

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Barb Carpio) – no news from HR on any deaths, no report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin) – Nora submitted a written report outlining an upcoming price change for Wild Apricot, our web hosting service, due to take effect in April 2022, along with a recommendation to downgrade our subscription level from Community to Personal, which will save us about CAD\$1,800 over 2 years without the loss of any functionality that we need. Council agreed, and agreed to table the decision closer to the date of renewal in 2022.

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

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – no report

8.6 MURAnews (Helen Barton): The *MURAnews* budget for printing and postage is about \$4,000 per year. We still have 570 people on the postal mailing list for *MURAnews*; we don't know if any of them have email addresses. Mary Johnston came up with the idea to go back to about 2005 for retirement date (since before that date we don't have retirement date information), and give notice by postal mail to those people, asking them to provide us with an email address to which

we can send the digital version of the newsletter. Another idea was raised to put a notice in a few consecutive issues of *MURAnews*, saying we're discontinuing sending print newsletters unless you contact us either by phone, postal mail, or email, and tell us you want to continue. Council agreed with this opt-in idea. The choice would be either "yes please keep me on the postal mailing list" or "please switch me to electronic delivery". What would happen if we only ended up printing and emailing 1-200 copies -- would the cost per issue be too high? Postage would go down; printing per copy would probably go up. **Action:** The *MURAnews* committee will discuss details. Printing & postage are currently roughly the same: \$1 to print and \$1 to mail. **Action:** Helen B and the *MURAnews* committee will devise a communication strategy.

8.7 Nominating (Helen Barton) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

In addition to the benefit plan change reference in (4), a person in August was worried about the MAC ID password change. This was resolved by having the UTS Help Desk forward her McMaster email to her Gmail address.

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

8.10 Volunteering (Dina LoPresti) Dina is trying to get in touch with someone at the university about this, and will follow up.

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 University Board of Governors (Betty Ann Levy) – there is a Zoom retreat next Friday all day for the Board Observers; Betty Ann will attend.

9.2 Community Engagement Committee (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9.3 CURAC (Hank Jacek) – Hank recalled that Mary Johnston reported on the CURAC AGM, which she attended on MURA's behalf, since it coincided with our AGM. No one else could recall if they had seen a copy of that report. **Action:** Hank will verify if the report went out to anyone but himself.

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

9.5 MUFA (Hank Jacek) – no report

9.6 Unifor 5555 (Barry Diacon) – It seems likely that the financial secretary will be retiring, so there will be an election. Barry will let us know when that happens.

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)

The committee will be meeting on Sep 23. All the meetings to May 2022 have been scheduled on Zoom. There has been no news on the administration and governance of the pension plan. No news from MUFA about the Joint Committee meeting that was supposed to happen in June. **Action:** The new MUFA President, Nicholas Kevlahan, will now have taken over. Hank will contact him to find out what, if anything has happened.

9.10 Age-Friendly University Committee (Mary Gauld) – no report

10. Other Business

10.1 Office for Community Engagement: Dave Heidebrecht is a contact person and manager of the office.

10.2 AROHE newsletter (Helen Barton): The last AROHE newsletter was forwarded to Council. They have ideas and resources that can be useful. One option is to just read the newsletters as they come in. Or, for \$120/year, we can be members and get access to workshops and other resources. If anyone is interested in looking at it and making a recommendation that we should get a membership, they are invited to do so.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:42 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.