



McMaster University Retirees Association

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Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 1 PM (Zoom)

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Denise Anderson, Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Susan Birnie (chair), Barry Diacon, Nora Gaskin, Mary Gauld, Nancy Gray, John Horsman, Hank Jacek, Betty Ann Levy, Jan Nicholson, Kathy Overholt, Jordan Roberts, Richard Stubbs

Regrets: Dina LoPresti

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting March 8, 2023 (for approval)

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

“that the minutes of March 8, 2023 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising

4. Human Resources Report (Jordan Roberts)

- **Travel insurance provider:** with Allianz leaving the market, there was a scramble to replace them. Sun Life has found a new provider, Global Excel Management (GEM) taking over July 1. Phone number and coverage will remain the same. Allianz will continue to manage cases started before July 1. Benefit booklets will be updated.
- There have been a number of escalations over **drug coverage** since the changeover to the new provider. People seem to be paying more than they were previously with respect to their maintenance medications, particularly compound drugs. Sun Life are working on a permanent fix, and coverage should be the same as it was before.
- **Benefits:** Eduroam needs to be added to the list of perks. Access to electronic resources currently says “emeriti only” but this applies only to off campus access. If retirees come in to a library they can access electronic resources while there.

5. President’s Report (Susan Birnie)

There was a discussion about **pensions**, pension increases or lack thereof, and when it’s time to do something about it. Betty Ann was involved when a group went to Roger

Couldrey to ask for ad hoc adjustments for people whose pensions had fallen behind due to a number of years with no increases. She suggested it might be a good time to have a discussion with the faculty association on this topic. Richard remarked that our pensions are only partially indexed, which means that over the long term, pension payments are going to go down. **Action:** Hank and Susan will discuss this. Nancy believes the UPP is a better plan, better managed, and significantly less expensive for the University.

Appointment of MURA representative on the Salaried Pension Trust Committee for 2023-24

Moved by Nancy Gray, seconded by Jan Nicholson

“that Council appoint Brian Beckberger to represent MURA on the Salaried Pension Trust Committee for the year 2023-24”

Carried.

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

We still have a surplus for the year. We haven’t yet had a response from Unifor. There was a discussion about possible ways of dealing with this. **Action:** Nancy will try to get an answer before the next meeting.

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton)

With MURA’s \$3K added, the fund now stands at \$26K; the total including pledges is \$28K. Helen will be meeting with Lori Moulden tomorrow. The recipient of the first \$1K scholarship will be named in September. Helen recommends that our next goal should be to increase the value of the fund, rather than to start a new campaign or increase the value of the undergraduate scholarships.

7.2 Archives (John Horsman) – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (Mary Gauld)

We will be selling cards at the Spring Fling, and it has been added to the event announcement in *MURAnews*.

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Mary Gauld) – written report

- Date: Wednesday June 14, 1 to 2:30 pm; virtual Zoom meeting
- Dr. Diane Sherifali will be the guest speaker.
- Still need to work out the agenda. There will be 1 door prize, an e-gift card.

8.2 Holiday Lunch / Spring Fling (Mary Gauld) – written report

- Date: Tuesday June 6, 11:30 to 2:30 pm
- Location: Phoenix Patio

- Cost will be \$25
- The Parking Office will provide us with up to 5 special parking spots for people needing to be extra close. Transponders will be recognized all day and parking will provide us with 25 courtesy tickets.
- No special guests or special agenda, strictly social, except for a welcome to the event and perhaps a plug for people to attend the AGM on the 14th!
- The Phoenix is going to provide 2 \$25 gift certificates and Mary has collected 3 other door prizes. If any others can be added, that would be great.
- The Bookstore will handle ticket sales online for a 10% fee. Can we say “no cheques, you must buy online with a credit card?” Yes, but we need to have a backup plan for people with either no credit card, or no online access. We can say they should contact an email and/or phone number. We will support the event from the MURA budget to keep the ticket price down. We will limit to 2 tickets per person, and open to more if there is space closer to the date.
- Council agreed to Tuesday Dec. 5 in CIBC Hall for the **Holiday Lunch**.

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Dina LoPresti) – no report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin)

Jan is in talks with Media Services about a more economical web site hosting and will have more later.

8.4 Constitution & By-Laws (Brian Beckberger) – written report

Changes to the MURA Constitution

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

*“That Council approve the proposed changes to the MURA Constitution”
Carried*

Carried

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – no report

8.6 MURAnews – deadline for submissions is April 14

8.7 Nominating (Hank Jacek) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

- A question about Foreign Currency Direct Deposit with CIBC Mellon
- A question about getting a Mac ID registered
- A coverage problem with Sun Life dental benefits
- A question about coverage for a reactivation centre vs. a rehabilitation centre

8.9 Trips & Special Events (Mary Gauld) – written report

Mary is planning some group walks. Some suggestions include:

1. **May 3, 10 am - Pier 4 and the Hamilton Harbour Waterfront Trail** – ending up at Williams. Nancy suggested reserving the upper section of William's for the group.
2. **May 31 - Bruce trail** – starting at Chedoke Golf Course to the Dundurn Stairs – turning back and walking up to Scenic drive. Ending at the Lancaster Eatery for food/drink
3. **June 28 - Welland Canal** – start at Lock 3 where the St Catharines Museum and Welland Canal Centre are located. Many choices to walk from there. And a lovely Greek restaurant located along the canal (George's Greek Village) that could accommodate people wanting to have a meal or a drink after.
4. **July 26 - McMaster trails OR McMaster campus**
5. **September 6 - Walking the Niagara Parkway** – parking in Chippawa and walking towards the Falls provides a view that many people don't take in. Lots of options along the parkway and the Niagara School of Horticulture.
6. **October 4: walking the Queenston Heights Park** – site of the War of 1812 and the starting point of the Bruce Trail – flat and easy walk around the park. A bit more adventurous walk to follow the trail where Brock was killed and the Americans invaded. Picnic lunch could be brought and taken at the park.

8.10 Volunteering (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

- 9.1 **Age-Friendly University Committee** (Mary Gauld) – no report
- 9.2 **Community Engagement Committee** (Dina LoPresti) – no report
- 9.3 **CURAC** (Susan Birnie) – no report
- 9.4 **CURAC Later Life Learning Committee** – no report
- 9.5 **MIRA Community Partner Network** (Jan Nicholson) – no report
- 9.6 **MUFA** (Hank Jacek) – no report
- 9.7 **Unifor 5555** (Barry Diacon)

The retirees' group is planning a a road-trip to Ripley's Aquarium on Apr. 25.

- 9.8 **Hourly Staff Liaison** (Cliff Andrews) – no report
- 9.9 **Hourly Pension Committee** (Cliff Andrews) – no report
- 9.10 **Salaried Pension Committee** (Brian Beckberger)

On March 15, Saher Fazilat announced the departure of Deidre Henne; David Feather, the Vice Chair, will be taking over.

9.11 University Board of Governors (Richard Stubbs) – the next meeting is a week Thursday

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:43 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.