



McMaster University Retirees Association

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Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, December 14, 2022, 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, Hank Jacek, Betty Ann Levy, Dina LoPresti, Jan Nicholson, Kathy Overholt,

Regrets: John Horsman Jordan Roberts, Richard Stubbs

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting November 9, 2022 (for approval)

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Mary Gauld

“that the minutes of November 9, 2022 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising

4. **Human Resources Report** (Jordan Roberts) – no report

5. **President’s Report** (Susan Birnie)

Meeting with the President on Jan 12 at 3 pm. This is currently set up as a face-to-face meeting. The Executive would normally attend. Kathy can’t. **Action:** Hank will let Susan know if he can. It’s our first meeting with the new administration. We have been asked to submit an agenda - thus far:

1. History and purpose of MURA
 2. MURA service to /activities for retirees
 3. Funding of MURA and support from university
 4. Connection to/contributions to university (including student scholarships)
 5. Definition of retiree without pension plan
 6. Potential further recognition of and utilization of retirees
- **Action:** Nora will send a list of the supports MURA receives from the University.
 - It’s pretty consistent that the retiree group is forgotten when changes to services and web sites at the university take place. Hank recommends the **University of**

California Retiree Associations web site as a model of how well retirees can be integrated into the university.

At the end of October Susan met with Wanda and Jordan to discuss **supplemental benefits** and the definition of a retiree. The draft policy lists the supplemental benefits as:

- Tuition assistance and bursary programs for eligible McMaster University courses
- Special parking rates
- Special library privileges
- McMaster email account
- Membership at McMaster University Club (Wanda noted that management of the club has changed and that access to this benefit may change)
- Access to Athletics and Recreation programs and facilities at a discounted rate
- Work Perks is not listed in the policy but is listed on the web site

Other benefits that were previously discussed:

- **access to lounges** (Wanda agreed that access needs to be facilitated for those who want it, but that there is a risk to having a lot of ID badges around with access). She will discuss who will validate that access with Glen De Caire (Security Services). They suggested this may move to an “on request” basis.
- **meal plans** - retirees are listed as eligible on the Hospitality services web site - Jordan will confirm
- **listing on telecom directory** (did not seem to be an issue)
- **photo ID card** (did not seem to be an issue, but a new “one card” is being trialed with students and it may replace the staff/faculty ID cards)
- **Online library access** - Jordan will check with the library regarding specifics for this and the above noted library access for clarity
- **VPN/Campus WiFi** - Jordan will discuss with Gayleen Gray/Sue McKinlay how to enable this for those who are on campus and need access (e.g., attendees at on-campus meetings)
- **Mac ID** - this is connected to email, as part of identity access management, and requires some thought.

HR has never provided an estimate of the costs of providing supplemental benefits to retirees. **Action:** Can we ask CURAC if there’s any information about what other Canadian universities do with their group RRSP retirees.

Definition of a retiree: HR proposal is a minimum of 10 years of service and age 65, same as clinical faculty. Susan pointed out that staff retire before age 65 more than faculty, making age plus years a fairer measure. Wanda would be willing to change the age limit to 60 or even 55, but is not willing to consider age plus years. Council discussed the issues around people retiring with the group RRSP. Susan and Wanda agreed to come back to the issue and hopefully resolve it in the new year. If someone takes the commuted value of their pension, they are still considered a retiree as far as Council members know. One Council member noted that policies need to be in writing to be of any value.

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

- Nancy is preparing estimates for 2024 to 2026 for the sponsor group requests.
- The Planetarium event had a net income of \$45. We have a deficit of \$1500 because we haven't yet sent the invoices to our funding partners. We will have a surplus of \$6000 at the end of the year because COVID eliminated our social events.
- Council discussed the relative benefits of spending money on social events and the scholarship. Social events are valued by members and have been impossible for the last 3 years so should be high on the priority list. We will leave the surplus as unrestricted for now, and will approve the \$13K.
- Should it be adjusted for inflation in years 2 and 3? We have not done this in the past. Helen thinks that we may have to take another look at this.

Moved by Nancy Gray, **seconded** by Brian Beckberger

“that Council approve that MURA will ask our funding partners for \$12,500 for each of the next 3 years”

Carried.

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

Anyone who has made a donation in the past year will not receive a request letter.

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

- Need to confirm a date and find a speaker. MUFA has a luncheon scheduled for April 24 and we have been asked to keep that in mind when setting a date for ours.
- One idea would be to hold the AGM separately as a virtual event and keep the tent event as purely social. The AGM would ideally be in the first half of June. Tuesday June 6 is a possible date.
- **Ideas for a speaker:** Red Wilson, the former Chancellor, who gave \$50M to start the Wilson School of Leadership, or someone associated with that; Marvin Gunderson on bugs; somebody from the Bruce Trail association; someone from the new Indigenous Studies program; Susan Dudley, from Biology, on tree communication.

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

Mary has connected with Laura Escalante at the Alumni office. Laura runs the reunions program and is hosting an event with a tent the weekend of June 23-25. Laura and I have spoken and if Thursday June 22 is agreeable to the

Council as a date, she will modify the requisition for the tent to add 1 extra day. We will then make our own arrangements with McMaster for setting up tables and chairs. We would also make our own arrangements for catering but this could be kept very simple and likely much more economical than the Christmas luncheon. Mary should be able to have prices available for the February meeting and be able to set a budget.

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Dina LoPresti) – outstanding death notifications have been cleared up

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin) – no report

8.4 Constitution & By-Laws (Brian Beckberger)

Article 9.01 begins with “the” which is not needed. Brian will make this change and send the latest draft a few days before the next meeting. If anyone sees a needed change, please send it to Brian via email.

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – no report

8.6 MURAnews

HR has sent letters about pensions; we should include a piece about this in the next *MURAnews*.

8.7 Nominating (Hank Jacek)

John and Kathy have agreed to be Council members on the Nominating Committee; Helen Ayre has agreed to be one of the 2 non-Council members.

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

Increases if any will be announced on Friday.

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

October 22 Planetarium show: Thank you once again to Susan Birnie for covering in Mary’s last-minute absence, and also to Nora, John and Denise for pitching in at the event to help at the door. We may have been slightly short of our \$300 cost.

8.10 Volunteering (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9. Information Reports from Liaisons

9.1 Age-Friendly University Committee (Mary Gauld) – written report

- Mary was unable to attend the November 17 meeting. According to the Agenda, there was a Presentation done by Human Resources on the Age-Friendly practices at McMaster given by Wanda McKenna, Franca Berti-Bogojevic, Edyta Mroczkowski, Human Resources Services, McMaster

University. They also held a Discussion of suggested areas of interest for next meeting.

- Mary asked if there is anyone on Council that would like to attend these meetings in her place.

9.2 Community Engagement Committee (Dina LoPresti) – no report

9.3 CURAC (Susan Birnie)

Annual conference is May 31-June 2 in Saskatchewan. Hank got a notice but Susan didn't. **Action:** Hank or Susan will contact CURAC to update our contact.

9.4 CURAC Later Life Learning Committee

Susan attended a C-LLL Committee meeting. They are still trying to find their place and what services they can offer. They have a place for a column in University Affairs, and Susan will be writing the next column, about what is going on at McMaster University that is of interest to retirees. She will send her draft to Council for comments.

9.5 MIRA Community Partner Network (Jan Nicholson) – no report

9.6 MUFA (Hank Jacek) – no report

9.7 Unifor 5555 (Barry Diacon)

There was an Ontario Regional Council meeting last week and yesterday there was a retiree luncheon, attended by about 40 people in person and 20 via Zoom.

9.8 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.9 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

Cliff was put on the Board as a permanent member for the last few years, but due to an oversight was left off the invitation list for the last 2 meetings. He will resume attending in January.

9.10 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)

Next meeting is January 19.

9.11 University Board of Governors (Richard Stubbs)

The meeting is tomorrow morning, and has just been turned into a Zoom meeting. Susan attending because Richard is unavailable.

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:48 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.