



McMaster University Retirees Association

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Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 1 PM (Zoom)

1. Welcome & Regrets

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

Regrets: Cliff Andrews, Nancy Gray, Michelle Jubinville

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting September 14, 2022 (for approval)

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Richard Stubbs

“that the minutes of September 14, 2022 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising

4. Human Resources Report (Jordan Roberts)

- **Retiree release form:** MURA's suggested changes are with the retiree specialist team right now; there should be no concerns making the changes. Jordan will see if there's an opportunity here to verify some of the information in the database, such as given name, postal code, and/or pull from a different field, e.g. department name, etc.
- **Retiree policy in UTS:** Jordan is meeting with Gayleen in a couple of weeks about progress on this and will give an update.
- **Sun Life are transitioning their pharmacy benefit manager** from Telus (aka Assure Health) to Express Scripts Canada by mid-2023. Jordan has asked Sun Life for at least three months notification before this takes effect. This should have no impact to clients. Dina got a call from Express Scripts asking for information, and Jordan said she shouldn't have, and we should never be contacted directly by either Telus or Express Scripts. **Action:** Jordan will write a short notice for *MURAnews* to warn about this.

5. President's Report (Susan Birnie)

- The **Museum of Art Virtual Visit** went well; Susan thanked Mary for organizing it.
- The two **McMaster Planetarium visits** on Oct. 28 are sold out.
- On Oct 5 Susan went to the **McMaster remembrance service**; candles were lit for faculty, staff, retirees and students. She spoke with David Farrar about the custom of the President meeting with MURA representatives, and he's amenable to that. They also spoke about the custom of the President's office funding an event such as the Holiday Lunch, and he was amenable to continuing that custom as well.
- We are still working with HR and Wanda re: the **definition of a retiree** and post retirement supplemental benefits. This is especially relevant for those in the group RRSP, as the proposed definition excludes people in that group who retire before the age of 65. There is a meeting upcoming to discuss this.
- **UTS support meeting, Sep 27** (Wanda McKenna, Sue McKinlay, Jordan Roberts, Susan Birnie, Brian Beckberger, Nora Gaskin, Gayleen Gray): UTS may start removing email addresses that have been unused for thirteen months or more. This is a long-standing policy that hasn't been enforced for a long time. We also discussed levels of email support for retirees.
- Susan has asked **Hank to chair the November meeting** as she will be away.
- An updated version of the **MURA welcome letter** that HR includes in the new retiree package was presented to Council for approval.

MURA welcome letter to new retirees

Moved by Betty Ann Levy, **seconded** by John Horsman

"that the new retiree welcome letter for 2022-23 be approved"

Carried.

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

- Invoices for 2023 funding go out to our funding partners in February 2023.
- This year we will need to prepare a 3-year budget projection for 2024-6 to present to our funding partners.

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton)

Helen and Susan met with Lori Moulden from University Advancement, and they will have a new fundraising mailer ready to go out this fall. We now have the names of all this year's winners, and have sent letters to them through Lori, inviting them to send a picture and short biography to be published in *MURAnews*.

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) – we are always looking for speakers, so Council should start mulling ideas and send Mary an email with suggestions.

8.2 Holiday Lunch (Mary Gauld) – written report
Mary reported that the planning committee met and reluctantly decided to recommend we postpone the Holiday Lunch to an outdoor event with a less expensive meal in spring (May or June). This is due to dramatically increased catering costs (about double the 2019 price), a high number of fully-subsidized new retirees due to the three-year catch-up, and COVID uncertainty at an indoor unmasked event where attendance at capacity would be required to break even. Council agreed with this plan.

8.3 Communications (John Horsman) – no report

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Dina LoPresti)

Since she started in this portfolio Dina has sent about 12 cards; she has also followed up with HR about known deaths that HR hasn't notified.

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin)

"A reminder for your end-of-life planning", which appears in the "Contact Us" tab of the web site, as well as in past issues of *MURAnews*, was updated to include CIBC Mellon as well as HR in all instances, subsequent to advice from HR.

8.4 Constitution & By-Laws (Brian Beckberger)

Action: Brian will draft the proposed constitutional changes and send to Council a couple of weeks before the next meeting. **Action:** Nora will send Brian the Word document for the Constitution and Bylaws.

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – A spreadsheet with a number of new members just arrived. **Action:** Kathy will submit a membership report for the next meeting.

8.6 MURAnews

- A one-time letter will be going out to everyone who hasn't yet responded about how they want to receive *MURAnews*.
- The team is working on the Fall issue; still struggling to get an approved tuition assistance article.
- Mary has had a request from Eli Clark, Manager of University Advancement Estate Giving, to communicate with our membership about estate giving in an article for a future issue of *MURAnews*, possibly to be followed up by an information session.

8.7 Nominating (Hank Jacek) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger) – no report

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

MURA visit to the Planetarium: Friday October 28th, 1pm and 7 pm

The tour is sold out at 35 people for each show. Cost to MURA for both sessions is \$300. Participants have paid \$5/person and the costs are covered at no cost to MURA. Several volunteers will be helping at each show. Most people paid by e-transfer and a few will give cash at the door. Mary has been in touch with each person.

8.10 Volunteering (Dina LoPresti)

A few volunteering opportunities will appear in the next newsletter and one has gone out by email.

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)

The last meeting was on challenges for older adults dealing with the digital divide. Jan has the minutes if anyone is interested, and has signed up for the next meetings as well.

9.6 MUFA (Hank Jacek)

- Hank talked to the pension committee chair of MUFA on October 4. He said MUFA hasn't had any discussions with the university about pension plan governance, and he would get in touch with MURA if they did, and would ask the MUFA President to do the same. If any such changes were to happen, they would probably start with the Joint Committee. He did say he thought the terms of reference would probably need to be reopened because the TMG and Clinical Faculty groups have dwindled, the Clinical Faculty group to the point that they may even have trouble supplying a member to sit on the committee.
- Susan reported that Wanda said they had dropped the governance issue for now in favour of other priorities.

9.7 Unifor 5555 (Barry Diacon)

The retiree group had a trip to the RBG Rose Garden with 40-50 people attending, subsidized by Unifor. A yoga night and movie night are also scheduled.

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)

- Meeting was the 15th of September. There is still a surplus, but the plan lost about 5M during the last downturn.
- The Committee has not yet retained a lawyer, but is in the process of doing so in order to get an independent legal opinion on plan governance.
- A working group will be formed for asset and liability review.
- The November meeting will review the audited report and make a judgement about whether there will be an increase. Brian remains pessimistic about the likelihood of an increase, but if the plan does well next year, there could be an increase then to adjust for this year's inflation.

9.11 University Board of Governors (Richard Stubbs) – written report

Dr. Ken Steele, a futurist, was the guest speaker at the BoG meeting.

10. Other Business

On the question of virtual vs hybrid Council meetings, Council agreed that we should continue virtually for now.

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 2:52 pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.