



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, November 8, 2023, 1 PM in MUSC-313/311 & on Zoom (Hybrid)

1. Welcome & Regrets

Present: Denise Anderson, Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Susan Birnie (chair), Barry Diacon, Tim Doucette, Nora Gaskin, Mary Gauld, Hank Jacek, Dina LoPresti, Jane Mah, Jan Nicholson, Kathy Overholt, Diana Parker, Richard Stubbs

Regrets: Virginia Aksan

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting October 11, 2023 (for approval)

Moved by Brian Beckberger, **seconded** by Diana Parker

“that the minutes of October 11, 2023 be approved”

Carried.

3. Business Arising

4. Human Resources Report (Tim Doucette)

- Regarding who can prescribe updated description in benefit booklets, Brian amended his request to add nurse practitioners and pharmacists, to include registered nurses, or change to “anyone authorized to write prescriptions”.
- Does everyone with drugs covered have the same formulary as everyone else with drugs covered? No, different plans can have different formularies. You may get an exception for a particular drug that isn't included in your formulary if a specialist requests it.
- A bank contacted Brian to find out how to change the bank into which CIBC Mellon deposits pension payments. Any retiree can change the direct deposit information on their own, either by contacting HR or CIBC Mellon. There's a form that can be filled out to expedite this.
- They are still reviewing why some people's coverage was dropped, but there have been no new occurrences.

5. President's Report (Susan Birnie)

- **Museum of Art tours:** they aren't open in April and May, so we're looking at the 2nd or 3rd week of June (13, 14, 18, 19 or 21). We'll pick 2 times and have people

sign up for them. We should also keep convocation and the AGM in mind. They also offer an outdoor sculpture tour, and Susan will forward the info to Mary in case she wants to include it in a MURA walk.

- **Definition of a retiree policy:**
 - A recent retiree in the group RRSP who should have had supplementary benefits was told he couldn't keep his email when he should have been able to, under the proposed policy. But the policy isn't in effect yet, so he was told he couldn't get the supplementary benefits. Susan sent a strongly worded email to Wanda. The case has been resolved for that one person.
 - The draft policy has now been circulated, included in the meeting materials. The policy doesn't add or take away any of the supplementary benefits we already have.
 - Helen raised the question of the RRSP people who have retired in the interim, since those people should be considered retirees. MURA should be given their information retroactively after the policy is in place. HR made an undertaking in 2019 to ensure that those people would have their information forwarded to MURA. (MURA used to get lists of all retirees, but after the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) came into force, MURA had to rely on the release form). **Action:** Nora will look for and forward the notes of that meeting. **Done.**
 - Things that aren't within HR's purview to control, e.g., WorkPerks, meal plan, are mostly still outstanding, and may be relegated to being listed on the MURA web site.
 - **Action:** our reps to the employee groups (Hank, Barry) will ask the groups if they have seen the policy.
 - Any policy has to go to the President/Vice-Presidents Team (PVP) before it goes to the BoG for approval.

6. Treasurer's Report (Diana Parker) – written report

- Diana is sending the canned reports from the Sage accounting software, unlike Nancy, who had been sending reports that she had done in Excel. Diana will try to include what people need in her reports.
- We need a line that shows the budgeted amount vs the actual amount, so Diana will prepare a progress to budget report for the next meeting, and send a report to Nora to circulate to Council.

7. Reports on Special Projects

7.1 Academic Awards Endowment (Helen Barton) – written report

- Should the terms of the Graduate Scholarship be changed to specify that the recipient must be an "in course" student?
- The award was disbursed in late spring of this year. According to her LinkedIn page, the recipient, Liza-Anastasia DiCecco, started a post doc fellowship at Penn State in June, finishing at McMaster in May.
- The current wording is: *To be awarded by the School of Graduate Studies to a graduate student researching technological advances related to seniors, and who demonstrates academic excellence.*

- Can we say in-course student preferred? Helen will pursue this with Grad Studies.

7.2 Archives – no report

7.3 Fundraising – MURA Cards (Mary Gauld) – no report

8. Information Reports from Committees

8.1 AGM (Mary Gauld) – no report

8.2 Holiday Lunch (Mary Gauld) – written report

The President's office agreed to sponsor us up to \$1,425.50: full price for new retirees, \$10 each for everyone else. The lunch registration information is in the Fall newsletter, published this week; there will be a reminder email going out as well.

8.3 Communications

8.3.1 Condolence cards (Dina LoPresti) – no report

8.3.2 Web site (Nora Gaskin)

- Susan was contacted by someone who wanted to replace Wild Apricot as our web host; he subsequently sent an email to MURA asking for a meeting. We'll decline.
- We got a survey from the Accessibility office at Mac about the accessibility of our web site. Filled it out and sent it in, mostly negative answers. Also questioned whether we should have been included in the survey. No response.

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

8.5 Membership (Kathy Overholt) – written report

8.6 MURAnews (Helen Barton)

The latest issue was published on Sunday (Nov 5). We received a congratulatory letter from a retiree on the issue. We still don't know why some people received the email announcement of the issue and some didn't.

8.7 Nominating (Hank Jacek) – no report

8.8 Pensions and Benefits (Brian Beckberger)

Brian submitted CURAC benefits survey.

Questions received in the past month included:

- A query about Arexvy; some plans provide drug coverage for this and some don't; log in to Sun Life to find out.
- A bank contacted Brian to find out how to change the bank into which CIBC Mellon deposits pension payments.
- A question about what happens to the limits for paramedical in the year you retire, when your amount is higher as an employee? You get to keep what you claimed when you were an employee.

- A request for a copy of the latest version of a benefits booklet.

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

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 (Susan Birnie) – no report

9.5 MIRA Community Partner Network (Jane Mah) – no report

9.6 MUFA (Hank Jacek)

Hank is keeping in touch with MUFA about what it was like before the MoU re joint management of the pension plan was instituted. One suggested that MURA should have two representatives on the PTC, since the number of retirees now is higher than it was in 1998.

9.7 Unifor 5555 (Barry Diacon)

- The retiree workers group hosted a performance of women drummers.
- There will soon be elections to the Retiree Workers Group.
- Rosemary Viola will not continue as President, for health reasons.
- The Unifor Ontario Council will have a convention in Ottawa the end of November.

9.8 Hourly Staff Liaison (Cliff Andrews) – no report

9.9 Hourly Pension Committee (Cliff Andrews)

Cliff will contact Wanda or her assistant, since he hasn't heard from the Committee recently.

9.10 Salaried Pension Committee (Brian Beckberger)

- PTC meeting Nov 16; will hear whether we get an increase or not; he suspects a small increase, if any.
- Some MURA reps met with the lawyer who will be looking at the MoU on behalf of PTC.

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

10. Other Business

Moved by Brian Beckberger at 3:04pm

“that the meeting be adjourned”

Carried.