



## 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 13, 2023, 1 PM (Zoom)

#### 1. Welcome & Regrets

**Present:** Virginia Aksan, Denise Anderson, Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton, Brian Beckberger, Barry Diacon, Tim Doucette, Nora Gaskin, Mary Gault, Hank Jacek, Dina LoPresti, Jane Mah, Jan Nicholson (chair), Diana Parker, Richard Stubbs

**Regrets:** Susan Birnie, Kathy Overholt

#### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Council Meeting May 10, 2023, 2023 (for approval)

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

*“that the minutes of May 10, 2023 be approved”*

**Carried.**

2.2 2023 AGM (for review) Council found no needed corrections.

#### 3. Business Arising

#### 4. Human Resources Report (Tim Doucette)

- Definition of a retiree policy is status quo.
- Two outstanding retiree benefits Tim was aware of were Eduroam & retiree inclusion in the McMaster online directory. Nora added that McMaster VPN and meal card also need to be investigated. **Action:** Nora sent Tim the URL for the Hospitality web site where they specify that retirees are eligible for the meal plan (<https://hospitality.mcmaster.ca/meal-plans-and-cards/meal-plans/#tab-content-staff-faculty-retirees-plans>). The benefit of having a meal card is that you save 10% on all on-campus food purchases through Hospitality Services.
- Brian asked, and Tim verified that when a benefit plan is restated, it is to clarify the coverage, not to change the coverage. Brian requested that coverage for hearing aids be clarified to specify both ears are covered.
- Our Sun Life service team hasn't changed. Tim will contact Sun Life to inquire about expediting reimbursements from Sun Life.

- Tim is committed to supporting our members and making sure they have the coverage they're supposed to have. The HR business partner model (an HR contact embedded in each department) is being rolled out across the university; this has been in the works for some time.

## 5. President's Report (Jan Nicholson for Susan Birnie)

### Welcome letter for new retirees

**Moved** by Brian Beckberger **seconded** by Barry Diacon  
*"That the updated welcome letter be approved"*

**Carried**

Council agreed to delay sending the letter until the second page is updated with more of the missing portfolios after they are filled.

### Committee chairs, liaisons and special projects

- Virginia Aksan volunteered for the Constitution committee and Trips & Special Events
- Jane Mah volunteered for Trips and special events, and to replace Jan Nicholson on the MIRA Community Partner Network. Action: **Nora** will send Jane some information on MIRA.
- Positions still unfilled:
  - Communications Committee chair
  - *MURAnews* chair
  - *MURAnews* editor
  - Academic Awards Endowment

## 6. Treasurer's Report (Diana Parker)

We've had only one or two transactions since the AGM. Diana now has full access to the Sage accounting software. We will wait until Susan gets back to pursue the outstanding funding amount from Unifor.

## 7. Reports on Special Projects

**7.1 Academic Awards Endowment** (Helen Barton) – no report

**7.2 Archives** – no report

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

## 8. Information Reports from Committees

**8.1 AGM** (Mary Gauld) – written report

The AGM was held via Zoom on Wednesday June 14 from 1 to 2:30. Dr. Diane Sherifali was the guest speaker and was well received. Approximately 40 people participated in the call. The presentation followed the standard practice from previous years. Two door prizes were awarded.

**8.2 Holiday Lunch** (Mary Gauld)

**Date:** Dec 5

**Place:** CIBC Banquet Hall

- Catering has been contacted and menus have been requested so we can determine prices. This will be discussed and the price set for the event at the October meeting.
- Parking has been notified and guests will be allowed to park on campus from 11am.
- Special guests and recipients of the MURA Scholarship and Prize will be contacted by email.

**Actions still to be taken**

- The President's office needs to be contacted regarding the subsidies
- Assistance in finding gifts (donations) for the door prizes is welcome
- Invitations will go out to new retirees when prices are finalized
- Advertising in fall newsletter
- If any council members are interested in participating on a committee, that would be helpful and appreciated. Let Mary know.
- Mary will bring a sign-up sheet to the October meeting for help on the day of the event. Please make sure the date is in your calendar and ideally, plan to be there from 10:30 until 2:30.

**8.3 Communications**

**8.3.1 Condolence cards** (Dina LoPresti)

Dina is up to date, but has 16 outstanding deaths that she still hasn't heard about from HR.

**8.3.2 Web site** (Nora Gaskin)

A fair number of updates to the web site have been made, including the current issue of *MURAnews*, the events, volunteering, pension and benefit news pages, and external link updates.

**8.4 Constitution & By-Laws** (Brian Beckberger)

It's important that future Councils be aware of the changes that were made and why. **Action:** Nora will upload the detailed document of changes to the Council-only section of the web site.

**8.5 Membership** (Kathy Overholt) – no report

**8.6 MURAnews** (Helen Barton)

If anyone thinks of anything that should be communicated to the membership, please have it in by the October 13 deadline, including all details about the Holiday Lunch. We will also include a follow-up on the Sun Life problems.

**8.7 Nominating** (Hank Jacek) – no report

**8.8 Pensions and Benefits** (Brian Beckberger)

Since May we've been busy with a lot of issues, 10 or 11, some resolved, some not.

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

- Information was circulated about a visit to the **McMaster Museum of Art**, proposed by Kevin Sulewski. Council decided the proposed date is too close to the Holiday Lunch. We like the idea and would consider it in the New Year.
- **MURA Walks**: Four walks have been held since our last meeting: Wed May 17 Hamilton Harbour Waterfront Trail (12 participants); Thursday June 16 Niagara River to the Falls and lunch at Betty's restaurant (5 participants); Thursday July 20 McMaster Campus tour and lunch at the Phoenix (18 participants); Monday August 14 Welland Canal and lunch at George's Greek Restaurant (6 participants).

**8.10 Volunteering** (Dina LoPresti)

Dina contacted departments about getting retirees more involved volunteering on campus, but they seem more interested in contacting their own retirees directly. **Action**: Dina will contact the President's Office.

**9. Information Reports from Liaisons**

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

**9.2 Community Engagement Committee** (Dina LoPresti)

There are still names listed at their web site, and Dina has tried to contact them but no one has gotten back to her. **Action**: Dina will touch base with Tim to see if there's a contact he can give her. Helen suggested the President's Office might be another place to talk to.

**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)

- Talked to MUFA about no indexed pensions at McMaster; it's a high priority for MUFA but they haven't been able to get the university to move on it.
- Management of the pension plan: there's no evidence that we could have been much better off than other universities, according to the person Hank spoke with, Herb Schellhorn.

**9.7 Unifor 5555** (Barry Diacon)

- Beth Couchman applied for and won a position among the Unifor National reps. As a result, Unifor 5555 Vice-President, Emily Heikoop, automatically became President. This then occasioned an election for Vice-President, which was won by Megan Forbes, former vice-chair of the Unit 1 bargaining unit. Ashley Shinde continues as Secretary-Treasurer.
- Recently the Local 5555 retiree group had an event where two presentations were given by federal representatives. One presentation was on the Canada

Pension Plan, Old Age Security, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement; the other on Canada Revenue Agency and Income tax. **Action:** Barry will ask Rosemary Viola for the contact names.

**9.8 Hourly Staff Liaison** (Cliff Andrews) – no report

**9.9 Hourly Pension Committee** (Cliff Andrews)  
There should be a meeting coming up shortly.

**9.10 Salaried Pension Committee** (Brian Beckberger)

- The first meeting of the PTC is tomorrow; the August meeting was cancelled. All meetings will be on Zoom this year.
- The PTC did a search for a lawyer regarding the status of the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding.
- After the books are audited in November, Brian will have a better idea about the likelihood of an increase.
- The pension plan performance seems to have improved over the summer but official numbers must wait until after the audited report later this year.

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

## 10. Other Business

**Moved** by Brian Beckberger at 2:47 pm

*“that the meeting be adjourned”*

**Carried.**