



UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Marshall McLuhan Hall
October 22, 2022
(pending approval at the 2023 AGM)

In Attendance: Brian Blakley, Heather Brownlee, Dennis Cooley, Gail Hargreaves, Randall Kinley, Bill Kops, Linda Kostiuk, June LaRonde, Gail Mackisey, Janice Mann, Ron Morris, Olva Odlum, Mark O'Riley, Denise Reitsma, Elisabeth Ross, Janet Sealey, Daniel Sitar, Gladys Stewart, June Stewart, Ed Unrau, Gene Walz, Michael West

Regrets: Jay Goldstein

1. Approval of the Agenda

Motion to accept the agenda:

Joan McConnell / Linda Kostiuk **Carried.**

2. Approval of the minutes of AGM held on October 26, 2021

Motion to accept the minutes:

Gene Walz / Olva Odlum **Carried.**

3. Business Arising

Nothing new or crucial.

4. Reports:

President, Janet Sealey

This is my first Annual Report as President of UMRA. Highlights of this past year are provided below. One of the major undertakings this past year has been the updating of our website information and move to the new Drupal platform. In November, I joined the UMRA representatives on the joint U of M committee to assist with the process. In addition to the U of M staff assigned to this project, I want to express my sincere thanks to Janice Mann and Gene Walz of the UMRA Communication Committee for leading the charge on this huge task including Mark O'Riley and Dan Sitar. While we hope to have the new website up by the end of September, further modifications may be necessary as we navigate this new and improved website.

With the help and support of the UMRA Executive Committee, we were successful in Ed Unrau's nomination for a CURAC/ARUCC Tribute Award. Ed's exceptional contributions to UMRA make him most deserving of this award.

On becoming the UMRA President, one of my agenda items was to raise the profile of UMRA. To date, some of the initiatives in this regard has been to have a personal letter signed by me attached to each UMRA

membership application inviting retirees to join the association. In addition, both AESES and UMFA agreed to place an article in their newsletter/communication emails highlighting the benefits of joining UMRA. I am also looking to develop an awards program to recognize volunteers who have provided dedicated service to the association.

In 2016-2017, under the presidency of Ed Unrau, the UMRA Executive approved a resolution to fund the second prize in the annual Three-Minute Thesis competition which is held every spring and is organized by the Faculty of Graduate Studies for students in thesis-based programs. At that time the second prize was valued at \$500 and the Faculty of Graduate Studies agreed to the prize being called the University of Manitoba Retirees Association for Second Prize. This year, the Executive Committee agreed to fund the total prize, which now has a value of \$1250.00. Going forward, the name of the prize will remain the same and UMRA will be invited to present the award at the final competition ceremony.

Through two major fund-raising initiatives by the U of M for the period of April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022, the UMRA Bursary and Scholarship funds were increased respectively by \$4980.00 and \$4866.00. Thank you so much to those who contributed to these funds in the recent fund-raising campaigns and in past initiatives. Once again this demonstrates the continuing support that retirees are providing to the university.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to the members of UMRA Executive Committee and the members of other UMRA committees for all their work on the respective committees and for helping to guide me in my new role as President by offering their knowledge and expertise in the affairs of the association.

Additions to the written report:

The UMRA website is launched, some information yet to be added. Looking for members to help with the website and with the UMRA Newsletter. Hoping for help in consolidating material on the history of UMRA, and in maintaining the feature, In Memoriam. VP, Mark O'Riley adds that the website can now be readily accessed on mobile devices, and UMRA intends to post useful information on what is happening at the U of M and elsewhere that would be of interest to retirees. The Executive is seeking members' advice, information, corrections, solutions, recommendations for the website.

Motion to accept the President's Report:

Ron Morris / Joan McConnell

Carried

Vice-President and Benefits and Pension Committee Report, Mark O'Riley

I have appreciated the chance to work on behalf of the UMRA membership in a number of areas over the last year.

Privacy: We are working to have a private portal that is accessible through our new web site for members of UMRA only. So that we can limit access to information that we feel should only be seen by UMRA members, we will be working with university administration to add this capacity to our site. To protect our member information, we also pulled our membership list from our website this year and we are working with the University to ensure that members can update their contact information easily and confidentially

Benefits and Pension:

The Benefits and Pension Committee was scheduled to meet with Dave Muir on August 24th to lobby him to increase the caps that exist on benefits for retirees. This meeting was a follow up to the meeting that was held Dave and the UMRA President and VP on Feb 3, 2022. Unfortunately, due to Dave's departure from the University the meeting had to be rescheduled. We are currently working to establish a new time for this meeting with Dave's replacement once one is chosen.

Event: At the 29th of March UMRA Zoom event with President Benarroch there were a number of questions about the Southwoods development. During the discussion Dr. Benarroch offered to help arrange a Zoom session to bring the members of UMRA up to date on the project. I worked with the President's Office to arrange a session, which was held on June 23rd. At this session members of the Southwoods project team discussed the Universities plans and answered questions from our membership. Notes from this event were drawn up by Janet Sealey and me and were included in our last newsletter.

Additions to the written report:

VP actively scans and responds to members' emails. Information posted on the internet can be vulnerable to unscrupulous targeting. We are taking pains to protect the privacy of members who use the UMRA website. Our aim is to lock down information on the website so that retirees can be reassured that the site will be secure as well as accessible.

David Muir in Human Resources has been helpful in working on Benefits and Pensions. An on-going concern about caps placed on the costs for services, especially dental. Two different cohorts of retirees are operating under different caps. The UMRA Benefits and Pension Committee is actively seeking a resolution. As prominent donors to the UofM, UMRA tries to influence the Central Administrations.

Information supplied to questions from the floor: MEDOC is a good source for travel insurance. The UMRA committee has compiled detailed comparisons of the U of M retirees' benefits to those medical benefits offered through CURAC and intends to refine it into a fuller and clearer document. At present retirees are cut off regular access to travel insurance at age 75 with the U of M, some are cut off altogether. Working to win full benefits for all retirees. A complex problem exists with the Canadian Revenue Agency's ruling on the U of M pension plan taxation and benefits. Darlene Smith in Human Resources is optimistic that the issue will be resolved to retirees' benefit. One other concern: A drop in income can mean that your allowable deductions with Pharmacare will decrease.

Motion to accept the Vice-President's Report

Heather Brownlee / Ed Unrau **Carried**

Treasurer's Report, June LaRonde

Budget Report - Oct 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022

Assiniboine Credit Union

Bank balance (as of October 1, 2021)

\$14,880.26

Membership renewals: Oct 1, 2021 to Sept 30, 2022

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Bank deposits —Cheques	\$2,725.00
E transfers.	\$1,215.00
Total	\$3,940.00
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Expenses - Cheques issued

3MT Bursary	\$ 500.00
Grad Bursary	1,000.00
Scholarship Bursary	1,000.00
Zoom License	224.00
Gift cards/stamps	115.91
Mailouts -	
Membership Renewal	
(i.e.stamps/photocopy)	<u>36.12</u>
Total Expenses	\$2,876.03

Assiniboine Bank Balance: Period ending August 31/22 \$15,954.95

Investment - Bank of Montreal – BMO

Closing value (as of June 30/22)	<u>\$25,898.23</u>
Total Assets	\$41,853.18

P.S. - There are 29 members who renewed and/or registered as life members.

- BMO Mutual Funds, this year we opened with funds \$29,984.92, lost \$4,086.69

Additions to the written report:

The statement included for the Oct 26 AGM is up to date.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report:

June LaRonde / Linda Kostiuk **Carried**

Membership Committee (Gladys Stewart presenting for Jay Goldstein)

Members: Gladys Stewart (chair), Jay Goldstein, Norma Godavari and Jean Paterson

Statistics for 2021-2022 Membership Year (October1, 2021 - September 7, 2022)

As of September 07, 2022:

Total membership	814
Lifetime Members	339 [42%]
Annual/biennia.	198 [12%]
Associates	377 [46%]

Since the beginning of the calendar year, 37 retirees joined, 16 members were deceased with a net change of 21. Final year end membership numbers will be presented at the AGM.

Reminders for renewals of annual memberships for 2022-2023 were mailed in late August. The membership application forms have been updated to collect data on year started & year retired of employment and department/unit at the university. Thank you to those who have already renewed.

Membership fees: Annual fees have remained unchanged with the option of renewing for one year (\$15) or two years (\$25); the fee for a life-time membership is \$100.

The membership committee has had three meetings in the past year to review Member benefits, promotion, and information on the website. We would like to organize one or two social and educational activities in the coming calendar year and are open to ideas. A recent committee proposal is the purchase of a park style bench to be situated at one of the two campuses. The bench would have a plaque to say, "Donated by the U of M Retirees Association".

Thank you to Jay Goldstein, for his commitment and work on the membership records database. Please send any changes to your address by email to retirees@umanitoba.ca.

Additions to the written report:

Special thanks to Jay Goldstein for his careful record keeping.

The committee met twice over the past year. Gladys explained the different membership categories. The annual membership-renewal drive is sent only to those who are registered as annual or bi-annual members.

The committee has at various times organized several special events—such as a museum visit, a streetcar tour, shared attendance at sporting events—for retirees.

The Executive is acting on the Committee's recommendation that we sponsor a bench in the name of UMRA somewhere on the University of Manitoba's campus.

Motion to accept the Membership Committee's Report:

Gladys Stewart / Daniel Sitar **Carried**

Communications Committee, Gene Walz, Acting Chair

Newsletter editor assigned, edited, and circulated two UMRA newsletters, spring and fall, with the fall 2022 issue being the largest to date.

Committee members (and others) contributed to the evolution of the UMRA website Committee accepted resignations of two members -- requires replacements and new members

Additions to the written report:

The fall Newsletter is the largest issue we have done. (Janet Sealey orally offered congratulations on producing such a strong issue).

The Committee has struggled, as have others, to handle the complexities of transitioning to the new website.

Motion to accept the Communication Committee's Report:

Gene Walz / Elisabeth Ross **Carried.**

Endowment Fund Committee, Ed Unrau, Chair

The two UMRA endowment funds grew by a combined total of \$9,846 this past year. This amount includes an allocation directly from UMRA as well as donations that were generated from two solicitations that the Donor Relations Department sent to retirees last December and this past March.

Our endowment fund supports a bursary and a scholarship, both of which are now large enough to support an annual award.

The University of Manitoba Retirees Association Bursary grew by \$4,980 this past year to bring the total amount of donations and contributions in this fund to \$29,008 as of March 31. A bursary was awarded to a student in the Faculty of Architecture in the amount of \$1,176. Any student in any faculty is eligible for this bursary.

The University of Manitoba Retirees Association Bursary grew by \$4,866 to bring the total amount of donations and contributions in this fund to \$27, 545. The selection process to award the first scholarship from this fund is currently underway and will be in the amount of \$1,147. The scholarship was established to support graduate students pursuing research on human aging.

The Donor Relations Department is planning further donation solicitations that targets retirees in the coming months. Retirees are encouraged to specifically direct their donation to either one of the UMRA funds. As the principal amounts in each of the funds grow it will become possible to increase the size of the annual awards, or increase the number of awards, or a combination of both. Our endowment funds and the awards they support are a tangible demonstration of the continuing commitment of retirees to the education of our students.

Additions to the written report:

Ed Unrau noted that the U of M has helped us out with the campaign to fund raise for the awards. We have been able to strengthen them substantially.

Motion to accept the Endowment Fund Committee's report:

Ed Unrau / Gail Mackisey **Carried**

Past President/Nominating Committee, Daniel Sitar

Overall, my responsibilities for 2021-2 have been limited this past year. As Past President, I also serve as Chair of the Nomination Committee of UMRA. This year, all Executive Committee positions are continuing for 2022-23. There is no slate of candidates to be considered for election for the upcoming year. We have been fortunate to recruit some new members to our committees. Thus, we are able to continue to bring fresh visions to our organization. I also serve as the retiree representative to the annual United Way of Winnipeg Campaign. I am pleased to report that University of Manitoba retirees continue to demonstrate their leadership in making contributions to such a worthy cause.

Motion to accept the Nomination Committee's Report.

Daniel Sitar / Gladys Stewart **Carried**

United Way

The fund-raising letter is ready and will be distributed through the University of Manitoba. Last year retirees contributed 55% of all funds raised out of the UofM. The generosity has been well-received by the UofM and by the United Way.

5. New Business

UMRA's two scholarships for the most recent year have been awarded respectfully \$825.00 and \$1,125.00.

Much discussion about sending out hard copies of the Newsletter to those who might need or prefer that form. The Newsletter currently goes to all retirees through the UMRA list and through the Human Resources list. Mailing hard copies, which the U of M administration paid for in the past, would be very expensive.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Brian Blakley / Heather Brownlee **Carried**