



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting,
Marshall McLuhan Hall
October 19, 2019

(Pending approval at the 2020 AGM)

In Attendance: Daniel Sitar, Marjorie Doyle, Janet Sealey, Ernie Bridges, Lois Brockman, Carol Goldstein, Jay Goldstein, Nelma Fetterman, Connie LeBlanc, Gene Walz, Ed Unrau, Linda Kostiuk, Thelma Lussier, Jean A. Paterson, Janice Mann, Gail Mackisey

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jay Goldstein and seconded by Jean Paterson that the Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM October 20, 2018

A few typos were noted. Under the Treasurer's Report, re line U of M Graduate Studies (Graduate spelt incorrectly, under Benefits and Pensions, fourth sentence should say to change plans (not planes), under those present it should say Thelma Lussier (not Lussien).

Moved by Lois Brockman and seconded by Janet Sealey that the AGM Minutes of October 20, 2018 be accepted as amended.

Carried.

3. Business Arising from the October 20, 2018 Minutes

All business arising is being dealt with in the October 19, 2019 Agenda.

4. Reports:

President, Daniel Sitar

The past year has again been a busy one for UMRA. Our interaction with the University continues to increase. Our move to electronic communication among members is now stable. If you happen to have a problem, the Executive Committee would like to hear from you so that we insure a high quality of access to information of interest to retirees. Please remember to visit our website at the University. There is a considerable amount of information concerning the activities of UMRA and an archive of past Newsletters and documents available for your use. We are still able to maintain at an economical cost an assistance program for paid members who have computer problems. UMRA members continue to participate in improving the availability of sessions that allow persons approaching retirement to better prepare for that event, and this initiative continues to

be well received by employees of the University. UMRA members are also participating in the Age Friendly University Committee initiatives that are being led by the Centre on Aging. Our increasing contribution to bursaries, scholarships and prizes to University students is well received by them, and enables UMRA to reinforce its positive role in enhancing the postsecondary educational experience. Only the Scholarship Fund remains to reach critical value that will allow its awarding to a deserving graduate student doing research to answer important issues focused on the aging community. Our Pensions and Benefits Committee continues to meet with Central Administration to review and address issues raised by retirees. More details of the operation of your Association are presented in reports from other members of the Executive Committee and from Committee Chairs. As your President, I attended the Annual Meeting of CURAC and volunteered my services on their Health Care Policy Committee. I am hoping that this initiative will increase the number of Newsletter columns devoted to important health care issues encountered by retirees of the University. We especially encourage retirees to consider participation in committee activities of UMRA so that we maintain and enhance the value of UMRA to the greater membership. You may indicate your interest in participation by contacting UMRA via its telephone number or via email. Additions to the President's Report – Dan met with Darlene Smith new VP Human Resources and Dave Muir, who is our new contact. The meeting went well. The university is planning to maintain status quo.
Vice-President, Janet Sealey

One of my tasks as Vice-President has been to monitor and respond to the telephone calls to the Retiree Association. This is not an onerous task and it has been really nice to speak with those retirees that I have not seen in years. Most of the inquiries received have been about the medical insurance options available through the Colleges and Universities Retirees' Association of Canada (CURAC) to which UMRA is a member. One option in particular is of great interest to our members and that is the MEDOC program that offers competitive travel/trip cancellation insurance, with rates varying by age and medical condition.

I am also a member of the Retirement Workshop Planning Group in addition to Jay Goldstein and Daniel Sitar. This Planning Group is made up of union representatives and university representatives and its purpose is to discuss how the university might improve on the information provided to employees considering retirement. In 2018 The University held a number of workshops for potential retirees in spring and fall 2018 and again in spring and fall 2019. Following the workshops the Retirement Workshop Planning Group meets to discuss the workshops effectiveness and suggestions are discussed for improvement. Overall the workshops have been well received by the employees.

On Wednesday July 17, 2019, twenty-one University of Manitoba retirees (UMRA) visited the Manitoba Museum on Rupert Avenue for a tour of the 1919 Strike exhibit. A very informative account of important individuals involved in Canada's most important six-week strike, and a timeline of the various strike events was provided by the tour guides. Artifacts of the early 1900's such as a voting box and car heater were also available for attendees to examine up close. All attendees enjoyed learning a little bit more about this significant event in Winnipeg's history, as this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike.

In 2020, I hope to add a speaker's series to the events sponsored by UMRA.

Additions to the Report – Jay thanked Janet for setting up the tour of the Manitoba Museum. It was very well received.

Treasurer's Financial Report, June LaRonde

Treasurer's Financial Report
University of Manitoba Retirees Association
October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019

INCOME

Assiniboine Credit Union:

Bank Balance as of Sept 30/2018 14,891.80

Membership as of Oct 1, 2018 to Sept 30/2019 3,976.92

Bank Interest 8.57

\$ 18,877.29

\$ 18,877.29

CURAC Rebate – March 15/2019 - \$108.22

CURAC Rebate – June 20/2019- \$136.70

EXPENSE:

CURAC Conference – 2019 578.12

Honorarium 3M Thesis presentation 100.00

UofM Scholarship – Feb 2019 500.00

UofM Scholarship – Nov 2018 2,500.00

Newsletter Printing/Postage 116.16

\$ 3,794.28

- 3,794.28

15,083.01

Assiniboine –Bank Balance as of Sept 30/2019

14,667.76

BMO Mutual Fund Investment, Current value

24,658.98

TOTAL ASSET

\$39,321.74

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** Life membership – 17 members have opted to Life membership for this year Oct 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019.

Additions to the Report: The typo Retirees (not Retires) will be corrected for the Minutes. A thank you was recently sent to UMFA for allowing us to use their space for our meeting.

Membership Committee, Jean Paterson, Interim Chair

Members: Jay Goldstein, Jean Paterson (interim chair), Gladys Stewart and Connie LeBlanc

Statistics for 2018-19 Membership Year: (October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019)

As of September 24, 2019:

1. our total membership was 782.
2. 51% were dues-paying annual or lifetime Members;
3. 49% were Associate Members

During the year we added 39 new members and lost 10 members due to death or resignation.

Reminders for renewals of annual memberships for 2019-2020 were mailed in late September. Thank you to those already renewed. We hope for remaining responses to be returned soon.

Membership fees: We continued to offer annual members the option of renewing for one year (\$15) or two-years (\$25); the fee for a lifetime membership remained at \$100.

Jay Goldstein is our membership data keeper. He also updates the application forms and member list.

Please send any changes in your address or email to retirees@umanitoba.ca, or by mail to 137 Education Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2. Thanks for your support.

Addition to the Report – membership continues to increase, we had several members die last year and had one resignation.

Communications, Gene Walz

The committee is always looking for contributions and suggestions for the newsletter. The first and second pages are standard each time but we are interested in hearing what retirees are doing. A new medical column was added and it received positive comments. We'd like to hear about interesting travel retirees have undertaken. Other suggestions for columns are gardening and birding. One person asked to have information on what is happening on campus and was informed that if you go to the U of M website there is a section where you can check on what is happening. The next newsletter will have a link to this information. The committee is in need of more members. Meetings are 2x a year.

Retirement Planning Subcommittee, Janet Sealey

Dan, Jay and Janet are part of the committee. The retirement planning sessions have been very well received. Participants evaluate the sessions, these evaluations are looked at, and adjustments in the sessions are made. Plans ahead see these sessions being offered earlier than five years prior to retirement. Perhaps UMRA could ask to have a bit of time to talk about our organization. When employees retire they do receive our

application form but it is included in a mound of other paper. Hearing about UMRA verbally may encourage more retirees to join. Just for info at the U of W employees have their membership to their retiree association paid if the retiree joins within the first three months of retiring. We will investigate this but not sure what other support U of W retirees association receives and we would not want to jeopardize what support UMRA is receiving from the U of M.

Benefits and Pensions, verbal report by Janet Sealey

The Pension and Benefits Committee met with Dave Muir, Director of Compensation and Benefits on January 10, 2019 to discuss the changes to the retirees' benefits package effective July 1, 2018, particularly the paramedical coverage. The meeting was to address a number of concerns raised by UMRA members regarding the implementation of a yearly maximum of \$500.00 for paramedical services. Previously, there was no maximum.

The changes to paramedical coverage also included an expanded list of paramedical practitioners covered. The implementation of both the \$500.00 maximum and the expansion of the list of paramedical practitioners was to harmonize retirees' benefits with those of current employees.

While some retirees were negatively affected by the imposed maximum, Dave Muir provided data that showed many retirees are utilizing the expanded list of paramedical practitioners. The data showed that the amount spent by retirees for physiotherapy in 2018 is down 10.3% from 2016 and down 13.3% from 2017. In addition, the data showed that the average amount a retiree spent on paramedical practitioners in 2018 is similar to amount spent in 2016 and 2017 prior to the change.

The Committee met again with the University administration (D. Muir and D. Smith, Acting Assoc. V.P. Human Resources) on April 1, 2019 to continue the discussion regarding other inequities between the benefits for retirees compared to the benefits of active employees. The University recognized there were still some inequities in benefits but are unable to make any benefits improvements at this time due to the provincial government's Bill 28 which prohibits any benefits improvements.

The potential shortfall in the Pensioner Account #1 (i.e. employees who retired prior to November 2008) was also addressed. When questioned about the shortfall in the Pensioner Account #1, D. Muir suggested that the Committee meet with Mr. Bernie Gold, Director of the Pension Office to discuss UMRA concerns.

On May 24, 2019 the Committee met with Mr. Gold. Mr. Gold provided a very thorough and helpful explanation of how and why there came to be a shortfall in the Pensioner Account. Subsequent to that meeting, all members of the Committee were permitted to attend two special meetings of the University Staff Benefits Committee where the University's administration and actuary explained the issues surrounding the Pensioner Account, as well as possible solutions to this issue. At this time there has been no further information forthcoming from the University but the Committee continues to monitor this situation very closely.

Endowment Fund, Ed Unrau

The UMRA Bursary is now being awarded. The UMRA Scholarship still needs more donations to make it viable to be awarded. Dan will encourage donations in the next

Retirees Newsletter.

The Scholarship, when viable, will be presented to a student in Graduate Studies with aging being part of their studies.

UMRA is receiving recognition with the awarding of prizes at the 3M presentations. We are acknowledged as donors for the 2nd place prize. Three hundred plus people at these presentations hear about UMRA.

Nominating Committee, Ed Unrau

UMRA's By-Laws stipulate that the Nominating Committee shall each year prepare a list of eligible candidates for vacancies for seats on the executive committee.

This year the Committee sought candidates for the following positions:

President

Vice-President

Members-at-Large

The nominees for 2019-20:

Dan Sitar, for a one-year extension to his term as president

Janet Sealey, for a one-year extension to her term as vice-president

The foregoing represents an extension to the usual practice of two-year terms for these two positions. Accordingly, the "election" at this AGM will be a decision to extend their terms by an additional year and only requires the concurrence of the members present at the AGM. There is precedent for this in that the AGM of about six years ago agreed to extend the terms of the then incumbents for a further year.

Connie LeBlanc, is nominated for a further term as member-at-large

Jay Goldstein, is nominated for a further term as member-at-large

RECOMMENDATION: The Nominating Committee recommends that the annual general meeting elect the foregoing slate of four candidates to the UMRA executive.

Continuing members:

Dennis Cooley, continues as UMRA secretary

June LaRonde, continues as UMRA treasurer

Marjorie Doyle, continues as member-at-large

Ed Unrau, continues as past-president

In addition, the chairs of UMRA sub-committees are ex officio members of the UMRA executive.

This 2019 nominating committee report was prepared by Connie LeBlanc, Marjorie Doyle, and Ed Unrau who is chair by virtue of being past-president.

It was moved by Ed Unrau that this report be accepted as presented, Jay Goldstein seconded.

Carried.

5. New Business

Constitutional Amendment

Proposed Amendment of UMRA Constitution

Background

When UMRA's constitution was adopted in 2010, Article 3 set out two (2) membership categories: Active Member (fee-paying) and Inactive Member (no fee). In practice the adjectives "active" and "inactive" proved to be confusing to prospective members. Some on the Executive Committee felt that the way to solve this problem was to have only one type of membership, that of Member (fee-paying). Others, while agreeing that the category labels were problematic, wanted to keep the option of affiliating with UMRA without having to pay a fee.

The Executive Committee established a Sub-Committee on Membership Categories in 2011. The subcommittee recommended a) maintaining both fee-paying and non-fee-paying memberships, and b) amending Article 3 to replace "Active Member" with "Member" and "Inactive Member" with "Associate Member." The Executive Committee accepted the sub-committee's recommendations. A motion from the Executive Committee to amend Article 3 was carried at the 2011 AGM. The Membership Committee subsequently reclassified our members using the new labels.

Current Issue: CURAC Benefits for UMRA Members

UMRA pays an annual fee (based on size of our membership) to belong to the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC). CURAC has introduced a number of benefits (e.g., travel and extended health insurance plans at favourable rates) which are "...available to all members [emphasis added] of retiree groups...that are affiliated with CURAC/ARUCC ." Given UMRA's current membership structure, our Members and Associate Members can take advantage of benefits available through CURAC. Two concerns have been raised about this situation.

One concern is that it is inequitable that while Associate Members do not help to defray the cost of our CURAC membership they are entitled to the same CURAC benefits as our fee-paying Members. The other concern is that when Associate Members are eligible for benefits through CURAC it removes an incentive to become a Member.

After considerable discussion the Executive Committee decided that the best way to deal with both concerns is to amend Article 3 to make it clear that only those who pay a membership fee are members of UMRA. Persons who chose not to pay a membership fee henceforth will be designated as Associates. If the amendment is passed only those with the status of Member will be eligible to take advantage of benefits available through CURAC.

The Executive Committee therefore recommends the following amendments to Article 3 (and related articles):

Article 3 – Membership

3.1 Membership shall be open to all retirees of the University of Manitoba and their spouses/partners.

3.1.1 A retiree is any person retired from employment at the University of Manitoba.

3.2 There shall be two categories of membership:

3.2.1 Members are those A Member is one who have has paid a authorized lifetime or annual membership fee.

3.2.2 Associate Members

3.3 An Associate is one who has not paid a membership fee.

4.1.4 Secretary

4.1.4.1 The Secretary shall keep proper minutes of general meetings of the Members and meetings of the Executive Committee.

Article 5 – Elections and Voting

5.2.1 No mMember may be represented by a proxy vote.

Article 7 - Meetings

7.1.1 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to Members and Associates not later than four weeks prior to the given date.

Article 8 - Finances and Fees

8.1 An annual membership fee Membership fees shall be recommended by the Executive Committee and approved at the Annual General Meeting.

It was Moved by Jay Goldstein and seconded by Thelma Lussier that this Constitutional amendment and various Articles be accepted as presented.

A question was asked about what happens with our CURAC membership. Our numbers will still be reported as Members and Associates. Only Members will be able to take advantage of CURAC benefits. As other benefits are sought out they will only be available for Members. Our Associates will be informed of this change.

Carried Unanimously.

Dan informed those present that Lois Brockman was recognized with a plaque for her work on UMRA and CURAC. Lois informed everyone that the first CURAC meeting was held in Winnipeg as a joint venture of the U of M and U of W. Lois also wanted to acknowledge the work of Nora Losey in getting things up and running. It was recommended that we nominate Nora for CURAC recognition.

6. Adjournment

It was moved by Ed Unrau and seconded by Gene Walz that the meeting be adjourned at 1:12 pm.