

CUPA/ARUC
Concordia University Pensioners' Association
Association des Retraité(s) de l'Université Concordia

MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Friday, April 29, 2016 – 10:00 A.M.
Room HC-155, Hingston Hall, Loyola Campus

1. Call to Order and President's Remarks

President Bill Knitter called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m.

Bill noted that as this is the Annual General Meeting, elections for the Executive Committee would be held later in the meeting. He encouraged everyone present to review the available Nominating Committee Report.

Bill welcomed all attendees and announced that Elizabeth Langley would be the guest speaker at 11:00 a.m.

Bill recognized and read the names of Concordia retirees who had passed away since the Fall 2015 General Meeting. Bill welcomed new CUPARUC members and announced the names of all new members who had joined since the Fall 2015 General Meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of November 4, 2015

The minutes of the November 4, 2015 meeting were distributed. The minutes were adopted unanimously.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no particular business arising from the Minutes other than what appears under Reports or elsewhere in the Agenda.

5. Reports

5.1. Financial Report and Membership Statistics

The Interim Financial Statement for the period June 1, 2015 – April 26, 2016 was made available to all attendees. Garry Milton (Secretary/Treasurer) presented the financial report. He informed members that the balance on April 26th was \$19,782.25. The total revenue since June 1, 2015 is \$10,655.12, which is made up from membership fees and

net receipts from the annual dinner. The association did not receive a contribution from Concordia this year. Total expenses to-date are \$6,028.97. The major expenses relate to the general meetings and events (\$3,011.58) and postage costs for the mailing of the newsletters and related materials (\$1,554). The association incurred a new cost this year related to the website. Due to a change in University policy, we are now hosting our website.

Questions related to CURAC membership fees, postage costs and telephone rental expenses were raised. It was noted that the CURAC fees were slightly higher this year as the fees are based on membership levels, which were higher this year compared to 2014-15. The reasons the association continues to use land mail as well as email for communications was reviewed. It was agreed that the Executive would review the merits of continuing to use Concordia telephone services.

A copy of the Interim Financial Statement is attached to the minutes.

There are 342 active paid members for the 2015-16 year. This is the highest active annual membership base since the association started keeping statistics in 2004. An additional 118 members have paid dues at some point over the past four years but have yet to renew for the current year. It should be noted that all mailings go out to all paid members as well as to anyone that has paid membership fees over the past four years.

5.2. Pension and Benefits Committees

Bill Knitter introduced Howard Fink (Chair, Pension and Benefits Committee) and George Tsoublekas (CUPARUC Alternate Pension and Benefits Representative) and thanked them for their work on the Benefits and Pension Committees on behalf of CUPARUC.

5.2.1. Benefits Committee

Howard noted at the last General Meeting the anticipated pension reform bill had yet to be tabled at the National Assembly and that, accordingly, there was much anxiety and uncertainty as to what was coming and when. Since then, the Bill has been tabled and much work is now underway with respect to understanding and making recommendations regarding the proposed pension reform. To-date; there have been six meetings of the Benefits Working Group (sub-committee of the Benefits Committee, which will make recommendations to the Benefits Committee regarding the proposed Bill and the impact on Concordia), four meetings of the Pension Sustainability Forum (discussion group with representation from the various university constituencies) and two meetings of the University benefits Committee. It is expected that there will be many more meetings of these committees. CUPARUC is represented at all of the meetings.

Since the Bill has yet to pass, the University does not want to make decisions on issues where choices are possible. Howard expressed concern, however, that if

potential alternatives are not tabled soon, there will not be adequate time for meaningful discussions.

Howard reported that once the Bill was tabled, a meeting was held with Morneau Sheppel regarding the potential impact of the new legislation on the Concordia University Pension Plan. For current retirees, it is clear that existing benefits cannot be restructured, including indexation.

5.2.2. Pension Fund

George Tsoublekas presented the written report he had prepared on the performance and state of the pension fund, which was made available to all attendees and is appended to the minutes.

A number of questions followed George's presentation. In answer to the questions, George explained the "underfunding" situation, noted that approximately 1/3 of our fund is invested in US funds and that even though the return achieved in 2015 was almost 9%, we will not receive an indexation adjustment this year. He noted, however, that, based on the indexation formula, since we have now covered most of the "bad years", things could look hopeful for next year.

5.3. Social Activities Committee

Wendy Hedrich (Chair, Social Activities Committee) was unable to attend the meeting so there was not a formal report. Bill noted that the recent event at the Centaur was well-attended and thanked Wendy for organizing the events over the past year, including the annual Christmas luncheon.

5.4. Scholarship Committee

Mary Baldwin (Chair, Scholarship Committee) presented the written report she had prepared, which was made available to all attendees and is appended to the minutes.

Mary noted that the awards for this year have yet to be released as the amount of the final payout has yet to be confirmed. Last year, the University topped-up the payout generated by the CUPA endowment fund such that \$40,000 was awarded.

Mary encouraged all present to be generous when the annual campaign begins in order that our fund can grow.

5.5. Technical Committee

Roger Kenner (Chair, Technical Committee) presented the written report he had prepared, which was made available to all attendees and is appended to the minutes. He explained the reasons why it was necessary to move our website earlier this year and noted that, now that we are hosting the site, it opens up possibilities that didn't exist

previously.

Roger noted that the website is up to date, including the latest newsletter. He encouraged people to check the website on a regular basis as the “Latest News” section on the home page is kept current with the most recent information about upcoming meetings, events and news.

5.6. Newsletter

Bill Knitter reported that John Woodrow has retired from the Executive Committee and as the Newsletter editor. Although John was unable to attend the meeting, he had asked that his thanks be extended to all those that helped him over the past several years, including those that had contributed articles and content.

On behalf of CUPARUC, Bill thanked John for his contribution to the Association and for a job very well done as the Newsletter editor.

5.7. Membership Recruitment

Bill Knitter reported that Doreen Hutton has retired from the Executive Committee and as the Chair, Membership/Recruitment. Although Doreen was unable to attend the meeting, she had prepared a report, which was made available to all attendees and is appended to the minutes. Thank you to both Doreen and John for working with Human Resources recently on membership recruitment.

On behalf of CUPARUC, Bill thanked Doreen for her contribution to the Association and for her significant achievements in membership recruitment, especially her accomplishments in improving relations with human Resources.

5.8. Relations with Other Associations

Howard Fink reported that the CURAC Annual General Meeting would be held in Hamilton next month.

6. Nominating Committee Report

Bill Knitter noted that the Nominating Committee is normally the purview of the Past President but since Graham Martin’s untimely passing, a Nominating Committee was formed to take on the duty. Bill expressed the sentiment of how much the Executive misses Graham’s presence.

The Nominating Committee Report, prepared by the Nominating Committee (Bill Knitter, Garry Milton, Mary Baldwin) was presented. The report was unanimously approved as presented. A copy of the report was made available to all attendees and is appended to the minutes.

7. Other Business

There was no additional business.

8. Next Meeting

The Fall General Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m., the last week of October, 2016, on the Sir George Williams Campus.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. The formal meeting will be followed by a presentation and demonstration from our guest speaker, Elizabeth Langley, entitled “Let us Discourage Diminishing”.

Minutes submitted by
Garry Milton
October 29, 2016.

CUPARUC
 2016 Annual General Meeting
 Interim Financial Statement for the Period
 June 1, 2015 - April 26, 2016

Opening Balance May 31, 2015		\$15,156.10
INCOME		
Membership fees	\$9,555.12	
Net Receipts - Annual dinner	\$1,100.00	
Concordia contribution	\$0.00	
TOTAL INCOME		<u>\$10,655.12</u>
EXPENSES		
General Meetings & Events	\$3,011.58	
Legal Fees	\$0.00	
CURAC Membership	\$195.75	
Website	\$230.09	
Gifts	\$20.70	
Postage	\$1,554.28	
Printing & Copy Centre	\$362.34	
Stationery and Supplies	\$168.28	
Telephone Rental	<u>\$485.95</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>\$6,028.97</u>
NET INCOME		<u>\$4,626.15</u>
Closing Balance as of April 26, 2016		<u>\$19,782.25</u>

April 26, 2016

Report on the Pension Fund – Preliminary Unaudited Data (by George Tsoublekas)

The pension fund ended the year 2015 with a total of over \$915 million in net assets.

The return achieved in 2015 was slightly less than 9%. This is higher than the objective of 6% which also represents the rate at which the Plan's liabilities are discounted.

- Our return rate has been positively affected by the strength of the US dollar, given that a considerable amount of our fund is invested in the USs.
- In comparison to other funds, our rate of return is situated at the top quartile of the returns of a universe of 95 funds followed by CIBC-Mellon.

The Plan is still underfunded. However, the funding ratio is estimated to have improved to 94.5% from 90.3% a year ago.

The new investment policy that has been adopted since 2013 is expected to

- reduce volatility in terms of annual investment returns, while offering high liquidity levels
- stabilize funding status and funding costs, and
- minimize capital losses in case of a significant market fluctuation.

The focus of the new asset allocation is capital preservation. Thus, the Plan is expected to slightly underperform in good times but perform better in bad times.

In addition, the new asset allocation is expected to produce results at a lower risk. In deed, our fund's annualized Sharpe ratio that gives a measure of the risk undertaken for the return that is being realized as of December 31, 2015 stood at 2.2, which is very good.

From the point of view of strategies, as of the end of December 2015, the portfolio is allocated as follows:

- 67% capital preservation
- 23% growth
- 10% diversification.

It should be noted that these strategies are constantly changing and consequently the percentages may be modified. However, the basic philosophy remains.

Improved governance structures have been put in place to ensure monthly monitoring of the performance of the portfolio and the risks involved, including follow-up interviews with our account managers.

Finally, the Treasurer's Office has created a structure with a newly hired specialist to manage in-house our cash position and conduct active currency hedging. The expectation is that these two activities will contribute to the enhancement of our returns.

The first quarter of 2016 has witnessed a lot of volatility in the market. Among the sources of volatility we count the domestic economic weakness and its inevitable reflection upon the currency, as well as and especially international factors such as the anxiety that creates the prospect of Britain's exit from the European Community.

Concordia University Pensioner's Association Scholarship Report for 2015-2016

The Concordia Retired Faculty and Staff Awards Endowment Fund was established in 2002 through the generosity of Concordia University Pensioners' Association (CUPA) members at that time, and the hard work of the late John Hall. The endowment is the result of the agreement between the University and CUPA to use the proceeds of the demutualization of the Sun Life Insurance Policy to fund scholarships in the name of retired Concordia employees. These awards are funded from the investment of the original endowment, plus additional gifts, and is managed by the Concordia University Foundation (CUF).

In recent years changes to the investment policies of the Foundation have been implemented to safeguard the value of endowments over time. Starting in 2014-15, the annual payout from endowments was reduced from 5% to 3.5%. The actual payout is 3.5% of the weighted average market value of the endowment over the previous 36 months. The University agreed to supply top-up funds to cover the 1.5% payout adjustment for three transition years, of which 2015-16 was the second. For the fiscal year ending April 30, 2015 the book value of the Endowment was \$710,996, and the payout before top-up for 2015-16 was \$28,087; this was topped up to \$40,000.

The annual payout is divided equally between graduate and undergraduate awards. Recipients are selected by the University, must be Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents, and must have completed one year of full-time studies at Concordia. Awards are not renewable, but recipients may be eligible, and re-apply in successive years.

For 2015-16 we have been able to maintain four graduate awards of \$5,000 each. The recipients were: Kristoffer Archibald (Faculty of Arts and Science), Sherif Nader Goubran (Engineering & Computer Science), Eli Friedland (Faculty of Arts and Science), and Sen LI (JMSB). Faculties now choose the recipients, while Graduate Studies ensures an equitable distribution across graduate programs and monitors the process to ensure the conditions of the awards are met. Our contacts there have been Jason Carey, who replaced Claudia Tocco, and Joanne Beaudoin who has assumed responsibilities for the past six months, while a new Awards Manager is being sought.

At the undergraduate level four bursaries of \$2390 and four scholarships of \$2395 have also been awarded, one of each in each of the four Faculties. The Scholarship recipients were: Salma Aly (B.Eng, Computer Engineering); Mathieu Perron (B.Comm, Major Finance & Economics); Harensan Kandiah (B.Sc. Major Maths & Statistics); and Mégan Mercier-Voghell (B.FA, Major Intermedia/Cyberarts, Minor German).

Valerie Roseman is our contact with the University Advancement Office. In general campaigns such as Annual Giving, she has explained that singling out a specific scholarship fund in a box on the form is no longer acceptable; so, to designate gifts to our fund we must use the "other" box and fill in the name of our fund – we do need donations. The students who receive our awards are always most appreciative and deserve all the support we can give - so be generous please.

Mary Baldwin, April 29th, 2016.

Concordia Pensioners' Association Web Site

It was necessary to move our website earlier this year. The University had instituted a new security protocol affecting access to University servers which made it very difficult to access and maintain the former web site. **Please take note of the new address:**

<http://CuparucConcordia.ca>

(The capitalization is for clarity and is, of course, optional. The address is much like the old one, but without the period between the two 'c's. The University has graciously agreed, for the time being, to put in a forward the old addresses of *cupa.concordia.ca* and *cuparuc.concordia.ca* , but you should get used to using the new address.)

A reminder of some features of your web site:

- 1) **Timely announcements** of events and other information are shown on the opening page. Where possible, **links** provided by speakers to additional materials are included. You can also find the *full* copy of the latest newsletter.
- 2) There is a **library of the minutes** of our Spring and Fall General Meetings, going back to the founding of Cuparuc in the late 1980s.
- 3) There is **library of former newsletters**, back to the first one in 1992.
- 4) There are **pictures from social events**, such as the Christmas luncheons. These go back to 2005. (If you have pictures or announcements from earlier events, please share them.)
- 5) The **Membership Page** contains:
 - a. **A list of all members.** Names are in two colours, indicating whether we have or do not have a current email address. When announcements sent on our *listserv* bounce back to us, we take you off the list and change the colour.
 - b **A list of new members.**
 - c. **A list of recently deceased pensioners**, whether members or not.
 - d. We do not give out people's email addresses, but if someone wishes to reach you, they may write to me and **I will forward their message** on to you.

Roger Kenner

Webmaster (roger@rogerkenner.ca)

March 2016

Bill Knitter, Chair, and Members of the CUPARUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I am writing to confirm that I will discontinue my role on the CUPARUC Executive Committee, coincident with the completion of this current term.

I feel that since taking on the portfolio for Membership in 2011, there have been several steps forward with respect to the recruitment of new Members. These are as follows:

- revision of the CUPARUC brochure;
- revision of the Membership Application Form;
- improved communication with the Department of Human Resources, specifically the unit responsible for processing Retirements. Together with John Woodrow, we have attained a beneficial level of cooperation with HR on behalf of CUPARUC, such that new retirees are provided with:
 - a CUPARUC application form, which briefly outlines the benefits of membership, fees and contact information;
 - a copy of the CUPARUC brochure, containing a brief history of the Association and its' mandate;
 - a copy of a recent Newsletter, which contains upcoming social events.

Last, but not least, CUPARUC now receives contact information for the new retiree, including an e-mail address.

Now is the time for new ideas from a new Committee member. I will continue to contribute to the Newsletter with photographs of relevant events.

I very much appreciate the opportunity, which I have had, to participate in a small way, with many of my former colleagues, as well as those I would not have had an opportunity to work with. For me, this experience has been a continuation of my long association with Concordia, and one for which I am very grateful.

Best Wishes to the Committee Members 2016 and onward, and congratulations on the achievements of the Committee as a whole. Concordia retirees are very fortunate to be so well represented.

Regards,

Doreen A. Hutton

Nominating Committee Report AGM 2016

The following members of the Executive Committee are up for re-appointment and are eligible and have agreed to stand: Howard Fink, Wendy Hedrich, Mary Baldwin, Roger Kenner, George Tsoublekas.

The following new Members at large are also nominated:

Craig Buchanan
Nancy Helms
Joanne Locke
Joyce Payan
Hal Proppe.

In addition, the following are in the middle of two-year terms: Bill Knitter and Garry Milton.

The responsibilities of the executive are recommended to be:

President - Bill Knitter
Vice president and Pension/Benefits committees Representative – Howard Fink
Alternate Pension and Benefits representative – George Tsoublekas
Secretary/Treasurer – Garry Milton
Member at Large and Social Committee Chair – Wendy Hedrich
Member at Large and Scholarship Committee Chair – Mary Baldwin
Member at Large and Web and Electronic Media Chair – Roger Kenner
Member at Large and Newsletter – Craig Buchanan
Members at large:
Nancy Helms
Joanne Locke
Joyce Payan
Hal Proppe.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Knitter
Garry Milton
Mary Baldwin