

**Minutes of CURA Welcome Meeting
September 12, 2019 – 12:00 noon
Rm. 2014 Minto Centre**

1. Provost Remarks: Lorraine Dyke

The Deputy Provost (Academic Operations & Planning), Dr. Lorraine Dyke gave welcoming remarks and expressed the Provost Office's continuing support for CURA. She outlined recent developments at Carleton:

- New Deans appointed: Larry Kostiuk, Engineering & Design, Patrice Smith, Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, Dana Brown, Sprott School of Business
- Planning on a new CU Strategic Integrated Plan (SIP) is underway and input is encouraged by all members of the Carleton community
- New indigenous initiatives
- New Carnegie Certificate and portal in Community Engagement

2. President's Report (Update): Susan Nesrallah

Susan welcomed the 2019 retirees and current members; and introduced the 2019/2020 Executive Committee pointing out that they are elected for a 2-year term at the May meeting. Mandy Hair, the Director of HR Operations was welcomed as an attendee at all CURA meetings. She is the liaison between retirees and the University and facilitates requests we may have for the University.

A summary of CURA was given for new retirees describing the organization as primarily social, but also shares information on issues affecting older citizens; such as, health, aging, financing, benefits, etc. More information is available on the CURA website at: <https://carleton.ca/cura>.

The President, Vice-President, and Past President meet with the Provost twice a year to address issues and concerns expressed by members. An update of issues completed and still outstanding was provided:

Completed:

- Parking on Campus – Reduced rate of \$5 for CURA activities on campus.
- Retiree Emails – ITS has approved the provision of Carleton email accounts to retirees with the word “retiree” in the address and have added it to their project portfolio (hope to have it by year-end).
- A question was raised on the purpose of having “retiree” in the email address: The email account to be provided to retirees will be completely new and separate from the email used for work – keeping the work email presents security risks to the University.

- Increased Visibility – Promotion of CURA at the service awards and retiree celebration event in late May/early June.
- CURA Website Update – Link to HR post-retirement benefits list (health, vision, travel, etc.), minutes of meetings, list of allowable parking lots on campus, and a Calendar of Events 2019/2020.
- Anti-virus Software – The MS Windows Defender is included in the Windows 10 operating system.

Outstanding:

- Appoint a retiree representative on the Pension Committee and on Union Committees – A request was sent to Betsy Springer for the pension committee rep, and she will inform us on progress. In terms of union representation, Irwin is on the CUASA committee, but none on CUPE2424. Mandy will look into this.
- Dental benefits for non-academic retirees – Mandy looked into this and reported that if dental was added to the current package, the cost would be prohibitive. However, retirees from any educational institution may apply for dental insurance from the Retired Teachers of Ontario (RTO) plan which provides the least cost alternative. The other one is the Municipal Retirees Organization of Ontario (MROO) which is more expensive.

3. CURA Survey: Peter Watson

Peter discussed the planned survey on what Carleton retirees of various employment backgrounds do for the university, emphasizing the importance of achieving a better understanding of these contributions than we currently have. The survey is being prepared by Wendy Watkins and Steve Prashker who are currently in the process of fine-tuning the questions. We hope to have the survey out to members before the next general meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report: Irwin Reichstein

Irwin reported that the current bank balance is \$7696, adding that the bulk of the revenue was a result of holding the CURAC Conference at Carleton in 2017. The membership fee of \$30 goes towards meals at the two annual general meetings. The following points of interest were also provided:

- Current paid membership is 65 (not including today)
- An additional 15 are interested but not paid
- Total retiree list including 2019 retirees is 199 and this is used for CURA communication of general information but not for social events

5. CURA Activities: Susan

CURA activities were outlined as follows:

- 2 annual lunch meetings for general membership in the fall and spring
- 2 outings followed by lunch or dinner (photos available on CURA website under Activities)
- 2 dinner-with-Speaker evenings
- President (Dr. Bacon) Holiday get-together in December
- Pension Plan Update presentation by Betsy Springer, Director, Pension Fund Management in January/February

Suggestions for social activities/tours/speaker topics, etc. are always welcome.

6. Trip to Marihuana Plant: Peter Fried

Peter gave a brief outline of the trip; and will send the invitation with details by email shortly. The tour of the Canopy Growth Corporation (Tweed) is scheduled for Thursday, October 10, from 10:00 am until noon, and there is no cost for this. Peter asked to please reply before October 1st, including the name of a guest, if any.

Transportation is not being arranged as a group; however, if anyone is willing to drive others; Peter will put individuals in contact with each other. After the tour, those who wish can have lunch in one of the local restaurants (names will be provided in Peter's email instructions).

In answer to the inevitable question – there will be no free samples, and cannabis is not sold on the premises although other items are for sale.

7. CURAC 2019 Conference: Bob Morrison

Susan, Bob Morrison and Martien de Leeuw attended the annual CURAC Conference at the University of Guelph in May 2019. CURAC is the Canadian federation of university and college retiree associations, with about 40 member associations across Canada. About 60 people from across Canada turn up at these conferences. Carleton hosted the 2017 CURAC Conference, and it was great fun.

The meetings are usually enjoyable and instructive, starting off with round table discussions so you can get to know people in small groups, and have long coffee breaks, so lots of time for informal chatter. They have good speakers and panels on topics of interest to seniors; e.g., health issues, income security and pensions, travel, reports from the host university's leading researchers – a highlight was a

talk on sex activity for seniors. Less than 1% of heart attacks occur during sexual activity – low risk! So, don't be shy....

The CURAC website is: <http://www.curac.ca/> . It contains reports on previous conferences and details about the upcoming ones (next year's is at UBC, and the year after at McGill. The Provost generously supports two delegates from Carleton.

CURAC has some benefit programs which may be of interest, primarily in the fields of travel where you get discounts on tours from Collette Travel and Trip Merchant, and insurance where you get good rates for home, car, health, travel, travel cancellation, and even pets – not to be sniffed at! You can check out the benefits at the CURAC website.

CURAC is a participant of Vibrant Voices, a non-partisan coalition of about ten seniors' organizations that lobbies federal MPs on issues such as: income security, pensions, national pharmacare, and the need for a national seniors' strategy. The lead is taken by the National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR), with several hundred thousand members and 40 fulltime staff. Bob Morrison participated in a lobby day last February where representatives of these organizations met with MPs and attended Question Period. It was a useful exercise.

For the upcoming election, the idea is for local branches of the participating organizations of Vibrant Voices to get together and meet with local MPs and candidates, perhaps at all candidate meetings. THE CURAC Newsletter on the CURAC website has further information about how to get in touch. If anyone is interested in participating locally, let Bob Morrison know at robertmorrison@rogers.com.

8. Retiree/Advancement Engagement: Margaret Haines

Margaret Haines reported on a new advisory committee set up by Advancement Services that will focus on retiree engagement. The purpose of the committee is to help engage retirees to increase fund raising, to encourage more involvement with Carleton generally, to ensure that the community is aware of developments at Carleton, and to thank retirees for their contributions to Carleton. Margaret, Linda Rossman, and Wendy Donner volunteered on this committee.

Advancement has published its first semi-annual newsletter aimed at retirees and was distributed to those for whom they had addresses. If anyone is interested in receiving the Newsletter, contact Mary Kange. The newsletter will also be posted on the Advancement website. Information in the newsletter was about new senior

appointments and about Carleton sponsored events which will now be open to all retirees, and not just to those donating funds.

Margaret also outlined the differences between this new committee and CURA, emphasizing that CURA is an independent membership body which can raise issues with the university through the joint committee with the Provost on matters that affect retirees; e.g., pension committee membership and email.

CURA works with all departments dealing with retirees including HR, Advancement and the Provost. As part of the national federation of retiree associations (CURAC), we are also part of a national voice for retirees and help members take advantage of CURAC's membership benefits. CURA also hosts social events for its members, many of which take place outside the university and are not related to university business or goals.

The new advisory committee does not have that level of independence, cannot promote membership in other organizations, cannot advocate for retirees, and is primarily focused on helping Advancement reach out to us with information, invitations to Carleton events and fund-raising appeals. There may be some overlap in terms of encouraging retiree engagement with the university, but Margaret stated that this was not an exclusive goal, but one also shared by HR, Learning in Retirement and many other departments.

9. Questions/Other Business: All

A question was raised on whether retirees could attend such events as the President's Breakfast or be eligible for discounted tickets for RedBlacks football or Senator hockey games. Mandy replied that in theory no, but they probably wouldn't notice if we did. She also added that these tickets are typically not for the most popular and well-attended games.

A question was raised about what CURA is doing about students who are losing OSAP funding due to cuts imposed by the Ford government. This is out of CURA's sphere of influence.

Upcoming events at Carleton's Dominion Chalmers Centre were announced. These may be of interest to CURA members and should be communicated on a regular basis. Susan will add a link to these events on the CURA website.