

## MINUTES OF THE CUFA COUNCIL

Held on Monday, November 7, 2022

9:30 AM – 11:19 AM by Zoom Videoconference

**PRESENT:** Ian Rakita (Chair), Ciprian Alecsandru, Theresa Ariolla, Elena Benelli, Aaron Brauer, Walcir Cardoso, June Chaikelson, Patrick Delaney, Georges Denès, Charles Draimin, Kristen Dunfield, Deniz Duruiz, Surabhi Ghosh, Alex Guindon, Cynthia Hammond, Rachel Harris, Steve Henle, Loretta Hung, Cody Hyndman, Lauren Kaplow, Alexandru Lefter, Samuel Li, Ted McCormick, James McIntosh, Nicola Nixon, Fabien Olivry, Maya Rae Oppenheimer, Joey Paquet, Elisabeth Peltier, Norma Rantisi, Alessandra Renzi, Mahesh Sharma, Ted Stathopoulos, Pouya Valizadeh, Raul Valverde; Chantal Bohbot, Geneviève Robichaud, Léa Roboam.

**ABSENT:** Angela Alberga, Meghan Joy, Ida Karimfazil, Lea Katsanis, Jordan Lebel, Jean-François Mayer

**GUESTS:** Linda Dyer, Gail Fayerman, Sam Meech, Kumiko Vezina

### 1. Approval of the Agenda

*Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Cardoso, Olivry) it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda be approved.*

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the COUNCIL Meeting of September 19, 2022

*Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Henle, Lefter) it was unanimously resolved that the minutes of the September 19, 2022, meeting be approved.*

### 3. President's Remarks

Ian thanked the representative from AHSC for suggesting that his colleague Peter Morden serve as a grievance officer. Ian extended his thanks to Peter and to Lea Katsanis for agreeing to serve. Ian reminded the council that we still need external email addresses for our members. To date we have received about 400 on a total of over 1000. Ian encouraged councillors to remind their constituents to enter their alternate email addresses on the CUFA website. CUFA will also send a message to CUFABUSINESS with a link to enter the alternate email address. Lastly, regarding UNITY, and the comments that members submitted, the anonymized messages were sent to the Provost, but we still have not received a proper response. Ian will continue to follow up at the Liaison Committee.

### 4. New Business:

**a. Negotiations: presentation of articles to be opened by CUFA - Linda Dyer, Chief Negotiator:** Ian introduced Linda Dyer, our Chief Negotiator who presented a list of the articles that the negotiation team is proposing to open and discussed the broad points about each article as follows. Linda also noted that the team tried to address all of the comments that were received prior to starting negotiation preparation.

**Article 8** - increase the number of positions under the minimum guarantee and reduce the number of excluded positions

**Articles 11 and 12** -incorporate new DHC guidelines and streamline the process.

**Articles 12, 13, 14** -reduce the reliance on temporary lecturers and increase the number of ETA positions and shorten their path to permanence. Temporary lecturers

are still needed, but we want to improve their conditions by removing the two year hiatus after three contracts and establishing twelve and twenty-four month contracts. Regarding teaching evaluations, ensure that the questions asked of students are consistent with recent research about the validity of student evaluation of teaching effectiveness.

**Article 17** - allow librarians to perform their duties remotely.

**Article 29** - create a resolution process instead of moving directly to disciplinary action. Improve fairness and reduce resolution delays. Gain some control over the process.

**Article 35** - adjustment in workload for parents returning to work after birth or adoption.

**Articles 39 and 40 and 20**, - salary grid and increases. Stipends for academic unit heads and supervisory librarians.

**Other items**

- Include Professional Development Allowance (PDA) in the Collective Agreement.
- Address the ever-increasing time-burden of administrative tasks and the impact on faculty workload.
- Ensure that CUFA is included in development of new policies and administrative processes with impact on CUFA members.

We expect to have an initial meeting with the Employer sometime between December 6 to 9, with negotiations likely to begin in January.

*Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Sharma, McIntosh) on the recommendation of the CUFA Executive, it was unanimously resolved that the CUFA Council approve the opening of Articles 8, 11, 12, 14, 17, 20, 29, 35, 39 & 40, as well as addressing the key issues of the PDA, administrative workload, and policy development affecting CUFA members.*

*A unanimous motion of thanks (Stathopoulos, Brauer) was extended to Linda Dyer for her presentation and hard work.*

## 5. Reports

- EDI Committee:** Nicola Nixon reported. The committee met on October 11 and discussed accommodations for remote teaching that were granted or not. The committee is not sure that the criteria for obtaining an accommodation has been made clear. Eleven requests were granted and twenty were denied. Pay equity is an ongoing concern.
- Pension and Benefits:** Michel Magnan reported for the Pension Committee. Since the last council meeting, the Pension Committee has met as follows:
  - One (1) Pension committee meeting (half day);
  - Two (2) Investment subcommittee meetings (one half-day and one full day);
  - One (1) Responsible Investment Working Group meeting;
  - The Annual Information meeting;
  - One (1) Education Day (half day) for Pension committee members.

The Annual information meeting was well attended with more than 300 registered attendants. As was reported at the meeting, the Plan ended 2021 in a solid position, achieving a surplus position for the first time since the financial crisis of 2008.

Stock, debt, real estate and currency markets continue to exhibit high volatility. Except for oil and some selected markets (wheat, aluminum, copper), all market indices exhibit double digit negative returns for the year to date. To the extent the Pension Plan is exposed to stock and debt markets, its returns are affected by overall downward trends. However, a significant portion of the portfolio is invested in private markets and in asset classes that are less subject to current volatility (infrastructure, farmland, residential rental properties, hedge funds, private equity). Hence, overall, while the Plan's latest performance report does show a slight single digit negative return, several of its portfolio managers do exhibit positive returns so far this year, more or less compensating for the ones that are exposed to stock and debt markets. The investment subcommittee continues its monitoring of the situation and a few managers are on a watch list but, overall, no major restructuring or repositioning of our investment strategy is being envisioned. With the current uncertain economic environment, it is difficult to ascertain or predict this year's return but it is probably fair to say that achieving breakeven would be a significant achievement.

This year, the Pension Committee education session was devoted to presentation about four potential investment opportunities: 1) commodities, 2) arts investing, 3) electricity futures markets and 4) digital assets. Further analysis will be performed with respect to these investment areas to assess their fit with our Plan's investment strategy.

In addition to ongoing monitoring of portfolio managers and investments, the investment subcommittee and Pension committee took a few risk-mitigation decisions this Fall, most notably the cashing out of a significant investment within one of our Private Equity portfolio investments. The cash out decision was taken in light of the magnitude of the value of the underlying investment which, in our view, was not consistent with our diversification approach and fiduciary responsibilities, despite the great potential of such investment.

ESG considerations underlie all investment decisions, and a detailed evolving ESG grid is applied to all new and current investments.

- c. Treasurer's Report:** Elisabeth Peltier reported. The audit is currently underway and was delayed because of Unity issues. On October 27 the CUFA Investment committee met with our investment managers at the RBC. Our portfolio is down by 9.72% for the year but this has not affected our assets. The investment managers have recommended a move toward more fixed income for investments.
- d. Appeals and Grievances:** Max Silverman reported. There are no new appeals. One grievance is at stage 2 and will be considered this month by the JGC. There are five active disciplinary measures cases. Delays in these processes and the extreme stress it places on our members continues to be a major concern for us. The Collective Agreement defines very clear and sufficient timelines for these investigations, but systematically the timelines are not met.

## 6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM