

# **MINUTES**

## **WURA Annual General Meeting**

**December 3, 2025- 1:30pm to 2:30pm**

**(Meeting held on ZOOM)**

### **Members Attending: 29**

#### **Welcome & Overview of Agenda- Gwendolyn Ebbett**

A quorum was achieved at 1:30 and President Ebbett welcomed everyone to the meeting. She began by noting a very successful Holiday Luncheon yesterday, attended by about 50 people and requested members to advise her whether the two events should be held separately (as we did this year) or together (as we did last year).

She explained that to keep the meeting within an hour's time limit, the various Reports to be discussed had been distributed in advance and would at most be spoken to briefly; questions would then be entertained and answered. An online ballot for 2026 Officers and Committee members will be sent out in coming days.

She mentioned that Nick Keren has filled the role of Web Master admirably and his timely contribution to functioning of WURA was acknowledged.

#### **Greetings from UWindsor President & Vice-Chancellor-**

##### **Dr. J.J. McMurtry**

Dr. McMurtry provided a verbal report, focused on four areas of Presidential focus: Advocacy and Engagement- a need to impact the Ontario Government in a changing University landscape; Recruitment of Leadership and Executive Positions within the University; a Growth Strategy for the University and Budget Planning- addressing real challenges and their causes in a transparent way.

Questions:

Christina Simmons asked why Universities were not getting needed funding. The President responded: a Government with an anti-university ideological orientation, widespread (but not local) popular distrust of universities and inefficiencies in university operations. He felt, however, that many in Government recognized that time had arrived to address the underfunding issue.

Maureen Irish inquired whether in the context of our location in a border region, were there possible partnerships to pursue.

The President responded that there were four areas in which Federal funding might be found: health care, industrial capacity, international trade and defense. All of these areas, including defense, were being pursued forcefully.

### **Greetings from WUFA President- Dr. Pierre Boulos**

Dr. Boulos congratulated WURA on the opening of Sunset House, its role in the Age Friendly University designation, funding of University Scholarships, and its role in promoting social activities, most notably organizing the trip to the Stratford Festival. He also spoke of WUFA's working with WURA on various pension and benefits committees. Jake Soderlund and Larry Glassford were thanked for their contributions to the WUFA Executive and Council, respectively.

He explained that in the recently negotiated 2-yr. contract extension, university contributions to the Health Care Subsidy Plan were extended and noted that various Voluntary Contract Termination programs, including one for those 55 to 64, were being considered. He expressed concern with lack of funding for universities and attacks on Academic Freedom, citing both Quebec and Alberta. He noted as well that in Ontario, Bill 33 gives a Government stingy with funds, more power to control key decisions.

There were no questions.

### **University Reports\***

#### **Bridget Aguilar, Human Resources**

Bridget Aguilar spoke to the highlights of the Report: a positive return of 11.85% in 2025, work of the D2 Committee, a United Pension Plan report still in progress, that Text changes to the Plan are close to being done and that work continues on the costing of Pension Plan benefits.

There were no questions.

#### **Marian Doll, Student Awards and Financial Aid-**

Marion Doll reported that 6 Scholarships of \$2,000 each were in the selection process for awarding. She noted that with the amount of money in the fund, it would be possible to award 7 Scholarships next year. In addition

to the financial contribution to the Scholarships, she acknowledged the work of WURA in the selection of recipients.

There were no questions.

## **WURA Executive Reports\***

### **President's Report, Gwendolyn Ebbett**

Gwendolyn first requested a moment of silence to acknowledge WURA members who had passed in 2025. She then spoke about the opening of Sunset House, and plans to hold “drop-in” sessions on Thursday afternoons, beginning in mid-January. She also noted WURA’s significant role in the University’s successful application to join the Age Friendly University Network and that a Campus Committee was working on an “Action Plan” and that there will be an AFU section on the University’s website. She also noted Data Storage and Archiving activities. As well, she acknowledged a most generous \$30,000 donation to WURA’s Scholarship fund by Barb and Donovan Thomas and the many contributions made in memory of Richard Dumala. Finally, she thanked the Executive Committee, especially those who were leaving the Committee, Maureen Irish, Frank Lemire and Jake Soderlund, for their work.

There were no questions.

### **Treasurer's Report, Dr. Norman King**

Norman reported that the organization was in good shape, with a stable balance running at about \$7,000. He also mentioned that \$1,400 had been contributed to WURA Scholarships in Richard Dumala’s memory.

There were no questions.

### **Scholarship Committee Report, Dr. Ron Barron**

In the absence of Dr. Barron, Gwendolyn cited Marian Doll’s earlier Scholarship Report as a source of pertinent information.

There were no questions.

### **Pension and Benefits Committee Report, Dr. Jeff Berryman**

Jeff acknowledged John Meyer’s exemplary service over many years on the pension file and thanked other members of the committee for their work.

There were no questions.

### **Communications Committee Report- Gwendolyn Ebbett**

As Committee Chair, Gwendolyn reported that five *e-Bulletins* had been published since the last AGM. Karl Jirgens and Nick Keren were thanked for their help in getting them ready and distributed. She noted that feature articles, along with their writers, are needed. The next “Hot Topics” session, suggested by Lucia Yiu, will take place in March and focus on *Community Services for Seniors and Care-Givers*.

There were no questions.

### **Nominating Committee Report, Roger Lauzon**

Roger noted that Gwendolyn Ebbett will have served as WURA President for four years and thanked her for her service. He also expressed thanks to Jeff Berryman for stepping up to take on the Presidency. He noted as well that Kai Hildebrandt’s name has been added as a Director-at-Large to WURA’s Slate of Candidates for 2026.

There were no questions.

### **Social Committee Report, Dr. Christina Simmons**

Christiana noted the success of the September trip to Stratford to see “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels,” noting Richard Dumala’s key role in seeing that this would happen. Another trip to Stratford is being planned for May. She also noted that a variety of social events could be held at Sunset House and encouraged members to contact her with ideas.

There were no questions.

### **Travel Grant Review Committee Report, Dr. Geri Salinitri**

In the absence of Dr. Salinitri, Gwendolyn mentioned that the Travel Grant Program to cover retiree paper presentations at conferences had been terminated due to budget cuts. She expressed hope for a resumption of the grants with the arrival of better financial circumstances.

There were no questions.

**Research Support Group Report, Dr. Walter (Jake) Soderlund**

Jake reported that he was stepping down as Chair. He had enjoyed the experience and wished the Group well. Gwendolyn thanked Jake for his contributions to the Research Group.

There were no questions

**Board of Governors Pension Committee-**

Gwendolyn mentioned the on-going review of costs of pension benefits referenced in the Report from Human Resources.

There were no questions.

**Adjournment-** The Meeting was declared Adjourned at 2:24pm.

**\*The Reports referenced herein are available on WURA's website:**

**[WURA Committee Reports for the Annual General Membership meeting Agenda](#)**

