

Benefits Committee Report

The Benefits Committee was engaged in pursuing two key issues for the 2010/2011 year. The first was our on going effort to obtain a discounted bus pass for retirees of the University of Victoria who also qualify for the standard seniors bus pass.

After being close to a deal in 2009-2010 we were hopeful an agreement could be reached with B.C. Transit and the University. Unfortunately we have unable to persuade the University to engage in what we believe could a cutting edge program that would benefit seniors in a host of ways and address a serious societal issue. The reluctance of the University is bewildering given its history of being on the cutting edge of public transit innovation with the bus pass program.

The second issue that has absorbed our time has been that of the extended health and dental plans. A great many members have expressed unhappiness with the Pacific Blue Cross plan currently offered to retirees. The rapid rise in premiums has caused many members to contemplate dropping out. The Committee has been investigating alternatives to the PBC plan and once again attempted to have the University be an active player in the search. Again there is a perplexing reluctance to take an active role in seeking a remedy to the retiree's distress.

That said we are continuing to investigate alternatives in co-operation with the retiree organizations from UBC and SFU. It is my hope that some clarity on choices of an alternate program will begin to emerge in the next year.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their on going efforts and I welcome Dr. Peter Liddell to the position of Chair of the Benefits Committee for the 2011/2012 year

David C Clode.