

CITY OF SAN DIEGO RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 9, 2010

MEETING HELD AT: Balboa Park Club, San Diego, CA 92101

ATTENDANCE

REA Board Officers Present: President Jim Baross, Vice President for Advocacy Patti Karnes, Vice President for Programs Dave Twomey, and Treasurer Gary Hess. **Directors Present:** Director & Webmaster Art Brown, Director Bob Korch, Director & Revitalization Chair Maggie Smith, and Director Dick Wilken. **Appointed Members of the Board Present:** Membership Sylvia Tatum, Newsletter Editor Janet Wood and Parliamentarian Robert West.

Others Present: Retiree Issues Task Force Member Joe Flynn, MEA Representative & Hospitality Chair Helen Phillips (today's, Recorder), Past Director Burnie Gipson, Assistant Newsletter Editor Jean Struiksma, Retiree Lynn Swanson, Retiree Jon Dunchack and Assistant Web-Master John Tsiknas.

Not Present: Immediate Past President Nancy Acevedo, the Elected Representative to the SDCERS Board Dave Hall, Secretary Ruth Ann Hageman and Directors Terry Flynn, and Ty Rogers.

CALL TO ORDER

President Jim Baross called the regular REA Board meeting to order at 9:35am.

INTRODUCTIONS

Jon Dunchack introduced himself. Mr. Dunchack retired w/36 years, finishing in City Manager's Office. He emphasized that we're presently facing some new challenges to our pension and healthcare benefits. It is essential that we our membership, and develop a strategy to respond to these challenges.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion (Wilken) to approve January 12, 2010 minutes carried unanimously. A motion (Wilken/Flynn) to approve the January 29, 2010 minutes also carried unanimously after the following discussion and additional modifications:

1. Board confirmed their vote at the retreat for an additional \$1,500 investment in three more recruitment luncheons, not to include today's or January's luncheon. The total luncheon subsidy for the year would be \$2,500 plus two special event meals: the Police Pistol Range Barbeque and the Holiday Party.
2. Vice President for Programs Dave Twomey said that 66 people had pre-paid for the February luncheon plus four walk-ins for a total of 70 attendees. He suggested to the board the possibility of spreading out the \$1,500 investment by switching to a menu of elaborate salads, as they would cost less and he would be able to stretch the investment to cover more than 3 luncheons. It was moved/seconded (West/Wilken) that the board support Dave's modified program, saying it was worth a try to go with salads for \$10.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The Board voted to transition from the \$25 Trader Joe's gift card to a free lunch, starting today.
2. New member contacts: there was a discussion of developing contacts with AFL-CIO Local 127 in order to have their retirees join REA. This was referred to the REA President with the idea of contacting the Local 127 President regarding any Local 127 retiree organization.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Jon Dunchack suggested the REA Newsletter could include informational stories about Vallejo bankruptcy issue and "why" to join REA. In addition, Mr. Dunchak suggested a "prepackaged advocacy letter" to help recruit and network.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1. President Jim Baross thanked the board members for email communication.
2. REA needs current retiree lists, but CERS does not release them to anyone; it is a privacy issue. So far, according to Membership Chair Sylvia Tatum, no one has been able to get this information from them. Is there another way to solve this problem? Past President Nancy Acevedo has list of REA members in terms of how many years with the City and how many in DROP; Local 127 is not included in the past lists.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Gary Hess reported a beginning balance of \$68,138.08 and an ending balance of \$69,009.84 as of January 31, 2010. Mr. Hess distributed copies of the month end, profit & loss and balance sheet reports. No motion required. (**Why is no motion required??? I have a question here. --RA)

Robert West asked if the Legal Funds should be shown with a total separate from the Operation Funds total on the Treasurer's Report. Recommendation was generally accepted that what has been titled a Total Reserve Fund should be split into two: a Legal Fund Total and an Operating Fund Total.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD: Our Representative Dave Hall cannot be at this meeting. He is working! Dave asked the Board to email or cell phone him if we have questions. The next SDCERS meeting is 8:30 a.m. Friday, March 5 for the full SDCERS Board and Thursday, March 4 for Committee meeting discussions.

RETIREE ISSUES TASK FORCE MEMBER: Joe Flynn reported the following: 1.The next SDCERS meeting is Friday, March 5, 2010. The SDCERS Committees meet the day before, March 4th; and, 2. Discussion of the Disability Application Process was February 16, 2010. Patti Karnes, Nancy Acevedo, Joe Flynn & Bob Ferrier were scheduled to attend.

HELPING HANDS COMMITTEE is the name of the Committee which provides information and outreach to bereaved members and their families.

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE: Advocacy Vice President Patti Karnes reported that she and Ruth Ann Hageman will be attending the City Council meeting of March 8, 2010 as SDCERS' actuary goes to the City Council to answer questions on the cost of the City's Annual Required Contribution. Will questions be brought up about the retiree healthcare benefit? Patti Karnes offered the following court dates of interest to retirees: 1. The ongoing litigation involving concerns to retirees is March 18 with Judge Barton. Additional court dates are: March 12, City vs Saatoff & April 26, City vs Italiano. Patti also thanked Joe Flynn for the DROP article in the Union Tribune.

Advocacy Bankruptcy Sub-Committee Chair Dick Wilken discussed that we need to monitor continued information in ongoing litigation involving concerns to retirees. The current dispute between CERS & City is a three month trial [Judge Barton].

Director Wilken has been doing a lot of research into the effects of bankruptcy, and he sought contacts in the retiree association of bankrupt City of Vallejo. Vallejo has reduced retiree health care and is waiting to be sued. Wilken's questions for Vallejo retirees included the following: Was there a desire by Vallejo to go after retiree pensions? How were union representatives organized on this issue? Our REA Board supported Wilken's request to have authority as the official representative of REA in order to formalize contacts with that retiree organization and to find out the answers that we are looking for. Lynn Swanson offered to look up more information on the legal case given the case number.

John Dunchak, who is working with Dick Wilkin, said that this bankruptcy issue could be a recruitment tool in REA's newsletter. He asks for stronger advocacy, informing members of financial impacts, an advocacy sheet to help recruit new members, and advocacy sheet to those who are out-of-town to write letters.

The board directed Wilken to keep looking for a retired attorney in our group. (*Nancy Acevedo invited several former Deputy City Attorneys to one of our meetings. It was fascinating. See Nancy about who those people were.*) Wilken will use an article in our newsletter. A discussion followed on the use of blast mail, and it was moved/seconded (Smith/Karnes) that REA blast email be reviewed by President since there have been some complaints about questionable information. Motion carried with 1 opposed.

REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE: Chair Maggie Smith announced that this committee will meet February 23 at 9:45 a.m. to noon at the Mission Valley Library.

NEWSLETTER: Newsletter Editor Janet Wood reported the following: It would be a good addition to add a newsletter column regarding the advantages to retirees of joining REA. 2. Retirees receiving the newsletter via the computer are 570; and those receiving the hard-copy newsletter via U.S. mail are 481 for a total membership of 1051. Any non-member can refer to the website and may access the membership application to join REA. Past Editor, Jean Struiksma reported that the deadline for March articles is February 24 (Jean is graciously assisting Janet in learning the ropes of newsletter editorship.)

MEMBERSHIP (Supplemental information): Membership Chair Sylvia Tatum's tasks deal with processing applications for membership, keeping the roster updated (with Kaye's expert assistance) and follow-up on requests for information regarding REA. She also tries to keep a hand-written card file with up-to-date information from different sources. Her contact with Retirement System's Maria Gonzalez is to forward payroll deduction forms for new members enrolled to pay their dues and follow up if names do not appear on the lists as printed monthly. Occasionally I try to update an address for mail returned (if possible).

Sylvia says, "As far as I know, we have not implemented the 3-month trial newsletter for non-member retirees -- since we do not have access to names, addresses, etc. for a mailing. If contact is a possibility then non-members can turn in an address and receive newsletter for three months."

Lynn Swanson suggested we ask SDCERS to put a note in their newsletter (called SCOPE), reminding all retirees to join REA.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Program VP Dave Twomey reported that the survey has been prepared to understand what our members want. This gives us a better feeling as to how we can improve our meeting attendance. Our new venue in addition to serving lunch seems popular. In order to keep the cost down as much as possible, we suggest a jar that says, "Donate to the tips." This provides our thank you to the servers. Some members do not want to purchase lunch. The REA guest speaker will finish by noon, meeting will adjourn, *then*, serve lunch. Committee recommends "give a free luncheon," rather than Trader Joe's Gift Card. REA can save the gift cards for the Holiday Party. The general board consensus was to begin at today's luncheon. The program guest speakers and dates are listed on the web site. March subject is Investment Portfolios. April's guest is Navy Deputy Director Captain Joe Rouse. May is the Primary Candidate Forum for Council Districts #2, #4, #8. (What about District 6?) The State of the System meeting includes CERS/Investment Officer/CEO for 1 x year overview. October's meeting is second Council Candidate Forum.

RECREATION COMMITTEE CHAIR: Helen Phillips expressed thanks for her new position. "I know I have big shoes to fill! I am looking forward to working w/the committee. A lot of questions to be answered, for instance, w/regards to the Holiday Party: How large is the budget? Do we want the same venue? What works/what additions/etc. Please provide your input. "I am sorry that I could not attend board retreat."

ACTIVE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION [MEA]: Representative Helen Phillips reported that the City of San Diego/MEA Blood Drive is June 8, 9 and 10 in a variety of locations.

WEB SITE: Director Art Brown reported that the plans to add more to the web site are moving along. Adding the Advocacy Information, an updated invitation to join REA and a current list of REA General Meeting Agenda & Guest Speakers is a good start.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: At last month's Board Retreat, Officers and Directors reviewed the 2009 goals and adopted the following goals for 2010:

Preserve Current Benefits

Continue Pro-activity Advocacy Committee

Increase Membership

Monitor CERS Complete Review of Information Papers (Health insurance. et al.)

Work to have Corbett Reinstated for Non Service Eligible Disability Retirees

Monitor Earnings in CD's, Obtain Demographic Statistics via Actuarial Report

Continue Hand in Hand Program

Survey Membership as needed

NEW BUSINESS: 1. The Branding/networking ad hoc committee wants to do a mass mailer to retirees. In order to be accessible to the [non member] retiree, do we have a way to send the newsletter? 2. Appoint Audit Committee. (**Wasn't this already done at the January Board meeting?) 3. "Helping Hands" program title.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: March 9, 2010 @ 9:30am, Recital Hall, Balboa Park (to be followed by the Regular Meeting at the Santa Fe Room in the Balboa Park Club.

ADJOURNMENT: President Jim Baross adjourned the meeting at 11:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Helen Phillips Acting Recording Secretary and Ruth Ann Hageman, Secretary. (Edited minutes are based on inputs from board members.)