

CITY OF SAN DIEGO RETIRED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
BOARD RETREAT MINUTES, Tuesday, January 22, 2008

Meeting called to order at 9:30 a.m. by President Nancy Acevedo

Present: Nancy Acevedo, Patti Karnes, Ruth Ann Hageman, Sylvia Tatum, John Casey, Jean Struiksma, Lynn Swanson, Terry Flynn, Maggie Smith, Alan Hardtarfer, John Tsiknas, Alyse Ford, Robert Korch, Joe Flynn, and Virginia Silverman.

Unable to attend: Ty Rogers and Dora Garcia.

Officer and Committee Reports:

Programs: Vice President Patti Karnes reported that the program for February will be Joan Stein, Deputy District Attorney, economic crimes unit, on identity theft. In March, the assistant to Doug McCalla, will be the speaker (Mr. McCalla is expected to retire in the near future). Patti is working on two debates: for April, a debate among the Mayoral candidates; for May, a debate among the City Attorney candidates. Other ideas for programs included a speaker on the Chargers' search for a new venue, and a meeting featuring retirees themselves wherein they would talk about how they handle their retirement. Alyse Ford suggested a travel program, for instance, "Amblers."

A discussion ensued about how to increase attendance at meetings. John Tsiknas agreed to do a chart of the number of meals served at the meetings. Comments included the food and cost may have an impact. Some feedback from members included the comments that the meetings are boring. Bob Korch said that the meeting on Senior Care was useful and interesting.

Facility possibilities included the Stadium, the Balboa Park Club or the Balboa Golf Course meeting place. It was generally agreed that the War Memorial Auditorium was dark, cold, too large, and uninviting. Alyse suggested that the tables might be set up in a round circle to increase conviviality.

Patti mentioned that there had been a slight drop in the Retirement Fund, as reported at the City Employee Retirement System (CERS) board meeting on January 18.

Advocacy: Virginia Silverman reported that she checks the agendas of the City Council and the committees. Terry asked if SDREA might be interested in following events with regard to Charter Review, particularly with regard to the Mayor and the City Attorney. Joe Flynn talked about a potential decision by the IRS with regard to the Voluntary Compliance Agreement. The process, he said, is that the organization, such as CERS, may make a presentation of their best case, and then the IRS makes a ruling. It is not a process of back-and-forth negotiation.

Treasurer Sylvia Tatum said that the new roster that Karen Anderson is working on will

be very helpful. It was pointed out that the Treasurer needs a Quicken accounting program. It was moved and seconded (Hageman/Flynn) that the Treasurer buy a Quicken program. Sylvia reported that the membership stands at 1,017, and there are 10 new members and an additional 10 members in process.

Membership: John Casey, Joe Flynn and Alyce Ford constitute the membership committee. Kaye Carey has reviewed the member brochures, and her proofs were handed over to Joe and Alyce for their review and final approval. With regard to a 6 months waiver of dues and a free lunch as rewards to new members, this had been suggested, but was not voted in. Trying to guess what might motivate people to join and to participate, a survey was included in the newsletter, and there was very little response. The majority of those responding, however, indicated that they wanted to keep the monthly luncheon meeting format. Alyce suggested that if carpools could be set up among members, this might help those that don't drive. Another suggested that new members come because you have something that they want. John Casey said there is a militancy index: people see your organization as doing something about their concerns.

Alan Hardtarfer suggested that a BLOG be set up which would encourage an open forum on the website, which would be an index of what people are thinking. Joe Flynn's bulletins might be included, with people having the capability of responding.

Alyse Ford suggested a postcard to new members offering them a free lunch, and Bob West said that such an invitation could be given out at the retiree orientation. Joe Flynn said that maybe CERS would send a letter to new retirees out for us: inviting them to join the association. Bob Korch said that we could contact City employees who are going into drop by using their City email address. Sylvia suggested that we not forget the spouses of deceased members. Lynn suggested that at the pre-retirement orientation meeting that a card be given out requesting their name and email address. All of these ideas will be taken under consideration by the membership committee.

Newsletter: Lynn and Jean Struiksma constitute the Newsletter Committee. Lynn said that the electronic newsletter makes our organization more modern. The list of new members could be put on the electronic newsletter and the mailed version if there is room.

Active Employee Association: representative Lynn Swanson said that the demonstration regarding the City Attorney at the SD Democratic Party Central Committee went well. There was a great turnout of Retired Police and Fire Association members. MEA provided signs. It was respectfully done.

Holiday Party. Jean Hughes was congratulated on a successful party. There was a discussion of the cost coverage: there were 6 free lunches (speaker plus incentives given to volunteer greeters). There was a discussion as to whether the members should pay the full freight or there should be a subsidy of the total cost of the event. Jean will call Tom Ham's about the chair incident. Other venues were suggested: Quivera Basin or the

Admiral Kidd Club. The Admiral Kidd is booked way ahead. Joe Flynn said that Retired Fire and Police use a meeting hall in Clairmont and then have it catered. John Casey said that the RFP membership is subsidized for this event. In the end, all agreed that Tom Ham's is an excellent location and has served us well.

It was suggested that there be a favor given at the party, such as a pen with the association's name imprinted. Joe agreed to check on prices for this with his source.

Lynn volunteered to do pre-printed name tags for the event.

Website: John Tsiknas announced that there will be a change of the password. Alan Hardtarfer said that he is feeling better and he is going to be able to help John T. more. There was discussion of a proposal by Lynn to spend \$2,500 to hire an organization that would re-design the website and make it easier for anyone to update. It was decided that John and Alan will do more study of this proposal and the board can take the money from Contingency Reserve if it were decided to go forward with the re-design.

Retiree Issues Task Force: Nancy Acevedo reported that two of the retirees who have expressed an interest in filling Carmen's position on the board are in DROP and are therefore not eligible. Dave Hall who retired from the Police Department (and was also chief of the Harbor Police for some time) is interested and eligible. The opening will be advertised and will not be filled immediately.

Alan Hardtarfer asked Joe Flynn, what are the issues going to be? Joe said that the problems have been pretty much worked out by CERS, but the necessary legislation is stuck in the City Attorney's office. CERS is getting more efficient, and there is particular improvement in membership services. Joe was asked about Mayor Sanders proposals, and Joe said that he doubts that those proposals will go forward.

Bob West said that there will be increasing difficulty for people who want disability retirement. The IRS and CERS have entered into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement.

Terry Flynn talked about the impact of contracting out City services on the retirement system which will increase the Unfunded Liability because fewer contributions are being made by City employees.

Virginia Silverlman said that the greatest challenge is to health benefits. They are a likely target, especially depending upon the economy. Lynn Swanson said that the health benefits are contracted for in the 1981 deal in which the City offered these and other benefits in exchange for City employees getting out of Social Security. Retirees get what current employees get, so we need to look at each year's agreement with the employee organizations to see if health benefits are carried forward. Bob West pointed out that of July, 2005, employees are not eligible for health benefits. Terry Flynn pointed out that the Federal government has said that the City is not required to provide additional health care coverage.

CERS Retiree Representative: Nancy Acevedo said that we won't know about the Retiree Representative to the board until the applications go out. The Retirement Board will have to send a notice to all retirees. We could put something in the newsletter, or send out a blast email, soliciting a candidate from our organization. Joe Flynn said we need to find a good person who will represent both the general retirees and the safety retirees.

Maggie Smith moved and Terry Flynn seconded that a committee be formed on the issue of the continuation of health care coverage. This motion passed unanimously. The health care coverage committee will consist of Maggie Smith, Alan Hardtarfer and Jean Hughes.

Speaker: Retired attorney John Kaheny talked about the legal problems facing the City. The office has apparently been politicized, and needed ordinances, for instance ordinances required by the IRS, are not being prepared. In all, Mr. Kaheny's talk and the subsequent Q and A period were very stimulating.

Budget: John Tsiknas and Alan Hardtarfer will have a chance to find out about the proposed website program before the board sets aside the money to purchase it.

It was suggested that we ask RFP to share expenses, equipment and expertise.

Patti will come back with a budget for the forums.

Ruth Ann Hageman moved and Terry Flynn seconded approval of the budget. This was unanimously approved.

Goals: In the review of the goals for 2007, these were reaffirmed with three changes in wording. Instead of "CERS Reestablish the Health Advisory Committee," the goals will say, "Explore the feasibility of the City doing an actuarial study of health care costs." Instead of "Reinstate Corbett for Disability Retirees," the goals will say, "Reinstate Corbett for Non-Service Eligible Disability Retirees." Instead of "Obtain Demographic Statistics," the goals will say "Obtain Demographic Statistics via Actuarial Report."

With regard to additional 2008 goals, the board decided that the chairing of the General Members meeting will also be done by the presenter of the program. The Treasurer's Report will be made available, but not read.

With regard to the proposal to "Rotate CERS Attendance among Board Members," it was suggested that the 3rd Thursday's Business & Governance meeting is as important as the 3rd Friday's CERS Board meeting. So far, "volunteers" included Bob Korch, who will attend the Thursday and Friday meetings in March; Jean Struiksmma will attend the 3rd Friday in February (2/22) and Ruth Ann Hageman will attend the 3rd Thursday in February (2/21). We can put out a suggested schedule of CERS board meeting attendance for the CSDREA board members and other active retirees.

There was active discussion about how to increase member interest. Lynn will work on trying a drawing with the lunch tickets. Bob Korch said that there is an expectation of monthly meetings and that members look forward to fellowship and sharing. John Tsiknas moved and Lynn Swanson seconded that we maintain the current board structure and monthly meetings. Alan Hardtarfer suggested bringing in Organizational Development people to help us increase meeting attendance and involvement.

Nancy Acevedo pointed out that our organization is not a 501 (c) (3) organization but a 507 (c) (7) organization; therefore our organization can take political action.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Ruth Ann Hageman, Secretary