

ALLEGHENY COUNTY RETIREES ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Present: Ginny Bowman, Angela Conte, Patricia Cray, Ronald Chleboski, and Roger Westman.

Absent: Eileen McFadden Drake, Joseph Scorpion, and Diane Welsh,

President Pat Cray called the meeting to order at 9:38 am at the DoubleTree Hotel in Green Tree.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of Board Meeting of September 16, 2013 were approved upon a motion by Ginny Bowman, seconded by Roger Westman.

The minutes of the October 18, 2013 Board Meeting were approved upon a motion by Roger Westman, seconded by Ginny Bowman. The minutes of the luncheon meeting of the same day were approved upon a motion by Ginny Bowman, seconded by Angela Conte.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ron Chleboski mentioned that his computer had been corrupted and that he had put a hold on the checking account, but now had taken that off because there was nothing on his computer about the checking account that was not available publically. Pat was concerned about protecting her signature which could have been seen on images of the ACRA checks. Further discussion followed but no additional precautions were taken.

Ron distributed the October report showing a balance of \$41,295 and the Trend report from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. In the Trend report expenses were \$24,065 while income was \$16,399. Increased costs were due to the website development, more mailings, bonding, and the telephone service. **The Treasurer's Report was approved upon a motion by Roger Westman, seconded by Angela Conte.**

Pat was concerned over the mention of \$7,000 in a mutual fund in the June 2004 minutes for which no disposition is known. She had originally asked Diane Welsh to review the old financial records but Diane did not do so and had turned the records over to Ginny Bowman. Pat said she was unaware of this transfer and surprised that no one had informed her of it. A Board Member mentioned that Bob Skaggs was interested in helping to review the old financial records. Ron said he would like a group to review his records after the first of the year.

Dues Renewal Notice for 2014

It was decided to use PO Box 371 in Gibsonia for dues notice returns because we have paid for the PO Box through April, 2014. Ron and Roger will work out getting the

returns to ACRA after the first of the year. Ron suggested adding a space for donations, in addition to the dues, on the renewal notices. Roger suggested adding check-off boxes to ask if members wanted to receive postcard reminders of the luncheons and walk 'n' talks or rely on the newsletters announcements. Both of these suggestions were to help with our deficit spending.

Part-time Assistance

Discussion was held on hiring a part-time assistant at \$15.00 per hour. An ad could be placed in the ACRA newsletter. Ginny suggested having a deadline on when to respond to the ad. Roger said it would be good to have assistance with the website. Pat said she wanted that assistant available to other Board Members to help with their duties as well. Angela was concerned about mentioning the figure of \$15.00 per hour and would prefer turning to the ACRA members. She also suggested asking Diane Welsh to oversee any entrees on the website so one person would have control of the content.

Roger said he had someone who knows websites and would be able to tweak the site to make it better and more functional. **Roger moved, and Ron seconded a motion, to hire Matt Neimeyer for up to 10 hours at \$15.00 per hour for this purpose. The motion carried.**

Christmas Party

Pat asked who would be shopping for auction gifts for the December party. Those who would be doing so were Pat, Ginny, Roger and possibly Diane. Ron suggested asking Citizens Bank and Banksville Express, our printer and mailer, for donations of gifts or services for the party auction.

Newsletter

Editor Ginny Bowman said she had everything she needed and the articles will be available for review later today.

Next Meeting

Pat called for a meeting on Wednesday December 4 at 10:00 am at the DoubleTree for the members of the newly elected Board for 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Roger Westman
Secretary

ALLEGHENY COUNTY RETIREES ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING
Wednesday, November 20, 2013

President Pat Cray called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm at the DoubleTree in Green Tree. As this was the Annual Meeting, she called for various reports by the officers.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ron Chleboski distributed a trend report for the period October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. It showed a balance at the end of September of \$41,503. Income for this period was \$16,399 while expenses were \$24,065. The one-time expenses of \$3,400 for the work on establishing the website and a \$300 donation to the Salvation Army accounted for approximately 50 % of the deficit spending. He mentioned that very little cash was handled, the bulk of the transactions being by checks. ACRA checks require two signatures. He mentioned 99% of the income is from the membership dues so we are highly dependent on them. As to the deficit spending, the Board will work to align expenses with income.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Roger Westman said that Joe Scorpion was elected by the Board to be Vice-President upon the removal of Bill Gallagher for non-participation. The Treasurer's duties were split between two people: 1) handling the dues checks and records, and 2) collecting for the luncheons and walk 'n' talks. It was also decided to have all Members of the Board who handle funds bonded. New menu items and truly hot meals were being pursued from the new ownership of the DoubleTree.

On Memorial Day flags were placed on the graves of the veterans.

Four Board Members attended the Pension summit held by the Retirement Office this year. Thanks to our member Joyce Dodge who offered the suggestion, the Retirement Office is now holding seminars throughout the County offices on how to prepare for and how to apply for retirement.

The Board has investigated investment vehicles to get greater returns than the low interest now paid on our money market fund. The Board chose the Vanguard Wellesley Income Fund for a portion of ACRA's assets.

ACRA now has its own website, *ACRetirees.org*, which will be unveiled soon.

Walk 'n' Talks were held at the Pittsburgh Botanical Gardens, Deutschtown on the North Side, and in Pittsburgh's Frick Park.

President's Report

The results of the balloting for officers were announced: the single nominees for each office were elected: President, Pat Cray; Vice-President, Joe Scorpion; Secretary, Roger Westman. For Treasurer, no nominations were made. There was one write-in vote for Ron Chleboski as Treasurer and one write-in for the vacant Director position.

President Pat Cray said that the walk 'n' talks with lunches at nearby restaurants were increasing in popularity. A tour of the Friendship area and the Glass Factory are

being planned. On December 6 a tour will be held at the Hartwood Mansion in the County Park.

Pat mentioned the new ACRA logo and the questionnaire being handed out today to help the Board better plan for activities and speakers.

In reviewing the historical records to write the ACRA history for the website, Pat said she was struck by the universality of problems over the years, especially not having enough members involved. The problem continues; therefore, the Board is now considering hiring of part-time help at \$15/hour at an average of 15 hours per month to provide help to the Board with its duties.

The Board also invested \$25,000 in the Vanguard Wellesley Income Fund.

As to an increase in the pension benefits, Pat said she needs a lot of people to attend, in addition to her, when she makes a statement requesting a COLA before the Retirement Board at tomorrow's meeting. The last COLA was \$25/month in 2009 and it is time for another one.

There was a question from the audience about whether Pat's recommendation would also include an increase the contributions to the retirement fund. Pat said the actuaries had been making that recommendation.

General

Ron Chleboski commended Pat for her role in ACRA. He said we also need to be particular about who we endorse for the Retirement Board to assure it will be someone who can make meaningful contributions to the Board's proceedings.

The 50/50 drawing resulted in \$52 to the holder of the winning ticket and \$52 to ACRA. Also, two \$20 gift cards to Giant Eagle were also awarded as door prizes.

Upon closing, Pat mentioned the December 11 Christmas Party.

Respectfully submitted,
Roger Westman
Secretary

ALLEGHENY COUNTY RETIREES ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING
Monday, April 7, 2014

Present: Ginny Bowman, Angela Conte, Patricia Cray, Eileen McFadden Drake, Joseph Scorpion, Diane Welsh, and Roger Westman.

President Pat Cray called the meeting to order at 10:02 am at the DoubleTree in Green Tree, PA. This was a specially scheduled meeting with no luncheon following it.

Minutes of December 4, 2014

The minutes of the Board Meeting and the luncheon held on December 4, 2013, were approved with one correction that the location was Green Tree, not Green Field.

Treasurer's Report

The three invoices previously submitted to and tabulated by our new Administrative Assistant, Cassie Brandon, were presented. Included was an invoice from Voice Nation and a deposit for the Walk 'n' Talk to the Glass Factory which were already paid. The remaining item, the invoice for the work that Cassie herself had done was not yet paid. **Eileen Drake moved and Joe Scorpion seconded the motion to approve these payments totaling \$319.70. The motion carried.**

Angela Conte, Treasurer, had emailed the Board additional invoices from three sources: Matt Neimeyer for technical work on the website, the DoubleTree for luncheons, and Banskville Express for printing and mailing. After some discussion it was determined that these totaled \$3,869.16. **Joe Scorpion moved and Ginny Bowman seconded the motion to approve the payment of these expenses. The motion carried.**

Angela reported there was about \$17,000 in the checking account and \$25,330.77 in the Vanguard account as of December 31, 2013, the date of the last statement.

Pat Cray proposed hiring an accountant firm in Upper St. Clair to handle all the monies and accounting since she was unable to obtain the information she desired from Angela. The firm had estimated it would cost less than \$5,000 a year. Angela admitted she was **unable to respond right away due to the large amount and details** of the work handling all the dues payments, the luncheon transactions, and the Walk 'n' Talks. An extended discussion was held on the value of this proposal, whether we could again split up the work load and accomplish it in-house or have Cassie Brandon do some of it, and how we would interface with the firm if we hired them. No decision was made, other than to recognize the vast majority of the dues renewals were now over for the year so the proposal could be considered for next year.

Roger Westman, Membership Committee Chair, reported 989 members have now renewed for a total dues income of \$14,827.50. Donations from 213 members brought in an additional \$2,030.00 so far. There are 1,091 folks on the mailing list; therefore 102 members have not yet renewed.

Roger also pointed out that 436 members indicated they wanted postcard reminders while 429 said they did not want them. There was no reduction in the printing

costs for the lesser number of postcards, but some amount would have been saved on the postage.

Later Roger reported that two more members had renewed on line via PayPal and that \$28.52 is sitting in our PayPal account.

Life Insurance Residual Issues

Joe Scorpion noted that he recently received a letter from the County reinstating his level of Life Insurance originally promised at retirement. However, the letter also indicated that this was in effect until December 2018, and that the amount of coverage could change. Joe was asked to forward a copy of the letter to Pat so she could provide it to our attorney who has been looking into the life insurance issues. December 2018 coincides with the expiration of the term of the contract now held by Lincoln Financial.

Website

Webmaster Diane Welsh indicated she was having no luck in getting Matt Neimeyer to respond to her to fix some spurious items on the website. Roger Westman also indicated that Matt was not making the one change he requested of adding a “donations” entry on the membership page. Pat suggested forgetting Matt and going back to Imagebox to get further training. Diane said it would be a waste for her to get training because she does not plan on running again for ACRA Director when her term expires this year. Pat then suggested going back to Imagebox to have these changes made. Diane and Roger will coordinate on the list of changes and approach Imagebox to see if they are interested in doing the work. If not, then other firm will be sought out to do the work.

Newsletters

Ginny Bowman, Editor, said that the deadline for the next issue is May 15, but later said it needed to be May 8 if the mailing was going to go out to all retirees. (see discussion on RBAC elections). Ginny also initially thought she would need to increase the amount of information on the Walk ‘n’ Talks and luncheons if some members were going to depend solely on the newsletter for information. Roger indicated that those folks who said they did not want the postcard reminders were those who could not or would not attend anyway. So Ginny will keep the level of information on those items in the newsletter about the same.

Roger will scout out potential restaurants to use after the tour of the Pittsburgh Glass Center Walk ‘n’ Talk. Pat will be shortly arranging for the mailing of the postcard for the Walk ‘n’ Talk to the Botanical Gardens. The Oakdale Diner was recommended as the place to eat after that tour.

Pat showed an example of an alternate format for the newsletter that might cost less and would be more attractive. It was agreed we should explore that possibility.

Luncheons

Pat said there will be a substitute speaker from the Allegheny County Police for the upcoming luncheon but it will still be on safety and avoiding scams. For the May

luncheon the **UPMC Aging Institute** will provide “Brain Games” which can help maintain mental sharpness.

Based on a random review of the questionnaires returned, there seemed to be some interest in finding additional locations for the luncheons. Pat said she is willing if we can find suitable places. Eileen suggested using another questionnaire in the future to determine how much interest there is by general geographic location in the County, e.g. south, west, or north.

Pat highlighted a few other items she saw of interest in the results of the questionnaire.

Vacant RBAC seat

Pat noted that her name and Roger’s name had been put forth as possible candidates. Roger indicated that Pat would be the best candidate due to her name recognition. **Roger moved and Joe seconded, a motion to take action to place Pat Cray’s name on the ballot for the vacant position on the Retirement Board of Allegheny County. The motion carried unanimously.** Pat indicated she would still run for President of ACRA and saw no conflict of interest in that. Eileen was appointed head of a committee to explore the process of getting nominated and then coordinating a campaign to get Pat elected. It was suggested among other things that the next issue of the newsletter be sent to all 4,400 retirees promoting her candidacy. It was quickly agreed to do so.

Vacant ACRA Board Seats

Pat said we should look for potential ACRA Board members who can address our needs and urged others to help identify them. Roger will send the membership list to Ginny so she can attempt to contact those who volunteered via the questionnaire to see what their interests are in helping ACRA, either on the Board or as volunteers.

Increase in Pension Benefits

Pat said she intends to speak to the issue of an increase in the pension benefit at every upcoming RBAC meeting. Roger recommended putting a petition in an upcoming newsletter for retirees to sign and return to help put more pressure on the RBAC.

Further discussion was held on the nature of any increase we should advocate for; whether it should be a percentage or a flat \$25/month across the Board. The flat amount would be most beneficial to those receiving the lowest amounts of benefits while those with the higher amounts are less likely to need it.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Roger Westman
Secretary