

retiree

Up-to-date retiree info: www.dc37retireesassociation.org



Edward W. Hysyk
President

wrapup

Nominations for all officer positions previously listed on our website and in the PEP Talk were held during the April 12, 2022, membership meeting. Everyone was elected without opposition; therefore, no election will be required under our Constitution. New officers are as follows:

President: Robert Gervasi

Executive Vice President: Jose Sierra

Secretary-Treasurer: John Hardisty

Recording Secretary: Bruce Heigh

Vice Presidents

Publicity and Public Relations: Lesly Williams

Interunion Relations: Neal Frumkin

Political Action & Legislation: Donald Afflick

Education and Health Services: Melvin Fox

Social Security, Pensions & Medicare:

Dominick Martino

Housing: Cynthia Cox

Membership: Sallie Robertson

Associate Secretary-Treasurer: Pilar Oquendo

Associate Recording Secretary: Anna Berry

Associate Vice Presidents

Publicity & Public Relations: Nellie Gonzales-Arce

Interunion Relations: Aurea Alicia Mangual

Political Action & Legislation: Rosemary Culio-Frisone

Education & Health Service: Carmen Colon

Social Security, Pensions & Medicare: Isabel Figueroa

Housing: Petrona Graham

Membership: Rhonna Bonsu

Congratulations to all new officers who were sworn in at the June 14 general membership meeting.

Kudos to the entire election committee: Chair James Tucciarelli, Co-Chair Stephanie Thomas, Lenora Gates, John Reyes, and Kinma Lockwood for their diligent work on conducting a fair, accurate, and timely election experience. This was not an easy task considering this was the first time that we had a virtual election process. I also want to thank both Ann Widger, Director of AFSCME Retirees, and Ben Hodapp, Assistant Director of AFSCME Retirees, and their staffs for insuring the election process was glitch free.

Implementation of the Medicare Advantage Plus Program was placed on hold by the NYC Office of Labor Relations (OLR) and the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC). The plan will not be implemented before Jan. 1, 2023. In short, we keep the status quo for the time being except for the fact that GHI Senior Care has copays as of Jan. 1, 2022.

I want to recognize the work done by Marianne Pizzitola and her organization, The NYC

Organization of Public Service Retirees, for their efforts in taking NYC and the MLC to court for trying to change retiree health benefits. They orchestrated a stunning victory and I sincerely recommend all retirees contribute to their ongoing efforts to protect retiree health benefits. Contributions can be made via their website at NYCRetirees.org.

Others I need to recognize are Stu Eber, president of the Committee of Municipal Retiree Organizations, our executive board members Neal Frumkin and Dominick Martino, and member and activist Bob Pfefferman for their assistance and guidance in trying to navigate this health care maze.

Electronic Medicare Part B reimbursement was done by OLR on April 15, 2022, with paper checks following. The standard reimbursement rate of \$1,782 was authorized and for most retirees, this represented the full amount paid for Medicare Part B in 2021. We continue to press for full Medicare Part B reimbursement for all NYC retirees. For those retirees who were surcharged for Medicare Part B in 2021, IRMAA forms are available at www.nyc.gov/olr. OLR generally makes IRMAA payments in October. As a reminder, the surcharge for Medicare Part D (prescription drugs) is not reimbursable by either OLR or DC 37.

We recently met with the Chief Policy Officer at the NYC Mayor's Office, Ingrid Lewis Martin, to discuss issues that impact retirees' health care, Medicare Part B reimbursement, contact with OLR, and other retiree issues. We made her aware of the plight of our low-income retirees as a result of the newly instituted health care copays, the cost of prescription drugs, and the overall rise in the cost of living. I believe that the meeting was productive because she understood our issues and concerns and said that she was going to address them on a timely basis. Time will tell.

I recently asked our political consultant, Hank Sheinkopf, to arrange a meeting with new NYC Comptroller Brad Lander to discuss the aforementioned issues.

This will be my last column in the PEP Talk since I decided to retire. I want to thank you for your support and well wishes, and I wish you all the best and good health. May God Bless you and your families.

All DC 37 retirees who participate in the DC 37 Delta Dental Program should make sure that their dentist/health care provider accepts the plan's fee payment in FULL; otherwise you may experience "sticker shock" when you receive a statement for additional payments.

The Retiree Association is in good financial health and I do not foresee the need for a dues increase. I believe the Association should look into providing additional member benefits besides the current benefits such as our outstanding

website, education classes, AFSCME Union Plus Benefits, \$500 supplemental death benefit, and the subscription to this newsletter. Most of all, I wish for our members to become more active in the Association and for the approximately 27,000 non-members to join the Association because there is strength in numbers. The dues are only 10 cents a day, or \$3 a month.

I have so many people I want to thank as a relinquish my presidency: My Executive Vice President Jose Sierra for his support and for his success in having the Retiree Association's constitution updated on a timely basis and implemented before the current election process. I salute him and the entire constitutional committee for a job well done; members of our executive board for their support; John Hardisty, our Secretary Treasurer, and Pilar Oquendo, an Associate Secretary-Treasurer, who were both instrumental in keeping this office open and functioning during the COVID crisis; several union leaders who provided me with assistance, guidance, and personal friendship during my 40-plus years as a DC 37 unionist — Robert Croghan, Chairman of the Organization of Staff Analysts; the late Charles Ensley, longtime president of Local 371 (a mighty, mighty union); Larry Schwartz of Local 371; Chuck Miller, a Local 371 activist responsible for the Tier I reopener; Rochelle Mangual, past Association president and a close friend; and my good friend, traveling companion, mentor and longtime past DC 37 Retirees Association president, the late Stu Leibowitz; the DC 37 staff for their support in helping us resolve a wide range of problems, with a special shout out to Maureen Castagnetti, Dennise Frank (retired), Jodi Goldman, Norman Isaacs, and Digna Sanchez. They truly are the backbone of DC 37!

Again, our awarding-winning website, www.dc37retireesassociation.org, placed first in the NY Metro Communication Council's annual competition in the category of "General Excellence." This is due to the hard work of our Vice President for Publicity/Public Relations Lesly Williams, and to the diligence of member and activist Molly Charboneau.

This is the appropriate time to welcome all of the District Council 1707 retirees into our Association and hope that their membership and participation will make us a stronger retiree organization.

I wish the new president, Brother Robert "Bob" Gervasi, all the best. I want him to know that I am available to offer my guidance and assistance to him and to the Association.

If you need to email the Association, please only use the following address: retassn@dc37.net and if you need to contact us, please reach out at 212.815.1781.