



Macomb County Retirees Association

P.O. Box 46593 · Mount Clemens, MI 48046

ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

September 27, 2023

Italian American Cultural Center

43843 Romeo Plank Rd, Clinton Twp, MI

PRESENT Wendy Fisher, Norm Gilmore, Mary Solomon,
Thomas Kalkofen, Frank Krycia, Frank Taylor
County Executive Mark Hackel,
Benefits Coordinator Jennifer Smiley,
Pension Analyst & Member Gary Cutler
Approx. 150 in-person members and guests

EXCUSED Tracy Howard

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Thomas Kalkofen called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Vice President Thomas Kalkofen welcomed everyone to the meeting. He remarked that it was great to see so many in attendance. He acknowledged guest speaker County Executive Mark Hackel's attendance and thanked him for his support of the 2022 supplemental pension check. He recognized Benefits Coordinator Jennifer Smiley and Pension Analyst Gary Cutler.

Tom continued by acknowledging the passing of former MCRA President George Brumbaugh and asked for a moment to remember all retirees that have passed. Following a moment of silence, he encouraged members to invite their retiree friends to join the association. He concluded by introducing President Wendy Fisher and yielding to her to continue the meeting.

GUEST SPEAKER: COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK HACKEL

President Wendy Fisher thanked Tom for his opening remarks and invited County Executive, Mark Hackel, to address those in attendance. Executive Mark Hackel greeted everyone and commented that as a retiree himself, that their interests are his interests. He noted that this year's budget is very tight. There is no intention to add County employees. He affirmed that his goal is to safeguard the health care obligations in the next budget and beyond.

He continued by noting that the number one priority of federal, state, and local government should be to ensure the safety of its citizens. He commented regarding a future project to build a state-of-the-art corrections facility with a new approach to delivering services to those in need of substance abuse treatment. He acknowledged former jail administrator and retiree Don Amboyer's involvement in the planning process.

Mark Hackel concluded by raffling off four pies he brought to give to retirees. He thanks all retirees for the work they did to keep the County operational through all the years.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Wendy Fisher called for approval of the agenda. It was approved by unanimous consent.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Gilmore reported that the current membership total is 797, representing an increase of approximately 4.5% over the previous year. 95 new members have joined since the last annual meeting. As of June 30, 2023, 22 members passed away. 240 members have already renewed their membership for 2024. However, 91 members did not renew their dues for 2023.

The Secretary noted that the MCRA membership consists of about one third of all retirees. He encouraged members to tell their retiree friends to join. He shared that an invitation flyer is in every employee's retirement packet and in the retirees' annual open enrollment materials as a method of getting the word out about the Retirees Association.

He continued by stating the Retiree Association's website Macomb retiree.org is working properly though changes may be in the future due to rising web hosting fees. Over 42% of payments were made online last year. He noted there was an effort to reduce the transaction fees and it now costs less than a postage stamp to renew member dues online. He commented that PayPal is only used to process financial transactions and that it is not necessary for members to have a PayPal account and may use credit or debit cards to pay dues online.

Secretary Gilmore spoke about The Retiree Connection Newsletter. He stated the newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November. There are 285 members receiving the eNews newsletter by email (approx. 36% of members).

Secretary Gilmore concluded by informing the members that after a long process, the IRS affirms that the MCRA is a federally recognized nonprofit organization. He entertained any questions but received none.

A motion to receive and file the Secretary's report made by Frank Krycia with support from Howard Harry carried by unanimous consent.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Former Treasurer Mary Solomon presented the treasurer's report on behalf of Tracy Howard. It was reported that as of July 1, 2022, the Association had an open balance of \$20,136.81. The MCRA received income of \$12,363.68 (including membership dues and interest) and expenses of \$11,681.83 (including postage, printing, office supplies, trivia contest prizes, luncheon expenses, officer honorariums, memorial gifts, etc.) The closing balance on hand as of August 30, 2021, is \$20,818.66. It was noted that the Treasurer's report represented 13 months to bring the closing date closer to the meeting date.

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's report made by William Hackel with support from Sue Socia-Wallace carried by unanimous consent.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Wendy Fisher began by offering insight on the number of total retirees and beneficiaries and the number of employees active with the defined benefit (pension) system versus the defined contribution (401K) system. Over 3,000 retirees and beneficiaries draw pensions. There are 1,137 active employees in the pension system while are 1,137 with 1,242 employees active in the defined contribution plan.

President Fisher invited Pension Analyst Gary Cutler to comment on the status of the pension system. Mr. Cutler introduced himself and shared that a February 2023 report placed the Macomb County retirement system in 2021 in the top 5% of state retirement systems. Macomb County's system was ranked 4th but Mr. Cutler noted that Macomb County's retirement system has assets greater than the combined assets of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd state systems. He reported the pension fund has assets of 1.1 billion dollars with liabilities of just under that number making the pension fund more than 101.56% funded at the end of 2022. The figure was down slightly from the previous year due to market performance. The current year performance has already exceeded actuarial estimated returns; therefore, funding status should remain high. Assets are gradually being moved more toward less volatile income generating investments.

A motion to receive and file the President's report made William Hackel with support from Joseph Suida carried by unanimous consent.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Secretary Gilmore explained that the seven Board Directors serve alternating 2-year terms with this being the year that three Directors terms expire as of December 31, 2023. Each of the current serving Directors: Thomas Kalkofen, Mary Solomon and Frank Krycia, have indicated willingness to serve an additional term. He indicated nominations were open for the three directors' terms, however no additional nominations were made.

A motion to elect Thomas Kalkofen, Mary Solomon and Frank Krycia as Board Directors for the term from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2026 made William Hackel with support from Joseph Suida carried by unanimous consent.

GUEST SPEAKER: MACOMB COUNTY BENEFITS COORDINATOR JENNIFER SMILEY

President Wendy Fisher invited Macomb County Benefits Coordinator, Jennifer Smiley, to speak to the retirees. Jennifer indicated open enrollment materials would be arriving in the mail soon. If no changes are being made, retirees do not need to take any action. She continued by announcing a new pension payment portal system, Workday. Information regarding that system will also arrive in the open enrolment materials. Finally, she addressed the question of the County Holiday luncheon. Planning took place as early as January 2023 to bring back a retiree luncheon event. Feedback was received regarding the desire for a holiday luncheon and that will be considered when planning the 2024 event. Mark Hackel voiced his support for a holiday luncheon.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn made by William Hackel carried by unanimous consent. The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norman Gilmore, Secretary