

Official Publication of the Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco

NEWS & VIEWS

A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR ALL CITY RETIREES

Health Service Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski

- Rates and Benefits begins with all the small adjustments required before actual rates can be calculated. Administrative fees are among the first items to be considered. AON Hewitt, the actuary, reviews all requests and has determined the requests to be reasonable. UHC requests a 3% increase.
- Then there was discussion about rate stabilization and contingency reserves. This has to do with keeping rates balanced while maintaining sufficient reserves in the trust fund to meet all claims experiences since the system is self-insured for all plans, except Kaiser. HSS is one of the few employer boards to have contingency reserves.
- Commissioner Breslin challenged the presentation on premium rate relativity equalization for Kaiser and Blue Shield early retirees. This item is forwarded to March with a demand for more information, especially the cost impact for all categories of early retirees. Early retirees (pre-Medicare) pay high premium rates. The employee contract offsets no longer apply so they are paying full rates less the charter offset. This changes when they join Medicare. This information will directly impact the anticipated 2020 ACA excise tax.
- The board voted to research a benefit for surrogacy. Facebook, Apple, Columbia University and T-Mobile provide this benefit. HSS would be the first public employer to do so.
- The HSS budget seems to be mov-

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Retirement Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski, Herbert Weiner, and Herb Meiberger, CFA

The Fiscal Year is off to a shaky start!

- From 7/1/15 to 1/31/16 (FYTD), the Fund declined in value by 4.7%.
- SFERS' international stocks declined by 13.86% and U.S. stocks declined by 8.05% in the same period.
- *This means that it is unlikely the Fund will reach the 7.5% return required to trigger a supplemental COLA for this fiscal year.*

The Protect Our Benefits (POB) Lawsuit: Two COLAs were in your February check!

- Executive Director Jay Huish reported that the first part of the settlement of the POB Lawsuit has been paid! *Members who retired after Nov. 6, 1996, should have received a larger check than usual!* The extra amount is for the two supplemental COLAs that were not paid to you for FY 2013 and FY 2014. The interest will be paid by separate check next month. You would have had to be retired at the time to qualify for each fiscal year's payment.
- *Approximately 8,000 members who retired before Nov. 6, 1996, have not received these payments.* Members from POB spoke at the meeting to urge the Retirement Board to include these members in the legal settlement.
- At the end of the meeting, the Retirement Board met in executive session regarding POB's lawsuit and the pre-1996 retirees. The Board directed the executive director to issue a public statement within ten days on this matter.

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March Calendar

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, March 9

Business meeting & program:

10 a.m. sharp

Irish Cultural Center
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

News & Views

Editorial Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 15, 9 a.m.

Taraval Police Station
All interested parties welcome.

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 15, 10 a.m.

Taraval Police Station
All interested parties welcome.

Public Meetings:

Retired Firemen &

Widows Association

Thursday, March 24, 1 p.m.

Irish Cultural Center,
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

Veteran Police Officers

Tuesday, March 8, 11 a.m.

San Francisco Scottish Rite
Masonic Center,
2850 19th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

Retirement System

Wednesday, March 9, 1 p.m.

1145 Market St., 6th Floor

Health Service System

Thursday, March 10, 1 p.m.

City Hall, Room 416

UESF Retired Division

For time/location, contact
Diane Doe at 1 (415) 822-2099 or
Ddoe@mac.com.

SEIU 1021 West Bay

Retirees Chapter

Monday, March 21, 12-2 p.m.

Union Hall, 350 Rhode Island St.,
100 South Bldg.

Contact: David Williams

1 (415) 939-5149 or iamdhw@comcast.net.

Retirement Committee Report

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Basic 2% COLA is approved!

- San Francisco Bay Area inflation (CPI) was 3.18% in 2015. Therefore, retirees who retired before July 1, 2016 will receive the 2% Basic COLA, payable effective July 1, 2016. In addition, the 1% difference between the (rounded) CPI and the 2% Basic COLA will be credited to the "COLA bank" for all members who retired prior to July 2, 2016.

SFERS Board adopts City contribution rates!

- Actuarial Services Coordinator Janet Brazelton, and representatives from Cheiron, consulting actuary, presented the actuarial valuation for FY2015/14. The funding ratio was 86% based on the "actuarial value" and 89% based on the "market value" of assets. On 7/1/15, the Fund's market value was \$20.4 billion.
- The City's estimated payroll is \$2.9 billion, and the total contribution rate to retirement is 28.96% of salaries. The City's contribution rate for FY 2016/17 will be 18.83% of salaries, and the employees' contribution rate will be 10.13% of salaries. *This is significant, as both employee and employer contribution rates will decrease next year!*

SFERS Budget is adopted by a 5-2 vote!

- Executive Director Jay Huish presented the \$80 million 2016/17 budget. Two new positions will be added to investment staff, resulting in a total of 24.
- Commissioners Makras and Meiberger opposed spending \$8 million in fees for a fund of hedge fund manager, \$500,000 for a hedge fund consultant, and \$400,000 for hedge fund research. *These fees don't include management fees of approximately 2% of assets and 20% of the profits directly charged by the hedge fund managers.*
- Commissioner Makras stated that he has lost faith in staff's ability to administer a hedge fund program and cited several reasons.
- Commissioner Meiberger agreed, and cited the 2/7/16 article in *USA Today*, "Hedge funds keep getting crushed," which identified the poor returns of recent hedge fund "stars." He also cited staff's failure to respond to recent history showing that hedge funds have failed to offer protection in down markets, which was the fundamental basis of staff's recommendation for the hedge fund program.

Questions? Comments? Contact Herb Meiberger at herb.sf@gmail.com, Herbert Weiner at h.weiner@sbcglobal.net or Claire Zvanski at czvanski@hotmail.com.

New Members

Randall Swansoon	AIR	John Bettencourt	FIR
Steven Green	DPW		

Health Service Committee Report

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- ing along now. It was revealed that it is no longer on the mayor's two-year restriction requiring an annual 1.5% savings. HSS is a multiemployer health benefit system now serving over 115,000 lives. It also successfully negotiates rates that save all employers significant millions.
- The **HSS Annual Report** is complete. Go to myhss.org for your copy.
- The **Wellbeing Program** report was compelling. It remains undetermined if it significantly impacts the cost of our health programs as a few more years of experience is needed for analysis. But employees report improvements in quality of life.
- The **2016 demographics report** is most interesting. The average age of active employees is down to 35.83. Early retirees are 55.69 while Medicare retirees average 74.4 years. The average age of City Plan members is now 44.3, down from a high of 48 in 2013. This is all very good for rate setting. 93% of retirees live in California with 85% living in the seven Bay Area counties. 13,548 live in San Francisco.

Questions? Comments? Contact Claire Zvanski at 1 (415) 341-3085 or cvanski@hotmail.com.

Rest In Peace

The following members have recently passed away.

Richard Castile	BOE	Esther Krause	CON
Curtis L. Floyd	PDR	Marie J. McKechnie	BOS
Harold Y. G. Fong	DPW	Wayne D. Mitchell	FIR
Evelyn H. Hutchisson	BOE	Marie E. Moore	POL
Helen Johnson	BOE	Paula O'Connell	FIR
Louise Johnson	DPH	Mary E. Routson	DAT
Margaret J. Kanary	BOE	Angelina T. Soohoo	DPH
Arvo W. Kannisto	POL		

Useful Phone Numbers

RECCSF Office	1 (800) 541-2266
Email: reccsf@att.net	S.F. Retirement System
Website: sfretirees.org	Website:
Phone Number:	www.sfgov.org/sfers
1 (415) 681-5949	Phone Numbers:
Health Service System	1 (415) 487-7000
Website: www.myhss.org	1 (888) 849-0777
Phone Numbers:	
1 (415) 554-1750	

President's Message

By Claire Zvanski

By the time you read this report we will have heard from the Retirement Board on its decision about the pre-1996 retirees. As soon as we know the results, we will email all RECCSF members.

Both POB and RECCSF are anticipating responses from our members, now that all post-1996 retirees have received their supplemental COLAs; only the interest remains to be paid. We hope that this significant payout generates revenue for our organizations by donations from RECCSF members, given the high cost of legal fees required for this suit and the possibility of con-

tinuing legal action on behalf of the pre-1996 retirees.

My apologies to retirees who live outside of San Francisco. I am still intending to come to your area to meet with you. Our Membership Committee also hopes that you know some of the recent retirees who live in your area, and if you can help us with publicizing our anticipated meeting.

It's RECCSF board election time! We are always looking for more of our members to join our board. You are critical to helping all retirees continue to improve life and be vigilant about assaults on public employee pensions. *You are the key to the future of RECCSF. We need you!*



Questions? Comments? Please feel free to contact me at (1 (415) 341-3085 or czvanski@hotmail.com.

Travel Committee Report

By Beverly Pardini and Marylou Allen

Sun.-Wed., March 20-23

"Las Vegas at Leisure" includes three nights at the downtown Golden Nugget, roundtrip deluxe motor coach transportation, baggage handling, escorted day trip to Laughlin on the Colorado River, and a night motor coach tour of the "strip," stopping at the Bellagio.

Tuesday, April 5

ADA-accessible tour of the *new* Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park — located in the reimagined Richmond shipyard — that celebrates the men and women who helped make a WWII victory possible; hosted lunch included at the nearby Assemble Restaurant. Time permitting, we will view the USS Red Oak Victory Ship nearby.

Wed., April 20

First stop: Stewart and Jasper Almonds, an extensive gift store located in Newman. Lunch stop: Hilmar Cheese Factory. Continue on to Modesto and Sciabica & Sons Olive Oil for a tasting and gift store visit.

Tue.-Thur., May 17-19

High Sierra Trails begins with the first overnight at the Mont Bleu Resort, South Lake Tahoe. The following day, take a self-guided tour of the Dangburg Ranch in Minden, Nevada. Lunch is included at a Basque restaurant in Gardnerville, before checking in for a second overnight at the Carson Valley Inn, Minden. Before returning home the third day, we stop at the Silver Legacy in Reno.

Info: Marylou at 1 (800) 334-3465 or mrylallen@yahoo.com.

Historical Trivia

Did you know the saying "God willing and the Creek don't rise" was in reference to the Creek Indians and not a body of water? It was written by Benjamin Hawkins in the late 18th century. He was a politician and Indian diplomat. While in the south, Hawkins was requested by the President of the U.S. to return to Washington. In his response, he was said to write, "God willing and the Creek don't rise." Because he capitalized the word "Creek" it is deduced that he was referring to the Creek Indian tribe and not a body of water.

In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are 'limbs,' therefore painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, 'Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg.' (Artists know hands and arms are more difficult to paint)

Feb. 16 Board Meeting Actions:

- accepted treasurer's report and approved Jan. 19, 2016, executive board minutes as presented;
- reviewed nominations procedure and calendar for board election;
- selected a June installation luncheon committee; and confirmed contract renewal with UICC for monthly meetings.

February General Membership Meeting



San Francisco Retirement System Executive Director Jay Huish gave a comprehensive update on current Retirement System status.



Bonnie Bompart, PUC, stepping up to take minutes of February general membership meeting.



Joan Sebastianelli, DPH, back at RECCSF meeting after a long absence.



New member Steve Green, DPW.



Grenville Berliner, SFMTA, soon to set off for Thailand.



"MUNI" table.



New member Randall Swanson, Airport Commission.

2016/17 RECCSF New Executive Board Member Election!

RECCSF is currently soliciting members to run for the Executive Board, either as board members or officers (*especially Secretary*); terms are for two-year periods.

We encourage each member to consider enriching their RECCSF experience by serving in one of these capacities; and, for newcomers in particular, it's a great way to get to know your fellow members.

**If interested, please contact Leo Martinez at
1 (415) 334-9684 or
martinezleosr@yahoo.com.**

Great T-Shirt Sayings

- Sarcasm; just one more service I offer.
- On the Internet, you can be anything you want. It's strange so many people choose to be stupid.
- I'm not lazy – I'm on energy-saving mode.
- Yet, despite the look on my face, you're still talking.
- (Did you know they make bacon and cupcake flavored toothpaste?)
- I like cats. I just can't eat a whole one by myself.
- If life gives you melons, you might be dyslexic.
- Meddle not in the affairs of dragons, for you are crunchy and good with ketchup.
- I tried to log in to my tablet, turns out it was an Etch-A-Sketch and I don't even own a tablet. Also, I'm out of vodka...
- PUBLIC NOTICE Due to recent budget cuts, the rising cost of electricity, gas and oil, plus the current state of the economy, the light at the end of the tunnel has been turned off. Have a nice day.
- Things just haven't been the same since that house fell on my sister.
- I'm not shy, I'm holding back my awesomeness so I don't intimidate you!
- It's only weird the first time...
- I tried to grab fog, but I mist.
- Contrary to popular belief, no one owes you anything.
- If you can't laugh at yourself, I can!
- Old enough to remember when Pluto was a planet.
- Heavily medicated for your safety.
- Computers do not damage your thinker thingy.
- Silence is golden. Duct tape is silver.
- I can explain it to you but I can't understand it for you.
- The Hokey Pokey Clinic. A place to turn yourself around.
- Dear Algebra, stop asking me to find your Ex. She's not coming back.

Constructive Debt Management

By Maria Soria

*San Francisco Federal Credit Union
Burlingame Branch Manager*

Being overwhelmed with bills can become stressful, and it's easy to lose track. However, the following steps can be helpful tools to ensuring successfully management of your debt.

- **Create a strategy.** Organization is key! Set up a bill pay or budgeting tool to help organize your bills. Also, online banking is a great way to stay current with your finances; look into setting up recurring payments, or an auto pay program.
- **Develop Goals for the future.** Set a timeline for when you want to pay off particular bills. Paying down the principal not only saves you money, but also reduces the time frame for repayment.
- **Consolidate/Refinance.** Debt consolidation or refinance opportunities may be the best option for you if you are looking to lower your interest rates, or simplify your payments. You can achieve this by combining your bills into one convenient monthly payment.
- **Look for assistance.** Check in with your local credit union to find out how you can you can transfer balances from one financial institution to another. Instead of your credit union paying out a portion of their profits to shareholders, they reinvest their profits back into the credit union and the community. What this means for you is access to higher savings rates, competitive interest rates, and being part of an organization that focuses on benefitting the community.

San Francisco Federal Credit Union is here to guide you toward the products and services that will help you make the best decisions for your financial situation. Please feel free to visit us at www.sanfranciscofcu.com to learn more about how we can assist you toward reaching your financial goals.

Boost Your Brain Power

Submitted by Ray Favetti

Have you ever noticed that you can't remember that phone number? Not to worry; we all experience memory lapses at any age. In order to help you stay sharp, here are four strategies that you can practice.

- Exercise. It has been proven that increased blood flow to the brain helps cognitive processes. By regularly exercising, increasing the blood flow brings more energizing oxygen to the brain. Oxygen helps to rejuvenate the brain cells and helps mental acuity. Simple exercising—such as walking 20 minutes a day—can make a difference.
- Eat healthily. Consuming less fats, carbohydrates and sugars, and more fruits and vegetables, will help with overall health as well as keeping the blood flowing smoothly. Consuming less saturated animal fats and reducing cholesterol intake will help keep your arteries flowing, and increase the flow of blood to the brain. Foods higher in poly and monounsaturated

fats—such as those found in olive oil, fresh fish and nuts—have been noted by many doctors to reduce cholesterol.

- No Smoking! Smoking has been identified as a potential risk factor for heart disease because it narrows the arteries, which, in turn, reduce blood flow to the heart. Clearly, it can be said that smoking could have the same effect on the brain. According to W.M. Monique Verschuren, PhD of the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and Environment, “Giving up smoking at any age helps prevent cognitive decline.”
- Brain Teasers. Continue to challenge the brain. Working brain-challenging exercises—such as crossword puzzles, sudoku or scrabble—help keep the mind sharp and agile. But, there is no need to limit yourself in any way; reading, or any other forms of brain gymnastics, can help keep your mind active and sharp.

In short, treat your body well and it will treat you well!

Membership Committee Report

By Mary Anne McGuire Hickey, chair

Finally, a revised membership application will be available soon. The committee and members of the executive board made many suggestions that will hopefully attract recent—and also not so recent—San Francisco City & County retirees to join our organization. We all definitely need to recruit new members, so please consider the following:

- carrying a revised application in your purse or wallet;
- sharing *News and Views* with recent city retirees;
- inviting recent retirees to the RECCSF Annual Luncheon, to be held on Wednesday, June 8, 2016; and
- sharing your recruitment ideas and/or concerns with the Membership Committee.

My contact information is mcguire-hickey@sbcglobal.net. or 1 (415) 467-6862 or Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Note from the Editor: We need to hear from our RECCSF Members!

This is a reminder that *News & Views* is **your** voice on issues of the day that impact city retirees.

For example, we welcome:

- Letters to the editor;
- opinion articles;
- humor pieces;
- historical pieces;
- submissions from city retirees living in both local and out-of-area places; and
- other submissions of interest to our members.
- (Unfortunately, we are not permitted to accept ads for publication.)

Email all submissions to sheilamullen@mac.com.

Let's work together to include items of interest for all members of our RECCSF family!

Protect Our Benefits

By Skip McKinney

Protect Our Benefits is an independent political action committee which falls under the provision of the San Francisco Ethics Commission. The opinions are those of the writer.

On Feb. 10, the San Francisco Retirement Board met—once again—to discuss or vote on the issue of awarding the supplemental COLA for the pre-1996ers. For the last couple of months, POB has disseminated extensive materials on prior court cases that have backed up the POB stance. We have submitted examples of California constitution laws, the city charter guidelines, and the Board's own mission statement. The Board went into closed session, and upon adjournment decided not to disclose what transpired within the session.

We don't know why it is taking so long for them to make a decision on this; a simple "yes" would suffice. We have shown them material backing up "yes" votes for us, and have supplied any other needed pertinent information.

Perhaps there's a fear that the City will sue; if so, on what grounds? Suits are brought by damaged parties, whereas in this case it's POB that is damaged by the City not paying the pre-96ers.

If POB sues, it will because they believe that the Board didn't adhere to California contractual law, San Francisco City Charter law, their own mission statement, and, possibly, discrimination against the elderly.

An interesting point was made at the meeting on projected supplemental COLAs—if the fund grows as predicted—in 2017 through 2023; these will be paid only if the Fund grows as projected. It must grow at least 7.5% for retirees to be eligible for supplemental COLAs in any physical year. If Proposition C held up in court, it was projected that the Fund would not be at 100% until 2031.

Hopefully, by now most post-1996 retirees have received their supplemental COLAs, together with a letter explaining the breakdown; contact the Retirement System at 1 (415) 487-7000 or mysfers.org if yours wasn't paid by March 1.

For current updates on this and other issues, visit POB's Facebook page, as well as www.protectourbenefits.org.

The fight continues for our pre-1996 colleagues, so please considering donating to POB by check, money order, or PayPal. ***Make your check payable to POB, P.O. Box 320057, San Francisco, CA 94132. Your donation is not tax deductible under federal or state law.***

Thank you!

2016/17 New Board Member/ Officer Installation Schedule

- Nominations presented by the Nomination Committee—and taken from the floor—at the March 9 and April 11 general membership meetings.
- Voting at the May 11 General Membership Meeting.
- Installation at June 8 RECCSF Annual Luncheon.

For your calendars: Save the date!

2016 RECCSF Annual
Luncheon & New
Board Member/Officer
Installation Ceremony
Wednesday, June 8, 2016
No-Host Cocktails - 11 a.m.
Luncheon - 12:15 p.m.
United Irish Cultural Center
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.
San Francisco
More information coming later!

Membership and Subscriptions

for retired city employees as of July 31, 2015

Membership application: www.sfretirees.org; email: reccsf@att.net.

- \$48, *annual*
- \$600, *lifetime* (payable over six months in six payments of \$100 per month, or annually over six years in increments of \$100 per year)
- Members without computer access should contact the RECCSF office at 1 (415) 681-5949.

News & Views is the publication of the Retired Employees of the City & County of San Francisco, Inc., a nonprofit organization. *News & Views* is published to express the policies, ideals and accomplishments of the organization. Nothing shall be published herein that is racist, sexist or ageist, or that is derogatory toward religious beliefs and other personal issues; nor shall be published anything in violation of Article VII, Section 1 of the RECCSF constitution. Editorial contributions from individuals, organizations and groups other than RECCSF and its members may be included in *News & Views* only upon the approval of the Editorial Committee.

Submissions to *News & Views* are solicited and encouraged.

Submit in Word document to: sheilamullen@mac.com, or

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Linda Tabor-Beck,
First Vice President
John Madden,
Second Vice President
Secretary, Vacant
George Lau, Treasurer
Leo Martinez, Sergeant-at-Arms

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 15, 10 a.m.
Taraval Police Station
2345-24th Ave.
All interested parties welcome.

Note to members:

Please keep RECCSF updated
with changes in address,
phone number and email.

News & Views

April Deadline:

☛ Friday, March 11, 5:30 p.m.
Please email your submissions to:
sheilamullen@mac.com.
Letters to the Editor of 50 words or less welcome.
All letters subject to further editing.

Visit our website:

sfretirees.org

**RECCSF office
email address:
reccsf@att.net**

Welcome, New Retirees

Upcoming General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 9
Wellness and Nutrition Coach Al Garza
Mr. Garza will share strategies for a healthy 2016.

