

Branch Board Meeting Minutes  
Nick's Restaurant, Sarnia  
November 7, 2017

Branch web site **<http://www.federalretirees.ca/en/Branches/Ontario/Bluewater>**

Note: decision and action items are *in bold italic*

Present -

President - Gloria Cayea  
Treasurer - Diane Kerr  
Outreach Coordinator - Pat Mason  
Program Coordinator - Mary Ann Burgess  
Director of Membership - Bill Mason  
Health Benefits Officer - Earnie MacDougall  
IT and Web Site Coordinator - Doug Kerr  
Secretary - VP - Robert Jackson  
Member at Large. - Diana Wright

Absent -

Member at Large - Georgina MacIssac  
Member at Large - Murray Lester

Gloria opened the meeting at 12:00 pm with the following agenda items:

- Invitation to attend the November 14 London Branch General Meeting
- Discussion of Branch Advocacy Officer position
- Discussion of budget, door prizes, entertainment and other details related to the upcoming Bluewater Christmas General Meeting

Gloria noted the Branch received an invitation from the President, London Branch, to attend their annual Christmas / General Meeting being held November 14 at the Lamplighter Inn, London. Cost of the event is \$15 for NAFR members, and the guest speaker will be the National President. Anyone interested in attending is invited to let Gloria know.

Gloria stated as per the Strategic Plan, NAFR is working towards increasing its status as the largest advocacy group for retired government employees. National Office and some of the larger branches have appointed Advocacy Officers to facilitate this goal. The question for Bluewater Branch is whether we too should have an Advocacy Officer. For the moment the branch will work with the National Advocacy office until the role and need for a Bluewater Branch Advocacy Officer becomes clearer.

Gloria hi-lited two potential issues which may affect Bluewater Branch if implemented. There is fear that the government may cancel the deduction of NAFR membership fees at source, which would impact all members and increase NAFR's workload considerably. As well, there is talk in some circles of reducing costs and creating organizational efficiencies by closing NAFR Branches leaving the organization with fewer, but larger, branches. A general discussion followed in which it was agreed that if Branch closures proceed, then the affected branches and their members should have a choice over which branch they join. For example, in Bluewater's case the choice might be between joining London or Windsor Branches.

Bill mentioned that in the past two weeks four former Bluewater members were re-assigned by National Office to different Branches. It is not known whether the members were given a choice in the matter. ***Following discussion it was agreed the President would send an e-mail to Ted Young stating our position that members being considered for reassignment should be given the choice over which branch they wish to be a member. The e-mail will also seek more information concerning the potential amalgamation of branches. Earnie also suggested the e-mail include a request to re-examine Bluewater Branch boundaries, since inconsistencies have arisen.***

A discussion of the annual Christmas Meeting followed. Diane

stated the cost of the meals to the Branch is \$12 (\$13.80 per meal including gratuity). Food donated by members will be collected for a local charity. ***Diane will arrange for the floral decorations and obtain the Tim Hortons gift cards for the callers. Mary Ann will say Grace.***

Gloria said branches are requested to continue lobbying their local MPs concerning Bill C-27. It was noted that letters to MPs can be sent postage free. ***Accordingly a form letter will be made available for members attending the Christmas meeting.***

Venues for the September Goderich and October Grand Bend meetings were discussed. ***Mary Ann is to continue her work in assessing and pricing the various venues in these areas.*** It was noted Harbour Hill Retirement Suites and Hessenland were both well regarded venues.

A discussion of input to the SAGE inserts followed. ***It was agreed the branch will contribute to two inserts, namely the Spring and Fall inserts.***

Bill gave the latest membership figures. The Branch has 598 members, including 3 recent new single members, although we did recently lose 6 double memberships. ***Bill requested all Board members to use every possible occasion to recruit for the Branch.***

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Diane, seconded by Earnie.