

General Membership Meeting and Luncheon
MacPherson's Restaurant, Port Franks
October 18, 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 and welcomed the members.

Mary Ann lead the meeting through a moment of silence for departed members and Grace. Lunch was then served.

Following lunch Gloria gave the President's update. She noted there were about 10 no-shows, reminding everyone the Branch has to cover the entire cost of no-shows. ***Members who commit to attending a meeting are asked to notify the Outreach Coordinator, Pat Mason, if their plans change.***

Gloria gave an update on the advocacy work respecting Bill C-27, An Act to Amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act,

1985. While the Act mainly affects current employees of the Public Service rather than retirees, the potential exists unforeseen developments may affect retirees.

Gloria noted the NAFR Board of Directors has decided to appeal the unfavourable court decision concerning our health insurance premiums. This prompted a discussion concerning the involvement of the membership in major financial decisions. It was noted the NAFR Board of Directors is elected by the Branch Presidents to represent and act on behalf of the entire membership. It is appreciated they will not be able to always satisfy each individual member's point of view on any one topic. Further, the difficulties and expenses of involving each member was mentioned. For example, a simple mail-out to each member containing a ballot and stamped return envelope would cost NAFR over 1/4 million dollars.

Gloria reminded the meeting that although her term as President would last another year, the rest of our Branch Board's terms, whether elected or appointed, expire next April.
People willing to join the Board, or assist the Branch in other ways are invited to contact any member of the Board.

Diane gave the Treasurer's update. Essentially the Branch is doing well and is within budget. Diane noted that Branch subsidizes the cost of meals such as the one at Port Franks (total cost of meal \$23.70, cost to members \$15) and the upcoming Christmas meeting (total cost \$13.80, cost to members \$10)

Bill gave the Director of Membership's update. Bill stated that nationally NAFR membership is down by about 5000 memberships from a year ago. Locally, the Branch is down 25 members from last year. ***Bill asked anyone knowing a retired non-member or about-to-retire public servant to let anyone on the Branch Board know.*** A Board member can then approach the individual to promote the benefits of joining NAFR.

Bill summarized the increase in membership dues, the increase in our dental plan fees and our cost-of-living increase of 1.2%.

Pat gave the Outreach Coordinator's update. Pat thanked the callers and noted it was their efforts in contacting the membership that made meetings such as today's possible. Pat also reminded everyone the Branch would again be sponsoring a **Bowling Day at the Hi-Way Bowl on London Line, Sarnia. The event will take place on January 23, 2018, starting at 11a.m.** Cost of bowling is \$9 and shoe rental is \$4. Lunch specials will be available, starting at about \$7 for soup and sandwich.

Mary Ann gave the Program Coordinator's update. **Mary Ann noted the annual Christmas meeting will be held on November 22 at the Navy Club in Sarnia.** As already noted, the cost to members will be \$10 and this includes door prizes and a return of 'The Casuals', the group who entertained us at last year's Christmas meeting. Mary Ann also asked the membership for ideas on next June's annual bus trip outing. **Anyone with suggestions or ideas is invited to contact Mary Ann directly.**

Earnie gave the Health Benefits update, noting the recent increase to our dental plan fees. SunLife will be going digital next year, although participation is still optional at this point. Work on the Volunteer Awards is on-going. **Earnie and Georgina will be bringing a couple of proposed changes forward for membership approval.** It is intended to limit each submission to one nominee per submission, and to allow the nomination of active Board Members. Earnie noted HQ will not pay for the selected volunteer to attend the awards ceremony in Ottawa, so this will be a future Branch expense. Earnie also reminded the meeting flu shots will soon be available throughout the Branch's area, and members are encouraged to get theirs, along with the pneumonia shot if applicable.

Doug gave the IT and Web Site Coordinator's update, reminding members that the website is available and contains the latest updates and Branch information including contact information for the Executive. Doug pointed out the site works with mobile devices, and invited constructive criticism. ***Doug invited anyone interested in assisting with translating the website to french to contact him.***

Gloria and Doug suggested members check out the 'Members Profile' on the website. Bob Stennett's profile is currently featured. It is intended to update the profile page with a new member's profile every few months. Accordingly, everyone is invited to keep checking the website.

Gloria thanked everyone for attending and following the 50/50 draw the meeting adjourned.