

AFSCME Retirees Subchapter 161
May 2019 Members' Meeting

The May 15 meeting was called to order at 11:37 a.m. We recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken. All officers were present and accounted for.

Charlie gave the president's report. He said, "Who went to Springfield?" There was a show of hands. Charlie continued, "Thanks, because we need the FAIR tax.

"There's a commo [communications] meeting tomorrow at 12:00 noon at the Austin/Irving Park library, 6100 Irving, Chicago.

"I have a quarterly meeting in Springfield. I'll take an executive board member or activist with me. We have one free bed.

"We'll keep reaching out to old members and organize ourselves."

Mary gave the Vice-president's report. She said, "I attended a convention in Washington, DC put up by People's Action, putting together a people's platform for 2020. They are in favor of economic democracy, government for the common good. They believe corporate control is problematic for the economy and for government. We are experiencing inequality not seen since the turn of the century. We should have racial and gender justice and a sustainable economy. Health care, housing, public education, higher education, care work, and energy should be in public hands.

"We need racial and gender equity. Roll back mass incarceration, and end the war on drugs. We see the president use the war on drugs to divide people instead of the public health issue it really is.

"I have personal experience in incarceration. A mistake was made at court; I was detained for a few hours in the pokey. The lawyer gave me the wrong court date, so I was held in contempt. I saw a disproportionate number of blacks in jail versus whites.

"What are they fighting for? Improved Medicare for all, transformed foreign and military policy, free college for all.

“Many who were there who won office, it took them years to develop relationships. We have to organize ourselves.”

Tony read the April 2019 minutes.

Charlie asked, “Are there any changes to the minutes?”

Walt asked, “Kelly Cassidy worked to overturn Roe vs. Wade? She worked to protect it.”

Ron said, “There were 25, not 205 voters.”

With these changes, the minutes were accepted.

Jesse gave the treasurer’s report. He said, “The beginning balance for April was \$28,907.04. Two payouts were made in April, a payout of 39.25 to reimburse a member for travel expenses, and a payout of \$50 to this treasurer for reimbursement for meals for a guest speaker and companion. On April 29, a deposit was made of the rebate of \$680.24 from Council 31. The ending balance for April and beginning balance for May was \$29, 490.11.”

John asked, “Of the \$29,000 in the checking account, could a significant portion be in an interest bearing checking account?”

A motion was called for.

Mary called for an amendment to check with Council 31 to see if we can do this. A motion to clear this with Maria was made, seconded and voted on. The motion carried. A motion was made for Jesse and Charlie to see where we can put the money, and was approved.

A motion was made to accept the secretary/treasurer’s report; the motion was approved.

Charlie said, “On June 6 and 7, I’ll be in Springfield, in a room with two beds. I’d like a motion to approve spending \$140 for expenses for a member of the executive board or an activist to come down with me. I want officers down there to meet our officers.”

The motion was approved.

Dave said, “Joe Biden is leading in the presidential race. He was a senator from Delaware from 1973 to 2009. Delaware doesn’t tax tangible assets. It’s called the Delaware loophole. Other states are losing money to Delaware because of this. It originated six years after

Biden became senator. It looks to me that Biden is a lackey of big corporate banking interests. With the bankruptcy bill led by Joe Biden, he voted to make it more difficult for consumers to file bankruptcy. He is not in favor of our interests.”

Charlie said, “Walt will share his experience on using phones as he used them in politics.

“The FAIR tax ties in with protecting our pensions.”

Marlene said, “This year they had enough money to make pension payments now.”

John pointed out, “A Republican legislator said, because we have the money to make the pension payments, we should not consider the FAIR tax.”

Walt said, “Since 1970, the state constitution says we have a flat tax. Retirees are not required to pay a tax on retirement income, so that we don’t go to Florida, where there is no state income tax. However, the state can’t afford to pay for pensions with the tax rates at 5%, which is all a poor person can pay. The graduated income tax is the solution.

“They say, call your state representative, call your state senator; you don’t know how to do it. Use your smartphone, ilga.gov is the state website. If you have a smartphone, you have the internet.

“Don’t count on all Democrats. They depend on the rich for campaign contributions.

“If you have a smartphone, and the person next to you doesn’t, help that person.”

Charlie said, “Your district is on your voter’s registration card.”

Walt said, “If you don’t have a voter’s registration card, go to ilga.gov, enter your address, give your name, and you’ll learn if you’re registered.

“We looked for one member in suburban Cook County on cookcountyclerk.com, couldn’t find it. Cook County adopted the Chicago system. You have to know if you’re on Street or Avenue of Boulevard.

“A state representative said, “Wow, we got two calls on a bill; we never hear anything. If you call from suburbs which are more Republican, you’ll have a huge impact.

“Call your legislator; the paper I passed out will tell you how.”

Charlie said, “Find out if he’s co-sponsoring this bill.”

Ron said, “Opponents of the FAIR tax will say the rich will move out of Illinois.”

Diane said, “2/3 of the corporations in Illinois pay zero tax. Illinois has one of the worst tax systems in the country.

“Mark Janus worked in Springfield, and is no longer working in Springfield; he went on the circuit with the right-wingers.

“AFSCME was organized to fight favoritism.”

“I have two pieces of mail as a state retiree, one from IPI.

“Don’t believe the lies. Stick together. Pay your dues, it’s a small amount.” (There was applause.)

Pat said, “I’ve got a question about the FAIR tax. I hear the House won’t call for a vote until they have enough votes to pass it. When will they call for a vote?”

Walt answered, “It’s in committee now.”

Dave asked, “How do our local representatives vote?”

Walt replied, “Some of our Democrats will vote against the FAIR tax. You can’t count on all Democrats to vote for it.”

Mary said, “I had bad vibes calling John D’Amico.”

Walt said, “To call, say, ‘I’m a voter, I live in your district, I haven’t missed voting in X many years.’”

MacArthur said, “Illinois Policy Institute representatives go to town hall meetings.”

Charlie asked, “In the June, July, August meetings, could we do a short action, call our representatives?”

Pat asked, “Isn’t the legislative session over by the end of May?”

Walt answered, “I don’t think the legislature will shut down by July 1; they have to pass a budget.”

Mike asked, "Have you met Dick Duchusloss? Why doesn't he put video gambling in Arlington Park?"

Walt said, "Because the casinos don't want them?"

Charlie said, "Call 888-412-6570; AFSCME will connect you with your state representative."

Walt countered, "I always call Springfield; I get a legislative aide."

Dave pointed out, "The legislative aides are on our side. They're public workers like us."

Walt said, "Most government employees don't have Social [Security.] "

Dave asked, "Why do some get Social Security and some don't?"

Walt replied, "Because the union fought for it."

Len said, "Reagan and Rostenkowski passed the Windfall Elimination Provision."

Marlene pointed out, "If you have under thirty years Social Security, and substantial income, the WEP does not apply."

Charlie said, "Jane Addams Senior Caucus has a fundraiser luncheon, Thursday, June 27, at St. Ignatius College Prep, 1076 W. Roosevelt Rd., 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m."

Mary asked, "Can we vote to authorize two tables to attend JASC?"

Charlie said, "It will cost \$400."

Mary said, "That would be sixteen people."

Charlie asked, "Should our subchapter support it? How many are going if the subchapter supports it? 11."

John said, "Bring friends."

A motion was made to pay for two tables at the fundraiser; the motion was seconded, and the vote carried.

The next meeting will be June 19.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:42 p.m.

