



AFSCME Retirees Subchapter 161

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Charlie Hogan, *President*
Mary Bennett, *Vice-President*
Tony Zappia, *Recording Secretary*
Jesse Wilson, *Treasurer*

Usual monthly meetings:
Third Wednesdays of a month
11:30 AM
Hackney's Restaurant
1514 E. Lake Street
Glenview, IL 60025

AFSCME Retirees Subchapter 161 October 2019 Members' Meeting

The October 22 meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. We recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Except for Charlie, who was excused, and Jesse, who would come later, all officers were present and accounted for.

Ron read the September 2019 minutes, and they were accepted.

Pat asked if there was an agenda. Mary said she hadn't been given one.

Mary introduced the speaker, Nick Peneff of CACOSH [Chicago Area Committee on Occupational Safety and Health.]

Nick said, "We're speaking about how people might change as they get older. The agent is things happening that cause harm. The host is the occupant, us. The environment is where we work. Pathways are actions at the interface, how agents get to the host, in the environment. The host factors are how each of us is different. Host factors include age, race, socio-economic status, use and access if medical services, use of prescription drugs and non-prescription drugs, alcohol, tobacco, pre-existing psycho-social stress, diet, physical activity, and exercise levels.

"With the first outbreak of Legionnaires' disease, there were people present with ages starting at 18; but older people with pre-existing lung conditions got sick, but the building was an agent.

"The effects of aging are social demand changes, training and learning opportunity changes, (you're retired; you don't have that now) self-worth changes (sometimes it goes up) activity type and level, and changes with retirement.

"Mental processes are at their height at 30 to 40, and decline slightly well into our sixties. What can we do? Reduce multitasking, reinforce tasks and skills with repetition, recognize and compensate (not just older people)

"AARP's five pillars of strength for mental health are move, relax, nourish, discover and connect. Exercise, sleep enough, eat well, avoid stress, think, and stay in touch with each other. One thing that embodies two or three of them is dance.

"Regarding vision, the lens loses elasticity, and we have reduced pupil size. We need proper lighting, and to reduce glare. We can have indirect lighting, we can reduce sunlight glare with shades and blinds and sunglasses. Regarding cataracts, they're something to watch, and you should keep in touch with your physician. It's harder to discriminate colors when you age. Age related macular degeneration has risk factors like age and smoking, race (it's more for whites) and family history."

Mary asked, "Does the apartment environment affect health?"

Nick replied, "It's huge."

Nick continued, "Hearing: We have decreased high-frequency hearing with aging.

"Exercise: walk, you need good walking shoes, be careful about twisting. Stretch the upper body throughout the day. Continue or begin exercise programs.

"Bone loss; cartilage deterioration. You can take vitamins, and Sam-E. You can reduce clutter to minimize trips, slips and falls, put grab bars in the bathroom. There will be gradual changes in walking levels. Fortify handrails on stairs.

"Let's talk about environmental factors at home. There are indoor pollutants."

Mary asked, "Is climate change a factor in all this?"

Nick answered, "It will be an issue."

Dave commented, "It said in AARP Magazine, Illinois was one of the very lowest, the second lowest in the United States for nursing homes."

Mary added, "If care can be given at home, it's preferred."

Nick said, "Group homes give adults with developmental disabilities jobs, and people to be with them, and they are non-profit."

Indoor pollutants: one issue is moisture, indoor pollutants cause asthma. They cause irritation, allergic sensitization. Age and other pre-existing conditions may be a factor."

Someone brought up changing air conditioner filters and asked about weatherization.

Nick said, "Weatherization and insulation are necessary. Listen to Mighty House on [AM] Radio 820 on Saturday mornings."

Nick went on, "I'm going to give you the five worst things in a building:

"5. Control of chemical exposures. Watch out for inferior furniture, flooring, wall coverings, insulation and cleaning products. You want to make sure fungus and mold don't grow. Watch for signs of water leaking into the building.

"4. Biological exposures. You don't want rats in the house, so you don't want landscaping up to the house. You want to keep water out. Balance ventilation and filtration. You need new filters every three months. Follow the fresh air.

"3. Ventilation and filtration again. You need an adequate amount of fresh air. Open the window a little, run the exhaust fan 24/7.

"2. Keep it dry. This is very important. Masonry is not waterproof.

"1. Healthy communication. If you have problem in the house, talk to management, if you have management. If you don't, go through the checklist.

"The characteristics of a healthy building are light, quiet and spacious.

"Does anyone have any questions?"

Diane said, "A lot of people don't know if their house is near a cell phone tower."

Nick said, "It's one tenth of the exposure of radio frequency exposure like microwaves. You should stay six to eight feet away from your microwave."

Chaya said, "In Skokie, they test microwaves."

Nick said, "About cellphones, the CDC says cellphones are safe, but more research is necessary."

Chaya said, "Italy bans 5G towers."

Dave asked, "What about laptops?"

Nick replied, "They're bad for your eyes.

He also mentioned Heartland Health Centers in the city, and said they have five locations, including 1400 Devon Avenue and 208 S. LaSalle.

He concluded, "I think that's it."

Mary said, "Thank you."

Chaya had a comment. "Dr. Lora Chamberlain, a family physician, says, for joint pain, put castor oil on the joint, rub it with a soft cloth, wrap it in plastic, and wrap it in an Ace bandage. I also heard, from the People's Pharmacy, put a bar of soap under your covers for leg pain.

"Can I make an announcement? There's a League of Women Voters program, the Illinois Council against Handgun Violence and Moms Demand Action, Monday October 28, 7:00 – 8:30 at the Winnetka Library.

"Also, Dr. Lora is speaking at the Elk Lodge in Des Plaines, Thursday November 14, at a Retired Teachers Association luncheon. Admission is \$24.

"SB1863, about voting by mail, is a very bad bill; oppose this. Call Springfield at 1-217-782-2000. They're voting on this October 28."

Pat asked, "Is this for exclusively voting by mail?"

Chaya responded, "Yes, and they lose your address if you move. Get in touch with your legislators in the State Senate and the State House."

Nick said, "Thank you all."

Jesse gave the secretary-treasurer's report. He said, "The beginning balance for September 1 was \$31,086.02. Five checks were paid out, \$79.59 to our president for reimbursement for office supplies,

\$210, \$70 each to three members for train fare to Springfield, \$350.50 to me for reimbursement; I made out checks on my own account. \$100 was paid to Diane Statton of the Alliance for Community Services, \$259.18 was paid to Charlie for reimbursement for payment of two members' train fare and hotel accommodations in Springfield. Subchapter 161 received a rebate of \$678.45 from Council 31. The ending balance for September 30 was \$30, 904.78.”

Mary thanked Jesse for the secretary/treasurer's report.

Someone asked Jesse, “Would it be cheaper to take Uber?”

Jesse replied, “They're not unionized.”

The person said, “They're reliable.”

Mary said, “You don't know if the drivers are qualified.”

Ron said, “The cab is cheaper to the airport.”

Tony said, “Lyft shows up in a few minutes.”

John spoke on the Communications Committee. He said, “The new sign-in procedures have been put on hold. I asked for volunteers for permanent members of the Communications Committee. I need six persons to work on a mailing October 31 at 1:00 p.m. at the Austin/Irving Library, 6100 W. Irving for two hours.”

Mary said, “The Illinois Labor History Society is holding a play, “Mother Jones in Heaven” by Sy Kahn at the Irish-American heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox Avenue [Chicago].”

Diane said, “Chicago teachers are on strike. There's a rally tomorrow. Check with the CTU website. The tax burden in Chicago is unfair. Politicians blame workers and unions. The teachers point out \$2 billion dollars in TIF money goes to Lincoln Yards.”

Mary gave an abbreviated president's report. “Regarding the convention, all efforts are going toward passing FAIR tax, so we can get funding for adequate services.”

John said, “At the Evanston Public Library main branch, there will be a presentation on the FAIR tax held by the League of Women Voters Thursday, November 7, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. the speaker is Cathy Tate Bradish.”

Nancy said, “At the conference, it was said, since Governor Pritzker has been in office, there's an \$8 billion debt. He's cut higher education by one half, health care by one fourth, mental health care by one fourth.”

Ron said, “Charlie is still on the executive board. The union encourages members to bring their spouses as members. Illinois has a very low tax for the wealthy. The FAIR tax will help the state. (Applause).”

Karl said, “With Illinois taxes, if you earn \$22,000 or below, you pay 13 to 24%; millionaires pay 5 to 6%. This isn't Governor Pritzker's fault; it's gone on for a long, long time. We need the FAIR tax.”

Pat asked, “Health insurance open enrollment is now. Should I choose an HMO or a PPO?”

Dave said, “HMOs have gatekeepers, there's not as much freedom. You can choose any physician you want on a PPO.”

Ron said, “I'm in an HMO, I've had no problems, but I'm not 65. If you're not having problems, stay with what you want.”

Pat said, “There's a higher out of pocket maximum with an HMO on Medicare.

Karl said, I'm with United Healthcare. My out of pocket maximum is \$1100.”

Chaya said, “If you're going to the Chicago Teachers' strike, part of the money lost is with test contracts. Monday, October 28, there's a Trump rally at 11:15 a.m. at Trump Tower.”

Diane said, “Maybe we should do a workshop on Medicare and Medicaid when you retire. When I retired, my Part B stopped.”

Pat said, “You were a State of Illinois employee? The state should cover that; contact SERS.”

Diane said, “I have to pay Part B.”

Pat said, “Part A is paid for. You pay for Part B from Social Security. You should get a supplement from the State of Illinois.”

Nancy said, “We're working to lower drug prices. Many can't get into a nursing home, or are kicked out because of costs.”

Len said, “Chicago has been losing residents; immigrants are taking their place. In a letter Donald J. Trump asked for \$35 to \$5000 because of his opposition to immigrants. Immigrants are great people and do wonderful things.”

The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 20.

Mary said, "Medicare Part D is forbidden to negotiate drug prices. As a first generation immigrant, I have relatives that wouldn't exist today, if Trump's laws were in place."

Jesse said, "He's very hypocritical; all his wives were immigrants."

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

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