



National Association
of Federal Retirees Association nationale
des retraités fédéraux
WINNIPEG & DISTRICT

National Association of Federal Retirees
Winnipeg & District Branch
National Website: www.federalretirees.ca
Branch Website:
www.federalretirees.ca/en/Branches/Manitoba/Winnipeg-and-District
Branch E-mail: nafwpg@mymts.net
Branch Mailing Address: 526-3336 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3K 2H9
Phone: 204-989-2061

GENERAL MEETING:

Wednesday, November 22, 2023
Masonic Memorial Temple

MINUTES

Present: Ceci O’Flaherty, Lionel Guerard, Gwen Schentag, Donna Dobson, Paula Nygaard, Colleen Link

Regrets: Cynthia Foreman, Louise Jutras

Attendees: 157

Meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda: Seeing no additions or changes to the agenda, the agenda is approved.
2. A moment of silence was held for those no longer with us.
3. Review of Minutes from the April 12, 2023 General Meeting: Seeing no changes or amendments the minutes were declared approved.
4. President’s Report (Ceci O’Flaherty): We’ve had a busy, fun-filled year starting with the AGM in April as well as a Planning and Orientation meeting with the Board of Directors. In May we hosted all Presidents, their delegates and representatives from National Office at the District Directors’ meeting which coincided with our 60th anniversary celebration at Celebrations Dinner Theatre. In June we attended the Annual Meeting of Members in Ottawa where our branch successfully put forward a resolution to look at the branch structure across the association to ensure that we are structured in a way to ensure success for all branches across the country. The committee to look at this important issue will be formed in January 2024 and will be tasked with providing options, recommendations, proposals and a financial analysis of the impact to the Annual Meeting of Members in June 2025. In August we hosted our annual golf tournament. We had a good turnout but would like to see more participation in the future. In September we held the Town Hall with candidates from four parties for the provincial election. In October we held an Outreach meeting in Selkirk and we sent congratulatory letters to ALL MLA’s representing our branch. The annual Manitoba Learning

Conference was held in early November which we attended. We also sent out a newsletter and organized this meeting.

Your board has been very active but we would still like to do more. We have tried to reinstate the Speaker Series but simply don't have enough volunteers helping us to make this work. We currently have four board positions that are vacant and at our meeting in April we will have three more positions where volunteers will be leaving the board – specifically, I am coming to the end of my tenure as President as is Donna as Secretary and Cynthia as Branch Advocacy Liaison. I know when we talk about everything that has been accomplished it seems like a lot of work but remember the saying “Many hands make light work.” Volunteer roles come in many varying levels of responsibility from a seat on the board to simply volunteering to take pictures at events. We all try to have fun and definitely all help each other out. You may take the lead on some things but then everyone helps and supports. Since most of our day-to-day communication is done by email and texting, volunteers must be computer somewhat literate and have access to email. Please think about it and if you want more information, come and speak with any of the board members after the meeting.

On a more upbeat note, our indexing rate was announced earlier this week which means effective January 1, 2024 our pensions will increase by 4.8%.

As well, we have started a new thing at our meetings with the 50/50 draw. We have a temporary lottery license for this. Half the proceeds will go to the winning ticket holder and half will go to the charity we have chosen. Thank you for being so generous today both with buying tickets and supporting our food drive. We will deliver the donations to Community Helpers Unite Inc. following the meeting.

As I'm sure you noticed in the newsletter, the Central Manitoba Branch (Portage) has been successful in recruiting several new local preferred partners. Most are centered around the Portage area but one has storefronts in many parts of Manitoba including Winnipeg. Effective November 1, 2023, Anderson Family Vision Care is offering a 20% discount on select frames and lenses to NAFR members, their spouses and dependent children under 18 years of age. Their location in Winnipeg is on McPhillips Street. I am hoping to have someone from Anderson Family Vision Care come out to one of our meetings to give a short presentation on the services they have available.

You will notice our website is all up-to-date and FaceBook will be up and running again soon. Thanks very much to our Director of Media, Louise Jutras for all her hard work.

As you may have noticed, we have not had any names included in the In Memoriam section of the Sage Magazine. This was an oversight on our part which has been addressed. Our members are very important to us so as a way to recognize this oversight, we included the names in the recent newsletter. Going forward, the names will be included in the Sage magazine.

As food prices continue to rise, I'd like to give you a head's up that we are considering having to charge a small fee for lunch at our meetings. If you have suggestions for venues and caterers for our meetings, please speak to a board member. Please remember we have specific requirements including parking, bus routes, wheelchair accessibility that we need to take into consideration when choosing a venue.

Thank you for coming. Stay safe and happy over the holiday period.

5. Financial Statements (Gwen Schentag): The financial statements were included with the meeting documents. A question arose regarding why we sent money back to Ottawa when we are considering charging for lunch? The money returned to National Office were funds we had in the Defense of Benefits Reserve Fund and the Branch Infrastructure Reserve Fund; as well an additional \$3,400 was returned to National Office as we are only allowed to hold one year's operating expenses in reserve. Since we were unable to hold meetings or events during the pandemic we had to send some back. We are working hard to keep our money in the branch from now on. Gwen agreed going forward to add notes to the financial statements to explain out-of-the-ordinary items.

6. Reports: Branch Services Officer (Paula Nygaard): The Manitoba Learning Conference was held a couple of weeks ago with the Branch President's plus one member from each of the four Manitoba branches. The Presidents outlined the challenges they are having in their branches as well as outlined their successes. Portage Branch is a success story and are becoming leaders in Manitoba. The branches have decided as a group that we will attempt to operate Manitoba driven instead of branch driven. Branches are desperate for volunteers for board members, if you are able to volunteer, please speak to any board member.

Advocacy Program Officer (Glenn Armstrong): Glenn outlined some of the changes and challenges with the PSHCP. We held a discussion including what Canada Life is doing to improve service, what changes are coming (generic/name brand drug reimbursement changes; Johnson Insurance merging with BelAir Direct which may mean changes to MEDOC in the future). If you are having trouble with Canada Life please follow the complaint/appeal process and try not to be frosty on the phone lines. We are expecting a federal election by 2025 at the latest and will need to start planning soon.

The Manitoba election saw 26 new MLA's in office. We are planning on meeting with each of them. The Government of Canada is working on the Safe Long-Term Care Act. We have provided information and input into that.

7. The winner of our 50/50 draw was Gord Evers. Congratulations.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m. Moved by Eveline Beriault, seconded by Gilbert Laberge.

Next Meeting

April 3, 2024