**RRTA Meeting**

**March 1, 2018**

**Attendance:**  R. Allen, D. Altobelli, Z. Artson-Crichlow, K. Barkley, M. Barnum, P. Brody, B. Buckingham, C. Dean, K. Fager, M. Ferenchak, K. Huey, W. Humphrey, M. Jenkins-Cox, B. Jones, M. Keating, L. Rapkin, K. Schultz, G. Shakes, S. Silvio, A. Smith, D. Sullivan, B. Swan, F. Valente, D. Voellinger, Y. Wooten, M. Zimmer

**Absent:**  L. Bonanni, C. Bonsignore-Kitchen, K. Evans, J. Ivanick, A. Johnson, F. Macek, M. McCarron, E. Robinson, G. Sweeney

**Also in attendance**: S. Raymond, MJ Whalen

The meeting was called to order at 10:10.

1. A moment of silence was observed for teachers who have passed away in the past month: Anne M. Catanese, Shirley S. Hayden, and Thomas Lanseer; also for the students and teachers of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School of Parkland, Florida. A $25 donation is made to Books for Kids in memory of any RRTA member.

2. The February minutes were approved as written.

3. The active teachers will be voting for the contract extension that was presented at the RTA rep assembly, Tuesday, February 27. There will be no change in health insurance coverage for the retirees.

4. Charlie Dean handed out the **IRS Required Minimum Distribution Worksheet** for mandatory for IRA/annuity withdrawal when one turns 70 1/2 by April 1. If you would like more information, contact him.

5. **Vote Cope** — The 2018 campaign begins in April when materials will be prepared and distributed. Please consider becoming a member or increasing your contribution. Vote Cope members’ names will be included in the April RRTA newspaper to verify you are a member. June there will be the annual drawing for contributors.

Dave Altobelli said that this weekend there will be the Committee of 100 at which union leaders meet with legislators and to discuss the ramifications of the Supreme Court decision of Janus and the NYS governor’s budget. Adam Urbanski added that the district is projecting the deficit that was reported in the D&C according to the governor’s budget, but that the legislators vowed at a recent legislative breakfast to increase the money to education. If the deficit continues as it is, possibly 300 teachers could be laid off. He continued that he expects there to be a deficit because of NYS’s debt and that the federal government is cutting money to education. He hopes that the layoffs will be only in certain areas and away from the classroom.

Urbanski also said that the Janus argument may end collective bargaining because the arguments by the lawyers are claiming that collective bargaining is also against the first amendment rights. The original argument was only that agency fee union members do not need to pay union dues.

6. NYSUT Legislative Breakfast Forum occurred on February 3 where many state senators and assembly persons came together to take questions from union leaders. They said they would work to improve the governor’s budget for education.

7.  **Dress a Girl/Savvy Sewers** — Gaya Shakes reported that Monday they made 42 dresses, 37 dolls, 22 personal hygiene liners and 14 personal hygiene bags. They are sending 100 dresses to Haiti in May. March 26 at their next meeting, the Lifetime group that sponsors a Zululand hospice will come to sell products from Zululand as a fundraiser for their future trips and supplies. The group is facing budget cuts and the loss of nurses who have recently died from AIDS and TB. Please stop in to support them. They will be there about 11 am.

8. **Books for Kids**  — The group is going to School 20 on March 14 and will be visiting School 23 (April 11) and School 41 (May 15). The group has a good bank balance to continue to purchase books for first graders. Thank you for your contributions.

9. **RRTA Newspaper** — Mary Barnum presented the list of articles she has for the paper. The deadline is April 12.

10. **RRTA Calendar** — Gonondagan and Mount Hope Cemetery tours have been added. Mary Barnum moved that dues payers pay $2 for the $5 entrance for Gonondagan. Charlie Dean spoke against this because of the past practice of paying 25% of the price of any trip or activity. The motion was voted down and was moved that Gonondagan price would be $3. It was decided to go on June 29 from 10 to 12 for the tour.

The Mount Hope Cemetery tour will be announced in the future.

11. Sharon Silvio proposed a motion that a donation of $50 to Books for Kids in honor of **Tom Gillett’s retirement** from NYSUT be made in recognition of his 50 years of service to RTA and NYSUT. The motion passed. Bob Allen said that because many of us are reaping the benefits of the great contracts that Tom Gillett negotiated during the 80’s and 90’s you might also want to donate to Books for Kids in Tom’s name.

12. Steve Polizzi is asking that RRTA do a **mailing for a Long Term Care** meeting on May 9. Mary Barnum is coordinating the mailing on Wed., April 18 at 11 am for anyone wanting to volunteer. Lunch will be provided.

13. Mary Barnum copied an article about the **Supreme Court and Janus** case (brought by the Koch brothers supporting AFSCME after Friedrichs failed last year due to Scalia’s death). The article is about oral arguments that were delivered last week causing the Supreme Court judges to argue that will overthrow a 20 year decision that agency fee was legal. The decision to overturn this was presented by Justice Alito and has included that collective bargaining is a denial of free speech rights, expanding the original issue of agency fee payers.

RTA, NYSUT, and AFT are continuing to monitor this and keep everyone informed. There will be a Labor Lyceum at the NYSUT building on Saturday, March 3 from 10 to 12 with Harry Bronson and other labor leaders.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20.

Mary Zimmer

RRTA Secretary