**RRTA Meeting (Virtual on Zoom)**

**October 7, 2021**

**Attendance:**  R. Allen,M. Barnum, C. Bonsignore-Kitchen, P. Brody, B. Buckingham, C. Dean, K. Evans, K. Fager, M. Ferenchak, S. Flynn, B. Gerace, K. Huey, W. Humphrey, M. Jenkins-Cox, A. Johnson, M. Keating, F. Macek, L. Rapkin, E. Robinson, K. Schultz, G. Shakes, S. Silvio, A. Smith, B. Swan, F. Valente, Y. Wooten, M. Zimmer, J. Zuniga

**Absent:** D. Altobelli, Z. Artson-Crichlow, K. Barkley, L. Espinosa, C. Smith, D. Sullivan, D. Voellinger,

**Also in attendance**: B. Jones, M. Ludwig, S Raymond, J. Robillard, M. Lavonis (RTA Secretary/zoom administrator)

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:02.

 2. A moment of silence was observed for teachers who have passed away in the past month: Anne Brown, Nancy Dewan, Catherine DiLella, Carol Dundas, Rev. Richard Cilano, Jackie Eber, Bernard Fagan, Carol MacMonagle, Dorothy Manteufel, Dottie Merkle, Michael O’Neil, Thomas Ooczyk, Vicki Phillips, Patricia Pittman, Joyce Resch, Tiki Scott, Marilyn Secord, Arthur Wiley, Ann Wilson. A $25 donation is made to Books for Kids in memory of any RRTA member.

3. The March RRTA minutes were approved as amended stating that Joe Zuniga was present at the June RRTA meeting.

4. The **Cost of Living increase** was in your September NYSTR check which was a 1.4% on the first $18,000; a $21 monthly increase.

5. **Medicare** — many providers are sending out info to get new clients. This does not effect RCSD retirees. You can have only one advantage plan to Medicare and if you choose another you cannot have the RCSD plan. The annual informational meetings will again occur on zoom this year. Information when these meetings will occur will be mailed out and those without computers will receive information in the mail, if requested. The meetings may also be recorded and found on You Tube to be viewed later. That information will also be included in the mailing.

6. **Dress A Girl** — Gaya Shakes said that the group is working out of St. Bernard’s on Lake. They are busy working on blankets for homeless shelters. If you know of any group needing these, contact Gaya (gayashakes@aol.com).

7. **Labor Council** — Freddi Macek said that members of Harry Bronson’s team spoke to the Labor Council about the Star and Enhanced Star programs. She said there is a new program, Circuit Breaker Program (a 3 year program) that we will be getting new information about tax credits for those who own property.

 Labor Council will be phoning for Monroe County Legislature candidates to help stop the stalemate that has been occurring in the legislature. Freddi said that they are only calling union members and could use anyone’s help. You can contact her (fmacek01@gmail.com) and she will get you a paper list that you can call from your home. She also will tell you how to hide your phone number. Labor Council is supporting Dave Long, Mike Yudelson, Josh Bouruth, and Yversha Roman.

 Election Day is November 2 and early voting will be available. Mary Barnum will send out dates and places for early voting to RRTA members.

8. **Vote Cope** — Mary Barnum said that after publishing the recent RRTA newspaper she received 33 new Vote Cope contributions. In the next newspaper she will thank those 33 members as well as include names of those who were left off the original list and had contacted her. The NYSTR COLA increase is a result of work from Vote Cope. Please consider contributing to Vote Cope or increase your contribution so that the Vote Cope organization has the power to continue to work for members.

9. **Substitutes needed** — The RTA grievance committee is working with the district and is requesting RCSD retired teachers to come back to substitute because of the desperate need for subs. The pay is $239.00/day. Contact the district to register and the RTA is working to streamline the application process for RCSD retirees to begin quickly. Martha Keating will be writing an article for the next RRTA newspaper.

10. **Newspaper** — The deadline for the next newspaper is October 18 and is to be mailed the second week in November. Mary Barnum is asking for articles and pictures. The paper will include the list of paid dues members (400 have paid the 2021-22 dues; last June we ended the school year with 728 dues paying members); Martha Keating’s article on substituting, Alex Johnson will write an article on his subbing experience and a cartoon; and the information about the RRTA rep election.

11. **NYSUT/AFT delegate election** — Information will be mailed out to all RTA/RRTA members in good standing as of October 15. If you have not sent in your dues, you will not receive the information for nominations, nor can you be nominated.

12. **Election of RRTA reps**: There were fewer nominees than positions. The following have a two year term: Bob Allen, Carol Bonsignore Kitchen, Marie Jenkins Cox, Kevin Fager, Bob Gerace, Willie Humphrey, Alex Johnson, Freddi Macek, Ellen Robinson, Ken Schultz, Gaya Shakes, Sharon Silvio, Cathy Smith, Deb Sullivan, Diane Voellinger, Mary Zimmer, Joe Zuniga.

 The following have one year left for their term: Linda Rapkin, Marie Ferenchak, Martha Keating, Barry Swan, Al Smith, Charlie Dean, Zelda Artson Crichlow, Frank Valente, Patti Brody, Karen Huey, Dave Altobelli, Barbara Buckingham, Yolanda Wooten, Sharon Flynn, Lucia Espinosa, Mary Barnum.

13. **Books for Kids**: The organization is on hold due to the pandemic.

14.  **Calendar**: Nothing is scheduled except for RRTA meetings on the first Thursday of the month on zoom and RTA meetings on the third Tuesday of the month.

 The RTA office is not allowing any group meetings in person so there will not be a Christmas party.

15.  **New Business:**

 A) Law HR3 is in Congress for drug price reduction negotiating for Medicare (Joe Namath commercial is misleading.)

 B) Barry Swan shared that if you want to know more of what is going on in the school district you can follow RORE on Facebook.

 C) There is a concern about subbing by retirees that when you sign up for one position (ie 2nd grade) and you arrive in the school to find the principal giving you another assignment (ie 6th grade), what do you do? Martha Keating said she will discuss this with the district.

 D) Will there be an insurance increase with RCSD? Charlie Dean said that this is unknown at this time, but watch for their mailings at the end of October. Martha Keating said that she believes that there will be a decrease across most plans.

 E) Mary Barnum said that she would like those coming to the RRTA meeting that are not reps have a designation next to their name on zoom. Matt Lavonis who is facilitating the meeting said he can do this.

 F) Ken Schultz said that he has read that the Social Security increase may be 6%. The official information should be out in mid-October.

 G) Sharon Silvio said that Rochester is expecting to receive 200 Afghani refugees in November or December. Knitters are asked to make hats, mittens, scarves, etc. If you have anything to donate you can contact Sharon Silvio. Donations will be taken to Saints Place (in Pittsford) or Catholic Family Services. They are also asking for gift cards for grocery stores such as Price Right, Wegmans, etc. She will keep us informed about what they need.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15.

Mary Zimmer

RRTA Secretary