



Westchester Unit 9200
Civil Service Employees Association
112 East Post Road
White Plains, New York 10601

Minutes of Open Monthly Member Meeting

FEBRUARY 2, 2010

Karen Pecora – President

Peter Snyder – 1st Vice President / Union Representative

Judith Brome – 2nd Vice President

Kwabena Manu – 3rd Vice President / Union Representative

[Vacant]– 4th Vice President

Michael Wolf – Treasurer

Kimberly Gotzen – Secretary

Junio I. Alvarado – Union Representative

- **Officers in Attendance:** All officers were in attendance except 2nd Vice President Brome
- Meeting was held at the CSEA Local 860 Office, 595 West Hartsdale Avenue, White Plains
- Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by President Pecora
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of silence for departed Members and family members and troops serving throughout the world

Agenda Topics for Discussion

➤ **Sick Bank Balance:**

The approximate balance of days currently in the Sick Bank is **4971**. The Sick Bank balance will be available on our website www.CSEA9200.com every month.

➤ **U.S. Imaging Mailing:**

Members received cards in the mail from this company, which made a deal with POMCO to offer referrals for MRI's and other tests. There is no benefit to us to use this company, and POMCO users are not mandated to use this service.

➤ **CSEA I.D. Cards:**

New CSEA I.D. Cards were advertised to be distributed during January, however to date members have not received their cards. CSEA Albany informed us that the cards are on the way.

➤ **Jose M. Schiffino and Vinny Castaldo from CSEA Organizing:**

CSEA Organizing representatives are researching employees that work for Westchester County and are not represented, and trying to get information to avoid layoffs and for future contract negotiations. We will be visiting your worksites, and please feel free to speak to us. They can be reached and/or visit sites at any time of the day that employees have shifts. Please call **(800) 342-4146, ext. 1400**.

➤ **County Executive Astorino's meeting with County Union Presidents:**

President Pecora attended a meeting called by County Executive Astorino with the Presidents of all County Unions. He stated that the last thing that he wants to do is to lay workers off, and that he is going to ask the State to alleviate some of the mandates that the County has to abide by, which can save the County some money. He has already taken the step to reduce the size of the County Vehicle Fleet by half or more, which was suggested by CSEA. Other cost-saving suggestions by CSEA members which were presented to the Board of Legislators in December have also been presented to the County Executive, and any new suggestions can be submitted to President Pecora.

➤ **Statement to the Members by President Pecora:**

Dues paying members of CSEA have the right to contact union officials at the Local, Regional and State levels with any concerns they may have. Lately there have been rumors circulating among the members about myself and the Executive Board and the administration of the Unit, and this is hurting the Unit. If the members put half as much energy into uniting with us to save our jobs and making the union stronger as they do into their animosity toward

myself and the Executive Board, we would be in a much better position than we are now. Member comments do not hurt me; no one is perfect and everyone makes mistakes, but your efforts would be much better used by uniting with me and the Executive Board to work toward a fair contract next time. I don't expect everyone to like me, but I would expect the members to work with me. Everything I do is for this Unit and our members, whether I do it right or wrong.

Local 860 President Jack McPhillips stated that Officers who run to represent and serve the members know that it is a thankless job, and we may not have the right answers for each individual member, but we have to work for the 3800 members of Unit 9200 as a whole. Members need to ask themselves what efforts they are making to help themselves and their fellow members – when we have contract rallies and such a small percentage of members show up, it is an embarrassment to the union as a show of solidarity. When the members come out and support us, we can do a much better job for everyone.

➤ **Handout: Shop Steward Workshop**

A two-part, six-hour free workshop on Shop Steward Training for Unit 9200 Members, to educate members on the skills that are needed to carry out the responsibilities of the Steward, including communicating, organizing and leading employees in the workplace, will be held at the Local 860 Office on **Wednesday, February 3, 2010 and Thursday, February 4, 2010** from **6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.** (includes light dinner at 5:30 P.M.). Call the Unit Office to register.

➤ **Handout: Civil Service Test Prep Course**

A Civil Service Test Prep Course, to assist in preparing for state, local government and school district civil service exams, will be held on **Saturday, February 20, 2010** from **9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.** (includes light breakfast at 8:30 A.M. and light lunch) at the Local 860 Office for CSEA Members ONLY. The fee is **\$15.00**, due in advance, and members must pre-register and pre-pay. Call the CSEA Work Institute at **(866) 478-5548** to register. This workshop is also available online anytime at www.csealarningcenter.org with the subject "CSTPW 860".

➤ **Handout: Defensive Driving**

A six-hour Defensive Driving classroom course at the Local 860 Office, held on one Saturday or two weeknights. The fee is **\$19.00**. Upcoming classes will be held on **Saturday, March 13, 2010** from **9:00 AM to 3:00 PM** (includes light breakfast at 8:30 A.M. and light lunch) or **Tuesday, March 23, 2010 and Wednesday, March 24, 2010** from **6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.** (includes light dinner at 5:30 P.M.). Call **(800) 942-6874** to register.

Open Forum

Questions from Members answered by President Pecora and Unit 9200 Executive Board Members:

➤ **Can we address in the media what CSEA salaries really are, to dispute reports in the local newspapers alleging that we make much more than we actually do?**

President Pecora stated that now more than ever in the current economic climate, we are perceived to make more money than the private sector and we are going to be attacked. We need to sell ourselves by being more involved in our communities, at events like parades, etc., displaying our banner highlighting CSEA Unit 9200 members and making the public aware of the services we provide to the County every day, as well as that we are also taxpayers. We can start in our own homes and communities to let our neighbors know who CSEA workers really are, and that we are not the enemy.

Local 860 President Jack McPhillips stated that CSEA will be making a concerted effort on the Local and Regional levels as well to advertise CSEA and promote a presence in local communities. We have been intimidated for too long to let our neighbors or the public know that we are County employees, and we need to take pride in the jobs we do and work to educate the public with the right message. We need to let the public know that it is other specialized unions like police, corrections and Teamsters management, and non-represented management, who are making the six-figure salaries and retirement benefits reported in the paper, NOT CSEA members. The average CSEA pension is only \$16,000.00 to \$20,000.00. CSEA members are the workforce making County operations run everyday, and we are not the problem in terms of the budget. We are entrusted to make sure to fight for ourselves and our fellow members, to keep the rights that were so hard fought to get by those who came before us in the labor movement.

➤ **What is the agenda for Lobby Day?**

There is not a set agenda, but CSEA wants you to talk to your representatives, and will provide information on that day when we arrive as to which issues are most pertinent. Members will first gather for lunch and representatives from AFSCME will speak about the issues. The AFSCME Lobby Day will be held on **Monday, February 8, 2010** at the State Capitol in Albany. There will be a bus departing from the Local 860 Office at **7:30 A.M.**, and returning from Albany at 3:30 P.M. Please call CSEA Political Action Coordinator Kelley J. Johnson at **(845) 831-1000** to register.

- **Can County Executive Astorino's proposal to require non-represented employees to contribute toward health insurance premiums affect CSEA members before our contract expires?**

Health Insurance is a mandatory subject of negotiation, and cannot be changed until the negotiations for our next contract begin in late 2011, unless CSEA agrees to it, and it is the position of CSEA Statewide President Danny Donohue that no contracts will be opened.

- **Will retirees be affected by any changes to health insurance if they retire after the contract expires but before a new contract is ratified?**

At the conclusion of the recent CSEA retiree lawsuit regarding changes to health insurance **co-payments**, the parties agreed that the County will not charge retirees more than current employees pay, which means that if there are changes to co-payments with the new contract, retirees may be required to pay up to the new limits imposed on current employees. However, with regard to contributions toward health insurance premiums, **if you retire under the current contract or prior to ratification of the next contract, you will not be affected** in the event that contributions toward health insurance premiums are part of the next contract.

- **The Journal News printed the transcript of testimony before the State Senate Finance Committee with regard to the Triborough Amendment to the Taylor Law, which states that local governments must continue to pay salary increases even when there is no contract in effect. Why didn't CSEA employees receive salary increases when we were out of contract?**

This provision applies to Step Increases or salary levels stated in particular contracts and not cost-of-living increases. Employees that were on Steps 1 through 4 while we were out of contract still continued to receive their Step Increases on the Anniversary of their Date of Hire, and employees that were promoted received raises, as per the contract. This amendment states that a contract remains in effect until a successor agreement is ratified, and with regard to salary increases, this would apply to Step Increases.

- **What is the status of the 1st Vice President?**

Jim Kelly has resigned as 1st Vice President as of approximately **January 14, 2010** due to personal reasons, and it will take about two weeks until he is removed from the system. According to the CSEA Constitution, since the 1st Vice President resigned and the 2nd Vice President retired, Pete Snyder will move up from 3rd Vice President to 1st Vice President and be on full-time release, and Judy Brome will move up from 4th Vice President to 2nd Vice President. Also, the Unit Executive Board unanimously appointed Union Representative Kwabena Manu as 3rd Vice President at our meeting on **February 1, 2010**. The office of 4th Vice President will remain vacant for the time being. Members interested in making recommendations or submitting resumes can contact President Pecora.

- **When you assembled your slate for elections, did you know that Ed Magilton was planning to retire and that Jim Kelly would not serve the entire 4 year term?**

It was President Pecora's understanding that Ed Magilton did not have plans to retire until 2011, and Jim Kelly had to resign due to unforeseen personal reasons.

- **Has the contract been printed?**

Yes, the contract has been printed, and we would like to make site visits and bring the contracts to the members. Please call the unit office to make an appointment for a site visit. The contract will also be available on our website www.CSEA9200.com on the Contract Updates page.

- **Employees who use uniforms would like to know the current status of the uniform provision.**

An agreement has still not been reached between CSEA and the County, as per the contract language, but if the County still goes forward with changing the existing uniform policy and violates the contract, we will need to file grievances. President Pecora will be meeting with the County Attorneys, the County's negotiator and our Labor Relations Specialist. We never agreed to a \$250.00 stipend, nor to purchase and/or launder the uniforms. Members affected by any changes to their existing uniform provision should contact President Pecora.

- **Former Unit 9200 Treasurer Elio Giuliani made a comment regarding union officers.**

The job of a union officer is not an easy one, and it comes with a lot of work, stress, judgment calls, and learning along the way, and he would like for members to appreciate this, and to thank the officers for their efforts.

➤ **Member made a statement to President Pecora.**

Unfortunately, people don't speak up when they are happy with the way things are, but they only do so when they disagree. However, criticisms of the Unit or the way that it is run with regard to specific issues should not be taken personally by the President or the Executive Board.

Officer's Reports

No Officer's Reports.

New Business

- **Next Open Monthly Member Meeting:** **Date:** **TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2010**
Location: Local 860 Office, White Plains
Time: 5:30 P.M. Light Dinner / 6:00 P.M. Meeting

Adjournment

- Raffle for a CSEA Unit 9200 Jacket was won by **Jose Sierra** from **Finance**.
- Raffle for a CSEA Unit 9200 Sweatshirt was won by **Mary Fitzgerald** from **Finance**.
- **Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Gotzen

Kimberly Gotzen
Secretary / Chair, Communications and Public Relations Committee / Shop Steward & Grievance Rep., Unit 9200

Handouts / Attachments

- **AGENDA - OPEN MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING**
- **Unit 9200 – Shop Steward Training [February 3rd & 4th, 2010]**
- **Unit 9200 – Civil Service Test Prep Course [February 20, 2010]**
- **Unit 9200 – Personnel Files and Your Rights**
- **Unit 9200 – Committee Descriptions and Sign-Up Form**
- **Local 860 – Defensive Driving Courses [January through June 2010]**
- **Local 860 – \$12,000.00 in Scholarships**
- **Local 860 – Grace Ann Aloisi Scholarship**
- **CSEA – Workplace Violence Prevention Programs**
- **CSEA – What CSEA Activists Should Know About The Family Medical Leave Act**
- **CSEA – Your Rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993**
- **CSEA – Can I Take FMLA Leave for My Family Member's Condition?**
- **CSEA – Occupational Safety & Health Department: Fight for the Living!**
- **CSEA – Voter Registration Application**
- **Raymond Opticians – Benefits for Westchester County CSEA Employees and Their Families**
- **Ronald M. Tvert and Company – Certified Public Accountants offering discount on Income Tax Preparation**
- **AFSCME Advantage/ UnionPlus Everyday Savings / Mortgage Program / Credit Card**

Unit 9200 Office

- The Unit 9200 Office is located at **112 East Post Road, 4th Floor, Room 428, in White Plains.** Contact us by **Telephone** at **(914) 995-2151**, by **Fax** at **(914) 995-5629**, by **E-mail** at **csea9200@westchestergov.com**, or visit our **Website** at **www.CSEA9200.com**.