



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

Minutes of Open Monthly Member Meeting

AUGUST 3, 2010

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**Karen Pecora – President**

**Judith Brome – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President / Union Representative**  
**Kwabena Manu – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President / Union Representative**  
**James Kelly – 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President**  
**Junio I. Alvarado – 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President / Union Representative**

**Michael Wolf – Treasurer**  
**Kimberly Gotzen – Secretary**

- **Officers in Attendance:** President Pecora, Treasurer Wolf and Secretary Gotzen were in attendance
- **Meeting was held at the Westchester County Center, White Plains**
- **Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by President Pecora**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Moment of silence for departed Members and family Members and troops serving throughout the world**
- **Statement from Local 860 President John Staino:**

President Staino took over as of July 17, 2010 after former President McPhillips retired. He has been a local officer for 12 years as well as an officer at Westchester Medical Center, and he is very familiar with our Contract. The matter at hand is layoffs, which is a concern with most of the Units and nearly 14,000 CSEA Members in Westchester County Local 860. We are in hard economic times right now, and the best thing Members can do is to continue to be involved in your Union, come to meetings, and to vote in the local elections. The County Executive is threatening all of us around the County, including school districts, municipalities, law enforcement and corrections, and many Units are negotiating contracts now, under the threat of not only layoffs, but also health care contributions, and we will be very careful what we negotiate, as it will affect all of the other CSEA Units. Unit 9200 has a Contract in force until the end of 2011, and WE ARE NOT OPENING UP THIS CONTRACT. We ask the Members to continue to be active and support your officers.

- **Statement from Region 3 President Billy Riccaldo:**

The County Executive has blinders on; all he cares about is a zero tax increase and decreasing the size of government and this is his only goal. Our job is to make this as difficult as possible for him to do. The County Executive runs the government, but he needs the Board of Legislators to allocate the budget and programs. The Legislators are the key; we have a good working relationship with the Board Chairman and a majority of the Legislators, and we would like you to call your elected Legislators and let them know what you do, and how the taxpayers will be affected if your job were eliminated. We are asking you the Members to spend some time to make suggestions on where money can be saved in your Department. You know where the temporary workers and hired consultants are, and where money is being wasted. You are the ones who are doing the work, and it is second to none. We need to reinvent how we do business because of the times we are facing. Tell your neighbors and co-workers that the reports in the local news about us are false, and what we really do to keep Westchester running every day. Help your officers on the Unit and Local level, and put the pressure on our politicians – let them know that they need us as much as we need them, and that we will fight for our jobs, and vote for those who support us.

Agenda Items

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- **Handout: News Release from County Executive Astorino**

This is the July 21, 2010 news release from County Executive Astorino entitled 'Deficit Still Enormous For 2011 Despite Successful Efforts To Reduce It', outlining again his projections for the budget deficit, and asserting again his opinion that it can only be solved with the layoffs of County employees.

➤ **Handout: Journal News Article (including response from Chairman Jenkins and interview with President Pecora)**

This is a Journal News Article published after the County Executive's news release, which includes a response from Board of Legislators Chairman Ken Jenkins, and excerpts of an interview with President Pecora, in which she states that WE WILL NOT BE OPENING UP OUR CONTRACT.

➤ **Handout: Fighting Layoffs Workshop – Action Sheet**

Handout from an Officer's workshop held by Region 3 on Fighting Layoffs, emphasizing research and organizing.

➤ **Handout: Civil Service Law/Layoff Procedure/Bumping Rights Presentation**

Unit 9200 will be holding another Civil Service Law Workshop for our Members in August, which will clarify Member questions about layoffs, retention and bumping rights, according to Civil Service Law.

➤ **Handout: 6 Myths About Registering to Vote / Voter Registration Card**

We need the support of elected officials on every level, and to have people in office that are labor-friendly, and the only way that we can achieve that is to VOTE. Last year only 27% of registered voters voted in the elections for County Executive and Legislators. EVERY VOTE COUNTS. There will be elections for three seats on the Board of Legislators this fall, and we need to find out who will stand with us and support them.

➤ **Handout: 'Health Insurance for Your Dependent Until Age 26? That Depends'**

Even though the new law allows dependent children to be covered until the age of 26 starting in September, due to a loophole with the start dates of coverage, this law will not go into effect for County employees until **January 1, 2011**.

➤ **Jack McPhillips Retirement Party**

Jack McPhillips, former Unit 9200 President for 8 years, and former Local 860 President for 4 years, retired in July, and a Retirement Party in his honor will be held on **Saturday, September 11, 2010** at the Renaissance Hotel in White Plains. We will be forwarding more information when it is available.

➤ **Civil Service Status – What You Should Know:**

You need to call your Department's Human Resources representative to confirm your start date for seniority, and your Civil Service Status (permanent, contingent permanent, probationary, provisional, etc.). Although many Departments have told Members to contact the Union, we do not have this information.

➤ **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Kelly's Retirement / Unit 9200 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President:**

Jim Kelly, our 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, is taking advantage of the State Retirement Incentive, and will be retiring from the County as of August 6, 2010. A Retirement Party in his honor will be held on **Friday, October 1, 2010** at Lake Isle Country Club in Eastchester. We will be forwarding more information when it is available.

According to the CSEA Unit Constitution, 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President Alvarado will be assuming the office of 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, and we will have a vacancy in the office of 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President. We will be making an appointment in this position, and if you wish to submit a resume or nominate someone who is a CSEA activist and would be a good representative for Unit 9200 Members, please contact President Pecora in the Unit Office. Every candidate will be considered.

➤ **CSEA Organizing:**

The CSEA Organizing Department is currently in the process of trying to organize the approximately 1200 hourly/seasonal/temporary employees in the County who work side-by-side with CSEA Members, but who make minimum wage and have no benefits or protections. The petition has already been submitted to the New York State Public Employees Relations Board (PERB) in Albany, and we are awaiting their decision. If we are successful in this effort, this will eliminate the problem of trying to replace our Members with temporary workers, because when they are hired, they will become Union Members.

➤ **Meeting of Union Presidents from Westchester County:**

President Pecora has met with the Presidents of the other Unions in the County. Some Unions have negotiated binding arbitration, which gives them an advantage over us, but they have and will continue to support us.

➤ **Public Budget Hearings:**

Public Hearings on the County Budget for 2011 will be held this fall, and we encourage our Members to attend these meetings to show your support for your Union, and have a public presence. We also encourage Members to contact us to assist you with putting together a statement that will have the most impact for our Members and our Union.

Riverfront Library in Yonkers on **Wednesday, November 17, 2010** at 7:00 P.M.

Pleasantville High School on **Tuesday, November 23, 2010** at 7:00 P.M.

Final Public Hearing – Chambers of the Board of Legislators on **Thursday, December 9, 2010** at 7:00 P.M.

➤ **Indian Heritage Festival on Sunday, August 15, 2010:**

The Unit 9200 Public Relations Committee and Officers will be attending the Indian Heritage Festival at the Kensico Dam on **Sunday, August 15, 2010** and handing out information and talking to our Members about and what we do, in addition to handing out voter registration cards. We encourage Members to join us, wear your CSEA apparel, and come enjoy the festival while showing your support and solidarity for your Union.

## Open Forum

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### Questions from Members answered by President Pecora:

➤ **Why is it that the County can spend the money to bring back retirees as consultants?**

According to our Contract and civil service rules, retirees cannot come back and do the same job they had because CSEA has exclusivity for those titles, and the guidelines of the separation and retirement incentives prevent this as well. This is why we need to know from the Members when this is happening in their locations.

➤ **Out of the 910 positions now being targeted by the County Executive – how many CSEA Members are competitive/non-competitive? Do Non-Competitive Members have any rights when it comes to layoffs?**

The majority of CSEA Members are Competitive Class. Laborers are Non-Competitive. Bumping rights apply to Competitive Class employees, but Non-Competitive employees are covered by a seniority layoff procedure according to our Contract. These questions can be explained and clarified by attending the Civil Service Law Workshop.

➤ **When will the list of 910 positions be released?**

The County Executive told President Pecora that this is an internal list for budget purposes, and it is not to be released now, but when the budget is released, the list will be released. The Departmental budgets are due to be handed in by the end of August, and the list of positions should be available to us then. The budget must be completed and submitted to the Board of Legislators by November.

➤ **Do positions need to be targeted by the County in order for us to take advantage of State Retirement Incentives?**

The option for employers to target certain positions to be eligible for the State Incentive was geared toward State employees. In the County, every Member who wanted to take advantage of the Part A incentive was able to. Employers were given the choice, but the County did not opt to target specific positions for the Part A State Incentive, and we do not anticipate that they will for the Part B State Incentive.

➤ **Do the 910 positions targeted for layoffs include employees in any other Unions other than CSEA?**

Approximately 95% of the 910 positions the County Executive is talking about are CSEA Members. There are 374 employees retiring as of today with both the County and the State Part A Incentives, and the majority of those are also CSEA Members, but the County Executive makes the 910 estimate over and above this number, due to the fact that the County will still need to make contributions to the retirement system and health insurance for them.

➤ **Has the Union or the Legislators asked for an independent audit of the County Executive's deficit projections?**

Yes, the Board of Legislators did release an audit of the County Executive's original projections, and they refuted almost all of his numbers. They have said that his numbers are not realistic, and that while the deficit is not zero, it is certainly not the \$166 million, or even the revised \$91 million, maintained by the County Executive.

➤ **Will the County switch health care providers from POMCO to NYSHIP or another company?**

This was researched by the County, but the savings was not significant enough to make this very complicated program change, and they are now looking at ways to save within POMCO.

- In locations where most of the employees are hourly, if they are laid off, the facilities will not be able to run.

We know that the County employs hundreds of temporary workers, and that they depend on them to keep some County facilities running. A lot of things have to happen before people actually lose their jobs. We are making many efforts to avoid any employees losing their jobs, including filing the petition to organize temporary workers. We have to remain united, and use all of our resources to fight for our jobs, including all of the levels of the CSEA Union, our Legislators, the local business communities that we support, and the taxpayers who depend on us.

- We are the front line people who do the work every day, but every time the County Executive talks in the press, he is turning the public against us. We have not seen an announcement from CSEA counteracting these statements. We need to have our voice heard.

We have been attempting to submit our side of the story through news articles, interviews, letters to the editor, etc. to the Journal News and other local publications for years, and the majority of these have been rejected. These publications are not labor-friendly, and they have no interest in publicizing our viewpoint. One of the best ways Members can get their message out is to attend public meetings of the Board of Legislators and other public forums and speak out. The County Executive is losing his credibility every day by the way he has chosen to handle this situation.

Region President Riccaldo also added that CSEA currently sponsors advertising on cable, radio, and outdoor electronic signs in our communities. We will be doing more, but we cannot run a campaign by fighting with the County Executive in the press. Why should the Union spend thousands of dollars to run private ads in, and support, a publication that is anti-labor? We cannot only react to the lies he is publicizing for his own agenda. Who cares what he says – this fight is for our Members. Would you be willing to go to your local supermarket and hand out fliers to your neighbors and fellow taxpayers to educate them on what we do and the correct facts? That is the way to get our message out, because it's personal, and we need YOU the MEMBERS to make a commitment to support YOUR UNION along with us.

- Are we going to be having another march to educate the public on how they would be affected if County workers are laid off? Can we get information into local businesses about this?

The County Executive's projected deficit is based on zero revenues, which is not realistic. County pools, parks, Playland, etc. have done very well this year and are making revenues, but they are being discounted by the County Executive. If we all get laid off, WHO IS GOING TO DO THE WORK? We are working with the Public Relations Committee to find ways to get our message out to the public and local businesses.

- Why does every single solution for the deficit fall on the backs of the workforce? We're already working with expanded workloads and overtime without pay to get the job done.

It's convenient to blame us for all the problems using inflated deficit numbers, and it's even easier to target us. He doesn't care about us – his one goal is to make his legacy a zero percent tax increase, no matter what he has to do to achieve that. This is why we need to have our elected Legislators working with us to find other savings.

- If positions are in the final 2011 budget, will they still be in danger of layoffs next year?

If your position is in the final 2011 budget, you will have a job in January. The County can decide to lay-off employees and/or eliminate positions at any time.

- Are there any solutions to be had by accepting furloughs?

No. This would constitute opening up our Contract, and we CANNOT do that. We appreciate the anxiety of our Members, but we need to stand strong behind the Contract we took 3 years to ratify in good faith.

- Politically, how can we make the public and other municipalities understand how they would be affected if County government services were not being provided?

The County performing these services centrally is by far the most cost effective way to provide them. If they were provided separately by the municipalities, by their workers or by outsourcing, there would be an expensive duplication of services, and municipal taxes would need to be raised much more than County taxes to be able to pay for them. We need to make this clear to the taxpayers.

- Could we have a special meeting in which Members can bring our neighbors to hear our message?

There is the possibility of arranging a CSEA – Meet the Public event if we have enough Member support.

## Officer's Reports

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No Officer's Reports.

## Next Meeting Date

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- Next Open Monthly Member Meeting:      Date: [TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2010](#)  
Location: **\*\*WHITE PLAINS HIGH SCHOOL\*\***  
Time: 5:30 PM Light Dinner / 6:00 PM Meeting

## Adjournment

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- Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Kimberly Gotzen**

Kimberly Gotzen  
Secretary / Chair, Communications Committee / Shop Steward & Grievance Representative, Unit 9200

## Handouts / Attachments

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- AGENDA – OPEN MONTHLY MEMBER MEETING
- County News Release – 'Deficit Still Enormous For 2011 Despite Successful Efforts To Reduce It' [July 21, 2010]
- Journal News Article on County News Release
- CSEA – Fighting Layoffs Workshop Action Sheet
- CSEA – Civil Service Law/Layoff Procedure/Bumping Rights Presentation
- 6 Myths About Registering to Vote / Voter Registration Card
- 'Health Insurance for Your Dependent Until Age 26? That Depends'

## Unit 9200 Office

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- The Unit 9200 Office is located at [112 East Post Road, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 428, in White Plains.](#)  
Contact us by Telephone at [\(914\) 995-2151](tel:(914)995-2151), by Fax at [\(914\) 995-5629](tel:(914)995-5629), by E-mail at [csea9200@westchestergov.com](mailto:csea9200@westchestergov.com), or visit our Website at [www.CSEA9200.com](http://www.CSEA9200.com).