

## February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 Meeting Notes - R.F.A.

President Joe O'Neil called the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the R.F.A. to order at 11:10 AM at Local 36's meeting hall with 38 members plus 2 Board members in attendance

**President's Report** – Joe O'Neil: Item #1. Effective this meeting, Tom Scherer volunteered to be the new Secretary, but since he forgot to bring a pencil, I will do this one for him. Tom Gregory also volunteered to be the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Discussed and the vote was unanimous!

Item #2. Our new Constitution and By-Laws were discussed. Read, discussed, motion made to accept, seconded and voted on; again unanimously!

Item #3. Tom Tippet (District of Columbia Retirement Board (or DCRB) Retired Fire Representative) spoke on the current pay problem that affects approximately 135 retired DCFD retirees. How We Got Here: As many of us know, both the Feds and the DC Government failed in paying the correct amount into our retirement system, resulting in our underfunded liability. So it was worked out and in June 1997, the U. S. Department of the Treasury assumed responsibility for paying benefits attributable for service on or before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1997. DCRD would be responsible for retirees' service time from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1997 forward. So, the U. S. Department of the Treasury's Office of D.C. Pensions (ODCP) hired a private company to audit the records and found 3 main problems that started in **1980** until corrected in the beginning of **2011**. Apparently it is this company that did the work, set up the call center and is handling the paperwork

**Error #1. The 80% Maximum Benefit error.** Prior to July 1975, the maximum optional retirement benefit was limited to 80 % of a members' **basic salary** at retirement. In 1974, a Federal statute changed **basic salary** to **average salary**. The problem started when the D.C. Code published Supplement VII in 1980 which incorrectly changed the wording back to the pre 1974 language, **basic salary**. Both the Federal and District governments failed to notice the incorrect Code change until DCRB discovered the publication error in 2010. The D.C. government had used the new incorrect D.C. Code error in calculating retirement benefits and appropriate annual Retirement Funding from 1974 until 2010. The D.C. Code error was corrected and all members since the beginning of 2011 has had the law correctly applied in calculating their retirement benefit. At the DCRB's meeting on December 18, 2014, the trustees voted **not** to take any action for the 287 retirees and survivors funded by the District that would result in **benefit reductions** for the District retirees, **including recovering benefit overpayments** from the retirees

**Error #2. The Look Back Cola error.** This affected only Federally funded benefit payments and impacts approximately 414 firemen who retired between February 15, 1980 and September 1, 1997. Between those dates, they received two (2) Cost of Living Adjustments when they were only entitled to one. Note: Firefighters retiring on or before March 1<sup>st</sup> or September 1<sup>st</sup> use to receive the Look Back COLAs

**Error #3. Non Systemic and other miscellaneous errors.** Some retirees have had non systemic errors including data entry errors, arithmetic and calculation errors, misapplying firefighter retention incentives and double counting periods of service

Tom Tippet stated that hard numbers of retirees affected by any or all of the problems wasn't being given out. Also, he wasn't sure if any more "Retiree Pay Packets" would be forthcoming

Ed Smith (DCRB Active Firefighter Representative and Local 36 President) added that Gary Hankins (DCRB Retired MPD Representative) is making up a template to help guide the cops and us to appeal. A retiree has 60 days from the date of their letter to file that appeal. Local 36 has made contact with the IAFF and has already given them some of the paper work

It was discussed that the RFA set up a committee to address the above problems. So President Joe O'Neal set up a committee with Bill Mould as the Chairman, and Tom Tippet and Dave Kauffman as members. Bill Mould asked each member in attendance to give Local 36 a copy of the paper work that ODCP had mailed them. Others can mail or fax theirs to the Local; Attn. RFA

Frank Tremel made a motion that a letter be sent out immediately to affected members. Discussion, then motion made to accept, seconded and approved

For updates and other information related to the above, go to [www.dcRFA.com](http://www.dcRFA.com)

**Deceased members** – President Joe O’Neil: There were 3 deceased members since our January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting: John Everett was appointed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1958 to T-16, retired August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1981 as Ch. Engineer from the FB and passed October 2, 2014

Fred Berti retired October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974 from E-9 and passed January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Charlie Butler Sr was appointed March 17, 1958 to T-8, retired April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1978 from E-25 and passed January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

The President called for a moment of silence for our deceased members and members of our Armed Forces serving our country

**The minutes of the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting** – George Kenney: Absent. Doug Wheeler read, motion made to accept, seconded and approved

**Applications for membership** – George Kenney: Absent, so next month

**The Secretary / Treasurer Report & Correspondence** – George Kenney: Absent, so next month

### **Committee Reports:**

**Sick** – President Joe O’Neil: Leonard Adams, Steve Adams, Bill Andrews, Carroll Ashbrook, Jim Bojalad, Mickey Bridgett, Kelly Butler Jr, Ken Cox, Ralph Creel, Michael Daras, Walter Diehl, Jim Eschbacher, Ray Gist, John Goff, Jim Greco, John Grolig, Lester Hansen, Red Heflin, Freddie Heller, Mike Malone, Bob Mann, Irvin Poole, Ken Propst, Rudy Radisch, Ben Self, Danny Stedman, Kenneth R Stevens, Tom Tait, Bob Talbert, Jim Tanis, John E Tippet and William Van Fossen

**Honor Guard** – Vinny Austin: RFA and DCFD were well represented at Fred Berti’s services. There will be a celebration of Life for Charlie Butler Sir on February 7<sup>th</sup> from 2 until 5. It will be held at JW and Friends Restaurant 6531 Back lick Rd, Springfield VA

**Entertainment** – Vacant: Butch Oliff brought up that the World Police and Fire Games are coming to Fairfax VA between June 26<sup>th</sup> and July 5<sup>th</sup>. See [www.Fairfax2015.com](http://www.Fairfax2015.com) or [www.dcrfa.com](http://www.dcrfa.com) for details. Stefan Ventura also stated the Emerald Society’s Ski Trip is scheduled for February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade is March 15<sup>th</sup> on the Nation’s Mall with the Annual Emerald Society’s Party following. The Florida Retired Firefighter Reunion is being held on April 17<sup>th</sup> thru 19<sup>th</sup>. See [www.WashingtonEmeralds.org/](http://www.WashingtonEmeralds.org/) or our web site

RFA picnic news. “RIP” Gardner told everyone that it will be held at St. Michael’s, 17502 Aquasco Rd, Baden, MD 20613 on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in September; (9/26/15). He’s bringing back roast beef and will also have chicken etc. And the wives are invited to bring dessert. More details later

**Delegate to Local 36 Board of Directors** – Butch Oliff and Jim Snyder: Larry Sheldrake stated the Local 36 has again won the O/T grievance (approximately \$47 million). The city keeps dragging their feet on paying. Local 36 has already formed a committee for the upcoming contract negotiations for the Fiscal years 2015 to 2017

DCFD - after years of not buying enough apparatus - has received 10 new wagons and should receive 5 new trucks beginning in March. Some of the old O.O.S. trucks are slowly being repaired and returning to the streets – about one per week. Currently there are 14 trucks In Service out of the normal 16

Check Local 36’s website [www.iaff36.org/index.cfm?section=1](http://www.iaff36.org/index.cfm?section=1)

**Members attending their first meeting** – Larry Stommel, Ron Tyler, Terry Williams, Bob Stansbury, Jim DiGregory and Kevin Donahue

**Old Business** – Jim Embrey talked about the Fire Museum at Engine 3 and the last 2 events. One was about the Fallen Firefighter Event and the second was about the Historical Society of DC

Joe and his committee has updated and rewritten our current Constitution and By-Laws. He discussed why each change or addition was made. Go to our website to see the proposed changes

**New Business** – Joe O’Neil mentioned that Joe Healy has RFA bullion badges for sale

Put on your calendar next years’ Florida Reunion dates, Friday April 17<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Same location etc. Again, one doesn’t have to be retired to attend; just a member in training is all it requires! Questions contact AJ Winterwerp or see updates at [www.dcrfa.com](http://www.dcrfa.com) as it gets closer. Many retirees should have received their invitations in the mail by now

**Good & welfare** – President O’Neil said that our RFA, with the help of L-36, the IAFF, and the retired MPD association will work with the retirees and their pay problems. Also each member (and others) should write their U.S Representatives and Senators

As usual, check out [www.DCFD.com](http://www.DCFD.com) and [www.dcRFA.com](http://www.dcRFA.com) for updates and more details

**NOTE: !! March 2<sup>nd</sup>’s meeting will be at 11:00 am at L-36’s hall. See below**

Remember our snow policy, changed per Joe O’Neil, if snow closes Prince George’s County school system, no RFA meeting that day

**Inactive Committees:**

**Entertainment Comm -**

**Vocal Alarm Comm -**

**Retired Comm -**

**Safety Comm -**

**Legislative Comm -**

There being no further old or new business, we’ll see you on March 2<sup>nd</sup> again at our Local 36 Union Hall. President Joe O’Neil adjourned this meeting at 1:05 PM

Below are the **2015** Tentative Dates: March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to be held at **11:00 AM At Local 36’s Union Hall, 2120 Bladensburg Rd NE Washington, DC 20018-1498** - Check later for future times and locations!

Mar 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Apr 6 <sup>th</sup>	May 4 <sup>th</sup>	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Dec 7 <sup>th</sup>
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If you know of anyone who has retired and would like an application for membership in the DCFD Retired Members Association, go to:

<http://www.DCrfa.com>

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Please think about attending L-36’s monthly membership meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 9AM  
Check <http://www.iaff36.org/> or [www.facebook.com/IAFF36](http://www.facebook.com/IAFF36)

Don’t forget the weekly “Board of Director’s” Meeting at Edgewater’s Coconut Joe’s, 48 South River Rd Edgewater MD 21037 at 4:00 PM ish on **Fridays**. Stop by and enjoy the evening. Contact George Barksdale for any other details. <http://CoconutJoesUSA.com/>

Luncheon if you're in the Myrtle Beach SC area on the **first Monday** (March 2<sup>nd</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup>) of each month at 11:30 AM. Contact Richard Hunley at [ItsMerhh@yahoo.com](mailto:ItsMerhh@yahoo.com) concerning the details. It's held at Calli Baker's Firehouse Bar & Grill in the Myrtle Beach Mall, 10131 N Kings Hwy Myrtle Beach SC 29572. [www.CalliBakersFireHouse.com/](http://www.CalliBakersFireHouse.com/)

Don't forget the monthly luncheon held on the **first Wednesday** (March 4<sup>th</sup>) of each month, at 12:00 noon at Station 7 Restaurant, 7456 Gumboro Rd Pittsville, MD 21850. For a head count, let Bob Gilbert know that you're coming - [RPGilbert1@mchsi.com](mailto:RPGilbert1@mchsi.com). To check the menu and for directions - [www.Station7Restaurant.com/](http://www.Station7Restaurant.com/)

Another monthly luncheon is held on the **second Tuesday** of each month (March 10<sup>th</sup>) at 12 noon at Champion Billiards Sports Cafe, 5205 Buckeystown Pike, Frederick, Maryland 21704 [www.FrederickChampions.com/home.html](http://www.FrederickChampions.com/home.html). Call Paul Stottlemeyer for further details. Or you're welcomed to just show up as there is plenty of room

The Southern Maryland Area Firefighters Luncheon will be on the **last Wednesday** of the month (February 25<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup>) at the American Legion Post 238, 6265 Brandywine Rd, Hughesville, MD 20637 at 11:30 AM. Contact Ricky Moore [RLMoore@comcast.net](mailto:RLMoore@comcast.net) so he can give a head count to the kitchen. [www.ALPost238.org/](http://www.ALPost238.org/)

The Guns and Hoses crew in Ocean City MD meet the **last Saturday** of the month (February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup>) at 12 noon to warm up for the 1:30 PM meeting at the Elks Lodge #2645 located at #13708 Sinepuxent Ave Ocean City MD 21842-4553 (adjacent to the Fenwick Inn). The Elks Lodge is 1 block off Coastal Highway at 138<sup>th</sup> St. Call Pat Johnson for further details <http://www.elks.org/lodges/home.cfm?LodgeNumber=2645>

For other information or details, check out our web page [www.dcRFA.com](http://www.dcRFA.com)

Late Note: For a look at your "Summary Plan Description" Retirement Booklet, go and view important info about our benefits - for us and our survivors

<http://dcrb.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcrb/publication/attachments/DCRBPoliceFirePlan2012Finalweb%20update%20June2014.pdf>

And that's the truth as Skip Ramsey usta say...

Thanx for the help from everyone!

Doug

June 2007