



**New York City DC 37 Retirees Association  
General Membership Meeting Minutes  
May 30, 2024 at 10AM (held virtually via Zoom)**

The moderator began the meeting at 10AM and introduced Administrator, Ann Widger began the meeting. Widger gave welcome remarks and called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence and reflection for those we have lost was led by Administrator Widger.

**REMARKS from Norman Isaacs**

Ann Widger introduced Norman Isaacs, who works at the DC 37 Health and Security Fund. Norman discussed the enhancement made by the fund to the optical and dental benefits.

*Optical Benefit Increase:* Effective February 1, 2024, all participants will now have a \$250 optical benefit to be utilized every 24 months based on your last date of service for all optical services. There are three ways to use your Optical Benefit: request an Optical Voucher, Optical Direct Reimbursement or a combination of both. Sunglasses fall under optical benefits. More information can be found [here](#) or by calling 212-815-1234.

*Enhanced Dental Benefits:* Beginning February 1, 2024, dental coverage was expanded to cover 105 additional dental procedures with cost sharing and price protection as well as enhancing the coverage of five existing dental services – periapical X-rays, periodontal cleanings (up to 4 per year), occlusal guard, posterior composites and root canals – at 100% (up to the \$1,700 annual maximum) when you visit a Delta Dental dentist within the preferred Delta Dental network.

Please update Health and Security with your current information: marital status, new address, update them with beneficiary information. More information can be found at <https://www.dc37.net/benefits/benefits> all. Any inquiries about DC 37 Health and Security Fund benefits should be directed to them by calling 212-815 -1234.

Isaacs took a few questions about these benefits.

**REMARKS from Chris Wilgenkamp**

Ann Widger introduced Chris Wilgenkamp, who works as the DC 37 Director of Technology. Chris discussed the transition to 125 Barclay Street office.

Chris stated that the DC 37 Offices will be returning to their home of 125 Barclay St. around Labor Day of 2024. The DC 37 headquarter is no longer at 55 Water St. There is a walk-in center site at 420 West 45th Street if members need anything from DC 37 during this transition All contacts are the same. Anyone who needs to be seen in person can go to 420 West 45<sup>th</sup> Street from 9am-5pm Monday-Friday. They will be here until we are ready to shift back to 125 Barclay Street. There will be new ID cards needed to get into the building at 125 Barclay and a new pass program will be introduced for guests. The Retirees Association will have space over at 125 Barclay Street along with every local. Dues and any mail currently should be sent to 125 Barclay Street.

### **REMARKS from Bill Whalen**

Ann Widger introduced Bill Whalen, Director and Chief Counsel at DC 37 Municipal Employees Legal Services (MELS).

Bill spoke about the Municipal Employees Legal Services, which is a team of 120 lawyers and legal assistants representing DC 37 working members and retirees. It is a free legal benefit service that is available to DC 37 members. He mentioned that they handle civil cases in New York at no cost to members including retiree members. These include help with issues such as housing, debt and bankruptcy, identity theft, rent subsidies and public housing/benefits (Medicare/Medicaid, Section 8, etc.) wills, life planning documents, real estate, divorce/domestic violence, and help applying for citizenship. This MELS benefit is available to members in the city of New York, Nassau County, Suffolk County, Westchester County and Rockland County. If you are not located in these areas, they can recommend someone in your area that is free in your state/county. You can contact MELS at 212-815-1111 with any questions.

Starting June 3<sup>rd</sup>-June 9<sup>th</sup> NYC is taking applications for Section 8 Housing Assistance. This is a rare event that has opened up with a limited number of Section 8 vouchers available. Apply at [on.nyc.gov/section8-application](https://on.nyc.gov/section8-application).

MELS is hosting two webinars coming up that are virtual and available to any DC 37 member regardless of location: June 26<sup>th</sup> at 6pm they are hosting a webinar on Bank Fraud, Internet Scams and Identity Theft. July 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm they are hosting a webinar on Medicaid. Registration is available on [www.DC37MELS.com](http://www.DC37MELS.com)

### **Administratorship Update from Ann Widger**

Ann Widger gave an update on the Retirees Association Administratorship. She stated that on February 22nd of this year, AFSCME President Lee Saunders put the DC 37 Retirees Association under Administratorship due to serious violations of the AFSCME Financial Standard Code, International Constitution and the Chapter's Constitution including failure to conduct annual audits and failure to file annual tax returns which resulted in the IRS revoking the

Association's nonprofit tax-exempt status. This put the Association's funds and the members' dues money in jeopardy.

Administrator Widger said they are working with a certified public accounting firm to conduct audits for the years the association has missed which includes 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. The Association's phones are now staffed full time from 9:00AM – 5:00PM Monday-Friday.

The Association is still paying out the \$500 death benefit to those who are eligible and are working with attorneys to create a more formalized process for that and a policy form.

Virtual membership meetings will be held until the end of 2024. Through this virtual membership meeting, last month's call was attended by almost 5,000 members including 200 retirees who joined via a Spanish simulcast. This method is insuring we can meet the most members possible. Will be looking at how we can accommodate in person meetings and virtual meetings at 125 Barclay Street. Go to [www.dc37retireesassociation.org](http://www.dc37retireesassociation.org) for follow-up information and announcements.

Widger noted that the Association wants to ensure it has current member email addresses and cell phone numbers to communicate more effectively. They have also started a DC 37 Facebook page which you can "like" or follow here: <https://www.facebook.com/dc37retirees>

Members should have received a flyer in the mail making sure we have your most up-to-date contact information. There is a QR code folks can use to update information, you can go to [www.info.dc37retirees.org](http://www.info.dc37retirees.org) or email [dc37retirees@afscme.org](mailto:dc37retirees@afscme.org). If everything on there is correct, then they do not need to do anything.

Widger noted that the DC 37 Education Department is currently holding spring education classes held virtually. At the time of the meeting, 183 retirees signed up for classes across the offerings. Members received a survey via email about what kinds of classes you want soon. They got about 400 responses to the survey and helped offer insight into what new classes should be offered to retirees. Classes will remain virtual until 2025.

Widger also mentioned that in terms of any potential changes to NYC healthcare, the matter is in the courts' hands, and we will be monitoring the courts decisions on the issue. There are 2 cases moving through the court. Appellate Division ruled that the city cannot make a change to Medicare for current retirees who were promised the benefit upon accepting employment with the city, but that it could make the change moving forward for current employees. The first Medicare Advantage Case is still pending before the Court of Appeals. This case is about offering Senior Care in addition to Medicare Advantage. The Healthcare Stabilization Fund managed by the city and the MLC will be depleted due to rising health care costs. The city needs to find a way to fund this annually. At this time, your healthcare remains unchanged. We will monitor the court's actions to ensure you are up to date.

June is Pride Month and DC 37 is hosting an Annual Virtual Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6pm. Please join us for our annual tradition by welcoming in Pride with members,

colleagues, and allies of DC 37. They will be joined by guest speaker Amanda Babine, Executive Director of Equality New York. Queens Pride Parade and Multicultural Festival - June 2, 2024, at Noon on 37th Ave, Jackson Heights. If you are interested in marching with us or joining DC 37's PDIG Committee, please email Jeff Oshins at [joshins@dc37.net](mailto:joshins@dc37.net). Info for Zoom link is on our Facebook page.

DC 37 is also hosting a weekend at Yankee Stadium. DC 37 members are eligible for discounted tickets to the Tampa Bay Rays vs. New York Yankees games on Friday, July 19 at 7:05 p.m. and Saturday, July 20 at 1:05 p.m. at Yankee Stadium. Each ticket includes an exclusive NY Yankees cap featuring the new DC 37 logo and a \$15 food and beverage voucher. You may purchase tickets at our Facebook page.

### **Financial Update from Deputy Administrator Terri Brady**

Terri Brady, Deputy Administrator of the DC 37 Retirees Association gave the financial report. The financial statements mentioned will be available on the Associations website. The statements are unaudited at this time. She noted that the chapter has modernized their finances by using Quick Books and electronic payments.

She said that the Association has \$305,342.94 in dues income and additional income from interest. In 2024, there is \$329,178.20 in expenses. Year to date income to deficit ratio: \$3,438.65. In the statement of Financial Position, there is a total equity of \$3,756,012.50.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Widger noted that we would follow up on any unanswered questions after the call. Anyone with further questions can call the Retirees Association office from 9:00AM - 5:00PM at 212-815-1781 or email [retassn@dc37.net](mailto:retassn@dc37.net). The meeting was adjourned.