



**November 2007**

## **MEA NEWSLETTER**

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**MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** The 07-08 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter MEA General Membership Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 13th at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium from 5pm-7pm. Actuary and pension expert Ira Summer from Public Pension Professionals, Inc., will update MEA members on the evolving discussions with the City about changes to retiree health care for future employees and potential retirement modifications to encourage longer service among current employees. In addition to Ira's comments, the agenda will include an update on the Management Training Fund's Equipment Program and an overview of the upcoming MEA strategic planning process. Light refreshments will be served.

### **CPR UPDATE: RETIREMENT REFORM: MAKING CHANGES THAT MAKE SENSE AND A DIFFERENCE TO EVERYONE**

Over the last five years city employees across the board have expressed a growing desire for a pension improvement. In late summer, at a meeting of the Public Employee's Committee of the San Francisco Labor Council, affiliated unions began discussing pensions and the word spread quickly throughout union halls and at City Hall.

Meanwhile, it has become apparent that the City plans to introduce a charter amendment that modifies retiree health benefits for new employees in order to reduce costs. They assert this is necessary because of new accounting rules (GASB 45) which require that any unfunded liability for retiree health care be reported - potentially impacting bond ratings. Supervisor Elsbernd - the City's point person on this issue - has made it clear that he views the City's five year retiree healthcare vesting rights as one area ripe for reform and is seeking to identify others.

This convergence of events presents a unique opportunity for labor to take the lead on a charter amendment that reduces retiree health care costs by making pension modifications that encourage longer service. Good public policy that is also good for workers.

In September the Coalition for Pension Reform (CPR) was formed to look at both retiree health care and pension reform as a single, interrelated challenge and opportunity. The

Coalition - which includes most of the affiliated public employee unions in San Francisco as well as POA and MEA – immediately identified as its number one priority ensuring that changes on the pension side are part of any GASB related charter amendment put on the ballot next June.

In anticipation of this campaign, all the unions have agreed, on a per capita basis, to contribute towards a “war chest” of approximately \$400,000. Actuaries specializing in both health and pension have been hired to work with us. The challenges are significant and time is short. Any ballot initiative for next June has to be before the Board of Supervisors by mid December with finalized language by late January to early February. CPR meetings are now being held on weekly basis and other discussions are taking place on several different levels to make that happen.

What is absolutely clear is that all of the unions are unified and committed to working together towards a resolution that is good for public employees in San Francisco, good public policy and that voters will support in 2008. Look for CPR Updates as this initiative progresses!

In addition to MEA, the Coalition for Pension Reform (CPR) includes:  
SEIU 1021, TWU Local 250-A, IFPTE Local 21, TWU Local 200, IAFF Local 798, IBEW Local 6, Machinists Local 1414, POA

**COURT EXTENSION:** MEA represented managers at the Courts have agreed to extend the MOU until April 30, 2008 and that decision has been affirmed by the MEA Board. Negotiations are set to begin in March.

**CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIP BAN DEFEATED:** In response to strong opposition from MEA and other unions, Supervisor Daly’s proposed ban on “romantic or sexual relationships” between managers and subordinates was defeated 10-1 at the Board’s November 20 meeting. In a letter to the Board, MEA stated “It should be clearly understood that our opposition is to what we view as an overly broad, unrealistic and intrusive ban on *consensual* relationships. Our support of strong policies prohibiting sexual harassment is unwavering, as is our belief that in those rare instances where managers become involved in consensual relationships with subordinates they should be vigilant in efforts to avoid even the appearance of impropriety....Although MEA shares your commitment to accountability and excellence in public service, we do not believe this issue or this policy moves us in the right direction.”

**IMS 2008:** The complete list of IMS Seminars for 2008 is now available on the MEA website.

<b>MEA Board:</b>	Mary Fitzpatrick, Treas	Sharyn Saslafsky	<b>Staff:</b>
Eileen Hirst, Pres	Cheryl Austin	Matt Smyth	Rebecca Rhine
David German, VP	Rafael Centeno	Bob Thomas	Bob Boileau
Carl Friedman, Secty	Jean Mariani	Darnisha Wright	

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