



ACRE Newsletter

<http://www.acrememphis.org>

Association of
City Retired Employees

Volume 2, Issue 5

September 2015

A Message from Our President

Fellow Members;

The last two years have been extremely frustrating for the Active and Retired workers of the City. There has not been one moment of compassion shown. September 1, 2015 the great non vote occurred letting a resolution pass that the Administration immediately stated it would not honor. In fact they stated it prior to the vote which is probably the reason 7 of the council chose to Abstain. To my knowledge the only time in the history of the council form of government this has occurred.

If the current Administration wins the election we can all look forward to more of the "Blame the employees and retirees for all our problems". We can look forward to more of the "Rich members of Memphis society" getting their pet projects approved regardless of any negative effects on the "lesser citizens".

Each of you has to take a hard look at your individual situation and start making plans for your families not only now for FY 2016 but also for FY 2017. Active Employees and Grandfathered Post 65 without Medicare or only Medicare A will face a high deductible plan in all probability beginning January 1, 2017. The entire plan will change, perhaps even the current subsidy this group is paying. ACRE and the other labor groups will have to work hard to try and get a lower premium for you to offset the High Deductible which could be as low as \$1,500 or much higher. If the premium does get reduced that savings is going to have to go into a HSA or HRA to help pay your HD. I am not trying to scare you, but inform you so you can start planning.

For us Post 65 with Medicare A&B things can change there also. The Federal Government from time to time authorizes premium increases for Supplemental Plans; Cigna will certainly pass

that on to all of us. .

Now for you Retirees who will turn 65 in the coming months and are qualified for Medicare A & B, you folks really have to make some hard decisions. Remember 3 months before your birth month, the birth month, and 3 months after [a total of 7 months] you have a Guaranteed Right to Enrollment in any approved Medicare Supplemental Plan that is offered in the State you reside. You can also get a Medicare Part D Rx supplement. So you don't have to buy the City Supplements. But, if you have a younger spouse who does not have insurance at their job, and are on the City plan you must keep the City Supplement Plan or Part D Rx plan for that spouse to be able to stay on the City Plan.

So you are 65 and leave the City Plan, your wife is 62, she will have to go get insurance somewhere else. You buy one of the City Medicare Supplement Plans and or Part D Rx plans then she

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Mike Lee, President

Vice President's Message

I am inviting all our members to attend our next Meeting. The Pre65's need to attend to get the latest information on their Health Care. Let's be aware that Open Enrollment is in October. See you on Wednesday September 16, 2015 at 10:00 am at the SCS Auditorium.

I am asking each member to continue to check with other retirees that are not members and to encourage them to join.

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas you may contact me at my ACRE email address:

vice.president@acrememphis.org or leave me a message at the ACRE Office at (901) 525-2615.

Richard McBryde, Vice President

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ACRE Officers:

- President: Mike Lee
- V. President: Richard McBryde
- Secretary: John Johnson
- Treasurer: Jim Nichols
- Chaplain: Jimmy Smith
- Public Relations: Tim Cook
- Sgt At Arms: Darrell White
- Legal Advisor: Clyde Keenan
- Healthcare: Francis Bradley
- Pensions: Dan Melancon
- Membership: Darrell White
- Membership: Doug Sanders
- Bob McCulley
- George Harris
- Set-up: Gary James
- Webmaster: Tim Cook



President's Message Continued

can stay on the City Plan with the current subsidy. Another "but" because that will become a high deductible plan in 2017.

Please pay attention to all the posts our Webmaster puts on the ACRE website, and the email "blasts" that are sent out. Pay attention to any Open Enrollment Materials you will get in the next few weeks, read and if you have questions call benefits immediately. Caregivers, check all City Documents sent and contact somebody if you have questions.

Also remember there are multiple Open Enrollments which could affect you. The **City OE** is October 12 through October 23, 2015. You Pre 65's that are not going to pay the 100% Access Only Premiums will have to drop during this period or your first check in December 2015 will reflect the higher premiums. When you Pre 65 leave the City you will also lose your Public Safety Officer Federal IRS deduction on your 1040 form.

The **Affordable Care Act OE is November 1, 2015 to January 31, 2015**. Enroll early to have coverage start January 1, 2016. Refuse to get coverage you will either have a penalty of 2.5% of your yearly income or have a \$695 per person penalty assessed when you file your next year taxes. You don't enroll by January 31, 2016 you can't enroll until the next year unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period. The Federal website www.Healthcare.gov has more information.

Those on Medicare A & B who have a Supplemental or Advantage Plan and/or with a Medicare Part D Rx plan the Federal Open Enrollment will be October 15, 2015 to December 7, 2015. Also be aware that the Doughnut Hole will again decrease for 2016. Go to www.medicarerights.org to see the phase out for Generic and name Brand drugs.

Tim Cook our webmaster will continue to post important updates and or send out via email updates ACRE feels you need to see. Be sure he has your latest email.

Finally Happy Birthday to ACRE it is 25 years old this September 2015. In 1990 a group of concerned retirees formed this group under its first President Jim Kellum. We who are following in their footsteps are trying to hold to the high standards they began. God Bless all of you.

Mike Lee, President

Healthcare Insurance Information

Attention Retirees: We have noticed that many of the questions that we are receiving have already been asked by some other Retiree. We want to remind you that the City of Memphis Benefits Office has created a website, www.benefitsmemphis.com, and on the Home Page at the top right side is a link, FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), click on this link and you will see thirty (30) + Questions that City Benefits has received and compiled with the Answers. You have to click on the Question to see the Answer.

A sample of one of the Questions and Answer is: Are there any premium increases for 2016? No premium increases have been proposed for 2016 in the city plans. The Federal Government may publish increases in the Medicare coverage plans, and if we hear of any information, we will be certain to inform you. Another sample Question and Answer is: If a Retiree opts out of the City's Medical Plan, will the right to re-enroll be lost forever? All Retirees currently enrolled in the City's Medical Plan will have the option to select a City Plan or an outside

plan during the regular Open Enrollment period in October 2015, without waiving the right to return to the City's coverage.

**Retirees, who opted out of the City's Plan, during previous years, may not be allowed to re-enroll in the future. Take a little time and go through these Questions and Answers and you will be better informed about your Healthcare Coverage with the City of Memphis. If you did not find the answer to your particular question, you can reach the City of Memphis' Health, Wellness and Benefits Office by email;

benefitsquestions@memphistn.gov or to speak to a representative, call [901-636-6800](tel:901-636-6800).

Some information for Retirees who have gone to Tri-Care Healthcare Insurance for the Military, they have created an Electronic Procedure where your Doctor can send your prescriptions to your pharmacy. Next Time You Go To Your Doctor, Ask your Doctor for an Electronic Prescription. That way it will be ready to pickup when you arrive at your pharmacy.

Francis Bradley, Healthcare Chairman



Healthcare Questions to City HR

This article contains a few questions we receive almost every day at ACRE. These questions were submitted to the City HR by ACRE President Mike Lee, and the reply is from Nila Carrington, the Benefits Operations Manager.

As always appreciate you reaching out to us. I think here at the City there may always be some exceptions. We are not having a "mandatory" open enrollment this year, meaning everyone will not have to come and fill out paperwork.

Those that want to make changes will need to, and as I get further into the details of Open Enrollment planning I may find some retirees we reach out to clarify the plan they are enrolled in to assure we have the data on the file correctly, or we have any eligibility paperwork that we need.

The Pre-65 population who wants to retain the City's Plan at 100% premium rates will need to verify with us that is their choice, so they will have to come in.

The tobacco surcharge and the spousal carve out are still in effect, as well as **anyone eligible for Medicare A and B needs to migrate to those plans and select a supplemental plan and a drug plan of their choice.** The "grandfathered" conditions from last year's retirees are still in effect.

***Please do remind everyone to look for and READ their open enrollment materials, and of course reach out to us with any questions.

Best,
Nila Carrington, City Of Memphis
Health, Wellness and Benefits,
Benefits Operations Manager
901-636-1384 (Office),
901-636-8486 (Fax)
901-512-2508 (Mobile)



ACRE Deaths

In Memory of OUR Retirees, we say goodbye to the following retirees. Their families are in our thoughts and prayers. Though they have left us, they are never forgotten:

- Freddie Hutchison/MFD
- James G. Ferguson/MPD
- Donald W. Guess/MFD
- Joe E. Caldwell/MFD
- Patricia J. Pierce/MPD
- M. Eddie Wood/MPD
- Patrick W. Howell, MFD

Membership Chairman's Comments

Members please keep your membership up-to-date, the expiration date is on your Membership Card or you can go to the ACRE Website and check your status. Be aware if you are more than 30 days past due; you can be removed from the rolls and you will

not get future newsletters. Thank you for your support of ACRE.

If you have any questions contact me at (901) 457-8487 or by email at drwsr@bellsouth.net.

Darrell R. White, Sr., Membership Chairman

Benevolence Committee sends Cards

The Benevolence Committee tries to send out Sympathy Cards and Getwell Cards when one of our members is in the hospital or dies. Their names are usually listed on our ACRE Website at www.acrememphis.org but

sometimes we have a need to mention others here in our newsletter Benevolence Committee article. Some times we miss someone and we want everyone to know we do try hard to list everyone.

If any of you know of some-

one we may have missed please call the ACRE Office and let us know. Also we depend on our members to let us know when they learn of a sickness and/or death.

*George Harris,
Benevolence Chairman*

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• **Our Fallen Heros** •

• **Foundation** •

• The *Memory Keepers* •

• *Monthly Luncheon* will •

• be Saturday, October •

• 3, 2015 at 11:00 am. •

• All Widows/Widowers •

• of Public Servants are •

• cordially invited. •

• Please **RSVP** by •

• September 18th to •

• (877) 424-9311. The •

• Luncheon will be held •

• this month at the Fire •

• Museum located at •

• 118 Adams !!! •

•.....



ACRE'S WEBSITE IS EXPANDING

The ACRE website is currently up and functioning as most retirees know. In the course of setting up Our Website, we learned we needed a way for Members to contact any Board Member or Committee Chairman concerning specific questions by email. All the Board Members and all of the Committee Chairmen now have an email address you can reach them at quickly.

If a member has a specific question or problem they can now email the specific Board Member handling that topic. For instance you can go to www.acrememphis.org click on *Information*, scroll to *Officers*, then scroll the page until you find the Officer you need to contact. Click on the **Officer's Name** and an email box will open with the Officer's email address already filled in. All you have to do is complete the Subject Line, write your email and hit send.

If you have a HealthCare question just go to the Health/Ins Page and review the topics for any specific question. We are constantly trying to update and improve that section of our website with the most current answers from the City Benefit's Of-

fice, especially during this Open Enrollment.

On the Home Page we have a New Information Section. When we get new and important information we place it here so everyone can access it quickly. Like the on the Healthcare Forums.

Another important aspect is the ACRE Email List. If you are on the email list you get important information quickly and in a timely manner. We try to get our members that are on this list information as fast as possible, and of course if we need your help you also hear about that quickly through our emails. If you are not signed-up please do so.

On Our Website we are trying to make it as user friendly and information friendly as possible. As new technology comes into our reach we will endeavor to incorporate it into your website to make it as easy as possible for you to get the information you want and need. If you have **any comments or ideas for your website** or information we are missing, please let us know, **we are here for you!**

Tim Cook, Webmaster

New Meeting Time 10:00am

The *ACRE Monthly General Meetings* are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of the month with a new start time changed from 11:00 am to 10:00 am. We were having scheduling difficulties with SCS concerning conflicting times. We also were having trouble with our Members being able to make the 11:00 am Meeting time, however we are happy to inform everyone of the new time and hopefully this will accommodate SCS, as well as our Members. This should allow our Members who live a little farther out from mid-town to be able to drive in after the main traffic rush in the mornings. This is not to say that in the future we will not encounter more scheduling changes, but for now we are okay. Of course the normal Board Meeting occurs before the General meeting, however due to scheduling problems the Board Meetings have been changed on a month by month basis to different times and locations. You can check the ACRE Online Calendar for any changes. **Remember 10:00 am !!!**

Gary James, Set-up Chairman

Public Relations Message

We **cannot** put everything we would like to in the printed and mailed Newsletter; so we have begun an electronic Newsletter that is emailed to everyone on the Email List and then posted on the ACRE Website. The electronic Newsletter has considerably more information in it for our Members. Please sign-up for the emails and check Our Website for more information. If you think we are not covering a topic as well as we should please send us an email at:

PublicRelations@acrememphis.org with your comments and suggestions.

Tim Cook, Public Relations



2 year Healthcare Roller Coaster Ride

The last two years have been a roller coaster ride in dealing with the healthcare and pension issues that was brought on by the city administration. Most all of ole retirees remember the Pipkin Roller Coaster out at the Fairgrounds. Standing on the ground it didn't seem that bad of a ride. So, we got on and then hung on as the ride took us up and down and jerked us around. We hung on for dear life thinking "when will this ever end." Well the ride came to the end and we survived. Some of us gained from the experience, some of us lost from it. But, we all survived. And as you all know, the roller coaster is still there and we eventually will have to ride it again. Who knows what the next issue will be.

Like most of the post-65 retirees with Medicare A & B, I had to go to a supplemental plan, and the premium for my wife and I nearly doubled. In the end I knew that no matter what happened, we were going to have insurance and we did. My wife and I give thanks to our Lord and Savior who helped us remain calm during this ordeal.

I want to thank all of the ACRE Board Members for all of the hard work that was put into this big mess and especially to Clyde Keenan for keeping us pointed in the right direction from a legal stand. And, I especially want to thank the membership for your continued support

John Johnson, Secretary

Retirees Pension goes into Hedge Funds

On Thursday, August 20, 2015, the Pension Finance Committee interviewed five (5) Hedge Fund Manager. The committee selected **two of the managers** that would receive **\$40 million** each to be invested in Hedge Funds. When asked if the Pension Board should be advised on all of the details how Hedge Funds are being handle along with the excessive annual maintenance fees and other associated fees, it was discovered that the Pension Board supposedly voted sometime last year in favor of involvement in Hedge Funds and the Mayor was now pushing involvement into Hedge Funds.

Whether these Hedge Funds will be profitable or another drain on the Pension Fund is yet to be seen. It is still the fact by City Ordinance that the Pension Board is supposed to have sole control and responsibility for the Pension Fund investments and not the Mayor and the Pension Finance Committee.

Addition information on these Hedge Funds and the side stepping the Pension Board by the City will be included in the ACRE Webpage when it becomes available.

Dan Melancon, Pension Chairman

Circuit Court lawsuit

Now that we know the Pre65 Retirees will be priced out of the City's Insurance the question has arisen as to whether there is any legal action that can be taken. There is a potential lawsuit, in Circuit Court, to challenge the City's actions. However, since we have not been able to get the Courts to certify these cases as a "**class action**" it will be necessary for each individual to be listed as a "**named plaintiff**". Although doing this for several hundred retirees is not impossible, it is complicated and expensive. We will have a detailed discussion of this issue at the next regular Membership Meeting.

Clyde Keenan, Legal Advisor .

Abridged Treasurer's Report

The first 8 months of 2015 showed us with \$13,336.00 budgeted for our operating expenses where \$10,822.25 was actually spent, leaving us \$2,513.75 in the black. However, if we have to go into our Legal Fund for litigation against the City of Memphis, we could deplete our funds very quickly. So, please keep paying your ACRE Dues and if you can add a little more for our Legal Fund, please do.

If anyone has any information on a retiree in the hospital or who has recently died, please notify the ACRE Office so we can help make sure the *widow/widower* gets everything they are entitled too. The ACRE Office phone number is (901) 525-2615 and is answered 24/7 by an elected Officer of ACRE, unless we are in a Meeting or helping another member; in which case you will be called back as soon as possible!

Jim Nichols, Treasurer .

Your Pension Information

Currently (July2015) the City of Memphis Pension Fund has approximately 87.23% of its funding liabilities which is only (3) three percentage points lower than the State of TN Pension Fund at 91%. Price Waterhouse Corp. (PWC) reported in 2014 the City of Memphis Pension Liabilities at 2.53 billion. If the City of Memphis were to raise its contributions to match the 91% points of Pension funding by the State of TN, then the City of Memphis would need to add an additional **(20 million dollars)** contribution to its Pension Fund not the **(600 million dollars)** as declared by the City of Memphis

It is not reasonable to believe that the State of TN would initiate an ultimatum towards the City of Memphis for being only (3) three percentage points beneath the State's own standards. If you have any questions or concerns please call the office or email me at dmelancon2@gmail.com

Dan Melancon, Pension Chairman

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send dues to: A.C.R.E.
638 Jefferson Avenue
Memphis, TN 38105

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ HPhone _____ Cell _____

Dept. retired from _____ Year _____

(Check one) New Applicant _____ or Renewal _____

Your Spouse's name _____

Email address _____

Extra amount for Legal Fund enclosed _____

Today's Date (MM/DD/YY): _____

DUES: \$25.00 PER FISCAL YEAR
(or \$15.00 for surviving spouse)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PART IN ACRE!

CITY OF MEMPHIS PENSION FUND MONTHLY TOTALS

2011	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	\$1.969	\$2.006	\$2.004	No Rpt	\$2.012	\$2.000	\$1.986	\$1.899	\$1.785	No Rpt	\$1.876	\$1.886
	78.76%	80.24%	80.16%		80.48%	80.00%	79.44%	75.96%	71.40%		75.04%	75.44%
2012	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	\$1.858	No Rpt	\$1.997	\$1.998	\$1.896	\$1.922	\$1.934	\$1.955	\$1.985	\$1.965	\$1.950	\$1.970
	74.32%		79.88%	79.92%	75.84%	76.88%	77.36%	78.20%	79.40%	78.60%	78.00%	78.80%
2013	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	\$2.034	\$2.036	\$2.075	\$2.116	\$2.107	\$2.039	\$2.069	\$2.053	\$2.116	\$2.174	\$2.183	\$2.203
	81.36%	81.44%	83.00%	84.64%	84.28%	81.56%	82.76%	82.12%	84.64%	86.96%	87.32%	88.12%
2014	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	\$2.162	\$2.221	\$2.209	\$2.198	\$2.222	\$2.245	\$2.206	\$2.240	\$2.175	\$2.196	\$2.206	\$2.191
	85.45%	87.78%	87.31%	86.88%	87.83%	88.74%	87.19%	88.54%	85.97%	86.80%	87.19%	86.60%
2015	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	\$2.171	\$2.228	\$2.217	\$2.235	\$2.252	\$2.201	\$2.207					
	85.81%	88.06%	87.63%	88.34%	89.01%	87.00%	87.23%					