

BROWARD 10-13 CLUB

An organization of retired New York City Police Officers

April, 2011



THE BLOTTER



Next General Meeting May 3rd, 2011

Focal Point Senior Center 6009 NW 10th Street, Margate Florida 33063

Meeting starts at 7:00 PM Sharp

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Frank J. Orefice

50/50

Martin Finkelstein



The Presidents' Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I would like to thank all of our members who participated in the Fort Lauderdale's St. Paddy's Day Parade. Our club was well represented. Leading the charge was our very own RMP, followed by our uniform honor guard and the proud members of the club with their families.

I must single out certain members of the club who went above and beyond the call of duty making this St. Paddy's day one of the finest parades we ever marched in. Past President Ron Kavanagh and his lovely girlfriend Wanda and Ron's family, Past President Frank Tooley and his lovely wife Commissioner Becky Tooley, Treasurer Frank Orefice and Past President and currently our Vice President Mike Borrelli. If there is anybody I left out like Tim Kennedy, I apologize.

News coming out of New York has taken a holiday. Nothing has changed as of now. Medicare Part "B" reimbursement checks will be arriving in the mail in August. VSF/Define Benefit checks will be arriving in the mail in December. The snow birds will be traveling back North. The wait in line for the early bird special will be reduced and we can now find a parking spot in the lot. Have a safe trip traveling!

Social Security recipients have not received a COLA in their checks for the past two years. We all know that Medicare Part "B" premiums are going to rise in 2012. There has been a COLA increase every year from 1975 through 2009. There were no raises in 2010 or 2011. Next year, the trustees who oversee Social Security project a 1.2 percent COLA. President Obama is projecting a COLA increase of 0.9. The average increase would be between \$10 and \$13. Let's not forget the rise in the 2012 Medicare Part "B" premium's.

Telephone numbers to keep Handy

Your Broward Board

Alan Berkowitz, President 954-816-8163
 Mike Borrelli, V. President 954-574-0365
 Warren Ostrofsky, Sec. 954-651-2004
 Frank J. Orefice, Treas. 954-977-3880
 Thomas Puglisi, Sgt. AA 954-341-4095
 Martin Finkelstein, Dir. 954-234-0042
 William Gallagher, Dir 954-977-0616
 Tim Kennedy, Dir. 954-263-0798
 Dennis Lydting, Dir 954-973-3083
 Christine McIntyre, Dir. 561-477-9604
 Frank Tooley, Dir. 954-972-5983
 Rick Braswell, Chaplain 954-321-4111
 Rabbi J. Kaplan, Chaplain 954-346-5030
 Dr. John Halpern, Surgeon 954-553-1065
 Joe Scimeca, Honor Guard 954-340-7967
 Lou Weiser, Pensions 954-718-9739

PAST PRESIDENTS

PAUL MANNINO 1981
 SY Silver** 1982
 Bill Schilling** 1983
 Ray McDonnell** 1984/5
 Mike Borrelli 1986/95/96
 Ron Kavanagh 1987/88/92
 Paul Barasch 1989
 Bill Bett** 1990
 Paul Levy** 1990/91
 Frank Tooley 1993/94
 Richard Lapp 1997/98
 Robert Izzo 1999/00
 Alan Berkowitz 2001/08
 Louis Weiser 2009/10
 Alan Berkowitz 2011/

****DENOTES DECEASED**



Police & City Numbers

PBA NY Office 1-212-233-5531
 DEA NY Office 1-212-587-9120
 PBA Toll free 1-877-844-5842
 SBA 1-212-226-2180
 LBA/CEA 1-212-964-7500
 LBA/SOC 1-212-964-7500
 ID card Section 1-646-610-5150
 PBA Brwd Satellite 954-977-3880
 Social Security 1-800-772-1213
 Blue Cross of NY 1-800-433-9592
 NYC Health Line 1-800-521-9574
 Operations (Death) 1-646-610-5580
 Medicare 1-800-633-4227
 VA benefits Assist 1-800-827-1000

Employee Health 1-212-306-7600
 1-212-513-0470
 1-212-206-7300
Article 2 Pension 1-866-692-7733

Health & Welfare 1-212-608-9671
 1-212-693-5100

Health Insurance & Eyeglasses
 GHI 1-800-358-5500
 Empire Blue Cross 1-800-433-9592
 Davis Vision 1-800-999-5431

WEB SITES

www.broward10-13club.com
 Medicare www.medicare.gov
 Veterans Admin www.va.gov
 Social Security www.ssa.gov

Taps for departed members

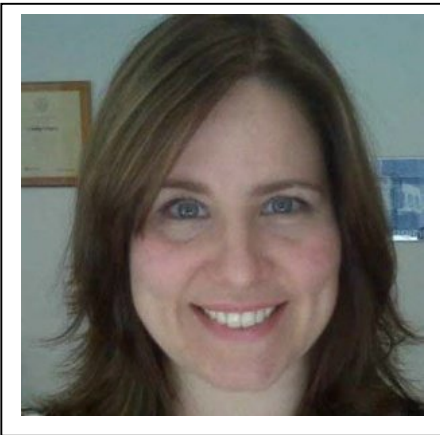
Remember 911 and those who gave their Lives for their country

10-13



Mike sics watchdog on pension abusers

By DAVID SEIFMAN City Hall Bureau Chief



Watch out, "Johnny Lungs," there's a new sheriff for the city's pension system.

Mayor Bloomberg is beefing up oversight of the \$113 billion retirement program by appointing a veteran city lawyer to the new post of chief pension administrator with a mandate to crack down on disability abuses, The Post has learned.

Carolyn Wolpert said one of her first tasks in the newly created position would be to overhaul an unworkable "safeguard statute" that makes it difficult for the city to go after retirees with disability pensions who are found to actually be fit for work.

The Post has documented repeated cases where retirees collecting hefty tax-free disability pensions appeared to be in great shape, including FDNY Lt. John McLaughlin, who was dubbed "Johnny Lungs" after he retired on an \$86,000 disability pension in 2001.

Despite his disability, McLaughlin was still able to compete in the New York City Marathon and triathlons since 2002. Joseph Giuffrida, a former firefighter who left in 2003 with lung problems, was discovered last year to be competing in mixed martial-arts matches. He's collecting a \$74,624 pension after 12 years of service.

Under the current rule, the city can recall employees who retire on three-quarters disability to determine if they've become fit for duty. The big problem, however, is the statute requires the city to rehire anyone found capable of returning to work, even if their old job is filled.

"We can bring people back," explained Wolpert. "If we find they're not disabled, we have to put them back to work. That stinks for everyone. The city doesn't save any money, and a retired firefighter doesn't want to become a clerk in Sanitation." Currently, the only time the city can yank a disability pension is if an employee refuses to appear at a hearing. Wolpert knows her way around the system as deputy chief of the Law Department's Pensions Division since 2005.

Her appointment comes seven months after the mayor named Ranji Nagaswami as the city's first chief investment adviser and chairwoman of the New York City Employees Retirement System, the largest of the five pension funds. One insider said Bloomberg intends to take more control of the pension system, which will cost taxpayers an estimated \$8.4 billion next year, up from \$1.5 billion in 2001.

"Historically, this has been an issue dominated by the comptroller's office," noted the insider. "We're now adding more support due to the fact we're paying the bills." Comptroller John Liu is widely viewed as a strong ally of municipal unions, whose leaders hold half the seats on the pension boards.

A report by the State Financial Control Board last week said pension bills account for 48 percent of the city's total fringe benefit costs and represent almost 11 percent of total city expenditures of \$65.9 billion this year.

Eliminating Police, Fire VSF Benefits Unjustified



As former chairman of the City Council’s Finance Committee and an investment banker, let me try to clear up some of the confusion surrounding the increasingly fashionable political attacks on public-sector-employee benefits, particularly as they relate to an issue attracting much public discussion lately, both at City Hall and in the corridors of the State Legislature—the Variable Supplements Fund (VSF) pension benefit for New York City police officers and firefighters.

Anyone familiar with the history of New York City police officer and firefighter labor and investment issues can see that a campaign to eliminate the VSF is, at best, the product of a fundamental misunderstanding of that benefit and of the tremendous value the city has reaped in concessions by the unions.

At worst, it is an unconscionable attempt to steal money from the pension fund and go back on a series of negotiated settlements with police officers and firefighters, many of whom have already given their full service to this city.

The VSF began with a collective bargaining agreement in 1968 when the city agreed to create a variable supplement retirement benefit fund for police officers in return for the unions allowing the city to invest their members’ pension funds in equity securities rather than lower-yield bonds. The increased returns from these investments, it was thought, would reduce the city’s required pension contributions while excess earnings above a benchmarked rate of return would fund the benefit. Originally, the amount of the benefit for police officers and firefighters was theoretically unlimited, depending primarily on the level of stock market returns.

In the 1980s, equity earnings rose dramatically, producing almost \$1 billion in excess earnings to the VSF. Sensing a fundamental change in stock-market performance, the city wanted to use this bonanza for other budgetary purposes and urged the unions to modify the earlier agreement by granting the city the right to take 15 percent of the assets of the VSF—more than \$100 million—and allowing the city to derive the full benefit of those equity earnings in the future. In exchange for this and other contract concessions, the city promised to fund a limited defined benefit for each police officer and firefighter upon retirement, starting at \$2,500 per year and increasing by \$500 each year until it reached the maximum \$12,000 in 2007. The economic benefit to the city was tremendous—\$4 billion, by some estimates—and celebrated by city officials involved in the negotiations as one of the signature achievements of the Koch administration.

Now the city wants to unilaterally repudiate those labor agreements by taking money from a fund that doesn’t belong to it, a fund owned by police officers and firefighters. That would clearly be unfair and

inequitable and establish a bad precedent. The city has benefited handsomely from these collectively-bargained agreements, and should honor the obligations it assumed under them.

Paying these benefits is not likely to cost the city any budget expenditures—these funds have been self-sufficient for almost two decades. Dishonoring the city’s obligation would be fundamentally unfair because police officers and firefighters have honored their agreement by providing faithful service day in and day out, most dramatically on and after 9/11. They fulfilled their obligation to serve and protect with the understanding that the terms of the agreement with the city which included these supplemental retirement benefits would be honored. And now many are relying on these benefits to support themselves in their retirement years.

New York City police officers and firefighters have already had their pension benefits unilaterally altered, in 2009, when new employees were placed in the new pension Tier III. I have studied the issue of police compensation over the years and know that their pension benefits are part of a compensation package that places police officers among the lowest-paid among comparable jurisdictions. With further pension cuts, we are running the risk of damaging two of the most efficient and effective agencies in city government. Let’s put aside issues like this one that will serve only to undermine the credibility of government and get on to the serious work at hand. *Mr. Weprin is a State Assemblyman representing Queens.*



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Broward 10-13 Club Meeting dates for 2011

<u>Apr</u>	<u>Sept.6th</u>
<u>May 3rd</u>	<u>Oct. 4th</u>
<u>June 7th</u>	<u>Nov. 1st</u>
<u>July No Meeting</u>	<u>Dec. 6th</u>
<u>Aug. No Meeting</u>	

All times are at 7:00 PM

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Daughter of a 10-13 Member

IRA Moves and the Case Against 'Pension Max'

By JOEL FRANK The Chief



Q.: I have recently inherited my sister's Individual Retirement Account (IRA). I would like to roll this account over to the New York City Employee's IRA Program (NYCE IRA). Is this feasible, and must I continue to make minimum withdrawals from the new account? P.Z.

A.: As an employee of the city, you may roll over all of your pre-tax retirement accounts to the NYCE IRA. Due to the fact that you are a non-spouse beneficiary of an inherited IRA, you must continue to make the required withdrawals from the rollover account. You can download the required forms and/or call the Deferred Comp office for assistance.

Q.: I have \$25,000 in an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). I have my eye on a few antiques and would like to purchase them with my IRA money. Does the law allow for this kind of investment? J.K.

A.: No, it does not. IRA investments are limited to the intangible items like stocks, bonds, mutual funds, bank accounts and variable annuities. While real estate may be placed inside of an IRA, there are strict rules that apply. **Q.:** Some of us retirees have been talking about the possibility that the state and city governments may very well resort to cutting our pensions. This possibility is very unsettling to say the least. Mr. Frank, what do you think? O.W.

A.: In my view this will not happen. During the deep, dark days of the Great Depression, the State and City of New York honored their pension payrolls in full. Economically we are in much better shape than we were in the 1930s. In fact, the government has told us that the Great Recession ended a number of months ago. Keep your chin up.

Q.: I am a Teacher who will be retiring on July 1, 2011. My wife of 44 years has never worked outside the home. I am planning to take "maximum" and purchase a \$600,000 life-insurance policy for her benefit, should she outlive me. What do you think?

A.: I think it's a bad idea. This type of proposal was thought up by the life-insurance sales sharks' decades ago as a way to sell life insurance policies to people like you; not as a way to guarantee a stream of monthly income that your survivor cannot outlive. Your plan is called "pension max." This means you, the member of the retirement system, will elect the maximum pension and purchase a significant amount of life insurance instead of electing an option from the TRS that will generate a lifetime income for your wife should she survive you. The idea being that upon your death, your pension dies with you but your wife will receive \$600,000 to invest.



Prescription Drug Abuse and Misuse – Broward County Update

A Message from Sheriff Al Lamberti

Dear Residents and Business Owners:

Throughout the last several years, sharp increases in prescription drug abuse and its related criminal activity have brought enormous challenges to our community. Sadly, we have seen the sprawl of pain clinics emerge – these clinics are often referred to as pill mills. With more pain clinics than McDonald's in our community – Broward County is ground zero for pill mills and the damage they cause.

While many of these clinics masquerade as legitimate businesses, they really are a main source of drug diversion. Diversion is the use of prescription drugs for recreational use – “diverting” the drugs from their original purpose. The influx of pill mills have caused large supplies of dangerous narcotic substances to be made available in our community, which has ultimately led to increased incidents of drug trafficking, addictions and fatal overdoses.

In response to the overall problem, the Broward Sheriff's Office acted quickly by imposing a multi-pronged approach to combat the problem. Last year I announced our vigorous enforcement efforts. These actions focus on the fight against prescription drug diversion.

Through consistent, multi-jurisdictional, intelligence-led enforcement, BSO has played a major role in curtailing diversion activities in South Florida. The proof that our enforcement is working is evident in the numbers. Last year our deputies and detectives seized more than 300,000 prescription narcotics and seized an astonishing \$10 million in drug money.

With nearly 11,000 individuals arrested on drug-related charges, more than 65% were related to illegal pharmaceutical trafficking.

While enforcement is extremely important and absolutely necessary, I also understand that we cannot arrest our way out of this problem. With that in mind, our agency successfully acquired a grant – Operation Medicine Cabinet – which allows us to also focus on education, awareness and safe drug disposal.

More than 3,000 residents of Broward County have participated in education events. Survey results have consistently concluded that the program is making a positive impact. Those who benefited include: public and private school children, school faculty and administrators, law enforcement professionals, health care professionals, students and their parents, parent-teacher associations, non-profit organizations, religious groups and seniors.

The drug take back initiative has been another useful resource to curtail the misuse of prescription drugs. Since evidence shows that many children will experiment with drugs found in the

home, we are providing opportunities for individuals to dispose of unused, unwanted and expired medications that may be stacked up in their medicine cabinets. To date, we have collected and destroyed over 28,000 dosage units of controlled prescription drugs. These are dangerous, addictive pain killers, stimulants and central nervous system depressants that, if misused, could cause great injury or death.

Many non-controlled medications can be harmful and through our efforts, we have collected more than 141,000. These take back events take place throughout the year. I encourage you to visit www.sheriff.org/OMC to locate and participate in a prescription drug take back event taking place near you.

An instrumental person to our Operation Medicine Cabinet program is BSO's Sergeant Richard Pisanti. For the last six months Sgt. Pisanti was assigned to work within the White House's Office of National Drug Policy in Washington D.C. During his assignment, Sgt. Pisanti worked on the prescription drug abuse problem at the highest levels of government.

He incorporated the prescription drug abuse prevention efforts we have put forth here in Broward County and implemented them into the current administration's National Drug Strategy. I congratulate Sgt. Pisanti on this outstanding achievement and welcome him back to Broward County to continue his work in prescription drug enforcement and education.

If you or someone you know is suffering from addiction, there is help available – call Broward County's 2-1-1 helpline for guidance and resources.

Stay safe!

Sheriff Al Lamberti

All Points Bulletin Radio Show

You can listen to the All Points Bulletin Radio Show with Sheriff Al Lamberti every Sunday from 2:00-3:00 p.m. on WWNN 1470 AM radio or online at www.wwnnradio.com.

A General Guide for the Widow/er of a Retired Member of the Service

Few situations in life are more stressful than when a spouse passes. All too often we have a difficult time focusing on the issues at hand and need guidance to get the deceased affairs in order. The following is a general guide for the widow/er regarding **IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS** that must be made by the surviving spouse and **INFORMATION** you should have **ON HAND** on hand when a **RETIREE DIES**.

· Notify the NYC Police Pension Fund either in writing or by telephone.

The address is; 233 Broadway, 25th Floor

New York, New York 10279

Attention: Retiree Death Benefits Unit

Telephone (212) 693-5607/5919

(For members appointed AFTER June 30, 1940 and for members who merged from Transit/Housing as of May 1995).

· You will have to provide the DECEASED FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST NAME, the DATE of DEATH, SOCIAL SECURITY number, NEXT of KIN as well as the executor/trix of the estate and his/her address and phone number.

· To complete our records you will need a COPY of the WILL , a copy of the PAID FUNERAL BILL, the *original* or CERTIFIED COPY of the DEATH CERTIFICATE AND a certified copy of your MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE as well as YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.

These documents are necessary for any benefits that might be due you as per the member chosen options.

**** For Members appointed PRIOR to July 1, 1940, you will have to contact the New York City Police Department at 1 Police Plaza, New York 10038, telephone number (646) 610-8073/74 the Audits and Accounts Section Article 1.**

· Contact the appropriate UNION for a possible existing life insurance policy and also for continuation of optional benefits, if qualified.

Police Officers- Patrolmen's Benevolent Assoc. (P.B.A) (212) 233-5531

Detectives-Detectives' Endowment Assoc. (D.E.A.) (212) 587-9120

****Sergeants- Sergeant's Benevolent Assoc. (S.B.A.) (212) 431-6555****

Lieutenants and above-Superior Officers Council (S.O.C) (212) 964-7500

· Contact the NYC HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM for Special Continuation of coverage application (coverage for life) located at 40 Rector Street, 3rd Floor, New York 10006 (212) 513-0470.

· Contact the NYPD OPERATIONS UNIT located at One Police Plaza, telephone # (646) 610-5580, for pall bearers (all five boroughs, all of Long Island and Upstate New York but not beyond Dutchess County).

There are no words of comfort at such a difficult time, however if you have all the necessary information at the ready it will expedite any claim that is pending, make the process run smoothly and your stress level can be minimized.

Your Social Security

By DAVID BROWN The Chief



Millions of taxpayers are busy gathering all the forms and documents they need to file their Federal, state, and local tax returns. If you receive Social Security benefits, one of those items may be your SSA-1099 from Social Security.

Some people who receive Social Security may have to pay taxes on a portion of their benefits. If you're one of these individuals, a Social Security Benefit Statement (Form SSA-1099) is an important tax document for you to have.

Social Security mailed the SSA-1099s for tax year 2010 to all beneficiaries in January. If you receive Social Security and need a replacement SSA-1099 for 2010 in order to file a tax return, you can request it on-line at www.socialsecurity.gov/i1099.

The SSA-1099 shows the total amount of benefits received in the previous year and is used to find out if any Social Security benefits are subject to tax. The Federal tax laws about Social Security benefits provide that:

- Up to 50 percent of Social Security benefits may be subject to Federal income tax for individuals with a combined income between \$25,000 and \$34,000, or for couples with a combined income between \$32,000 and \$44,000; and
- Up to 85 percent of Social Security benefits may be subject to Federal income tax for individuals with a combined income above \$34,000, or for couples with a combined income above \$44,000. (Note: "Combined income" means adjusted gross income, plus nontaxable interest, plus one-half of Social Security benefits.)

For more information on taxation of Social Security benefits, visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov.

To request a replacement SSA-1099, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/i1099.

Mr. Brown is District Manager of the Social Security Administration's Downtown New York Office.

Mayor Stung by the Truth

RICHARD STEIER the Chief

The full-scale rebuttal by the city's largest police and fire unions to Mayor Bloomberg's assault on the Variable Supplements Funds has placed him in the uncomfortable position of having to insist he has not been a liar about the pension-related benefit. What makes it particularly uncomfortable is that Mr. Bloomberg can't offer much in the way of facts to defend himself.

His crusade against the benefit began two years ago in a New York Post article that clearly was engineered by his administration. It ran under a headline labeling the payments "Christmas bonuses," because most recipients get the \$12,000 checks in December. The Mayor liked the phrase so much that he has continued to use it himself.

As his administration cast it, the benefit resulted from the police and fire unions hornswoggling two different Mayors into giving their members an outrageous sweetener. The problem with that claim is that both cases involved fair trades. A dozen years ago, when the stock market was booming, it seemed the city had gotten much the best of the second deal, so much so that a column in this newspaper, under the headline "Gored by a Bull Market," pointed out that the city was \$4 billion better off as a result of the 1988 VSF trade-in than it would have been had it continued to plow excess stock-investment profits into the unions' funds.

Mr. Bloomberg has looked to skip over that history to instead dwell on tougher recent times in explaining why the benefit is unaffordable. He has also claimed in an interview with Post columnist Michael Goodwin that ran Sunday that expecting the pension funds to average returns of 8 percent a year was "patently ridiculous. Bernie Madoff is the only one I ever knew that could guarantee 8 percent a year."

This is Mr. Bloomberg at his most disingenuous, using a willing interviewer to offer a clever analogy that doesn't hold up under close scrutiny. Mr. Madoff was actually claiming slightly larger profits year in and year out, as if his investment choices were immune to the ebbs and flows of the stock market. The assumption rate for the city's pension funds is set by a Chief Actuary, Robert North, who does not get rich by swindling clients and bases his estimate on long-term trends that are designed to smooth out the peaks and valleys. A coalition that includes the National League of Cities and the National Conference of State Legislatures commissioned a study that recently found that over the past 25 years, public pension funds nationwide showed an annual average return of 9.25 percent. That period included strong stock-market performance in the mid-1980s that was abruptly halted by the crash of October 1987, and both the golden years of the late 1990s and the awful ones of the past

decade. Add them all up, and the return still topped the projection Mr. Bloomberg calls “patently ridiculous.”

The Mayor also offers a false choice in arguing that if the VSF isn’t eliminated for even the retirees already receiving it, the city will be forced to lay off up to 10,000 Teachers. The idea of removing the benefit for retirees is so unpalatable, from both a political and a moral standpoint, that both the Daily News and the Post—which otherwise have been willing passengers on Mr. Bloomberg’s anti-pension train—have told him to back off and just focus on ending the payment for future hires. Doing so, however, takes away the immediate billion-dollar projected savings he claims could keep the teaching force from devastation. So is he really going to lay off that many people and risk gutting the modest gains his administration has made in education over the past nine years?

For that matter, why is the dialogue supposed to pivot on city services depending on union benefit concessions? Doesn’t Wall Street, whose profligate behavior created the financial crisis, have a vested interest in a well-educated potential labor force, and can’t its barons better afford to pay a bit more, rather than Mr. Bloomberg having to beat the money out of retired cops and firefighters?

And underlying his attempted raid on the VSF is a significant hypocrisy. He has asked Albany to give the city the right to directly negotiate with the unions on pensions rather than imposing unfunded mandates that result from key legislators’ alliances with prominent labor leaders. The truth is that most substantial pension legislation, including the 1999 and 2000 changes that later forced the city to dig increasingly deep into its pockets to fund the systems after making negligible contributions a decade ago, have grown out of negotiations between labor and management. That is also true of the VSF payments. Yet the Mayor is asking Albany to unilaterally strip the VSF from those who receive it, rather than talking directly to the unions as the city did in 1968 and 1988.

The more closely his tactics are looked at, the greater the likelihood that legislators focus on the rebound in pension fund performance over the past 18 months and realize that if it continues for an extended period, the city’s pension contributions are going to begin dropping within a couple of years, making that expenditure less of a drain on the municipal budget.

There is some reason for concern that people are living longer on average than a generation ago, putting added pressure on the funds by requiring them to pay benefits longer. Issues like raising the retirement age and reducing the impact that overtime earnings during the final years of service have on pension allowances deserve serious consideration; other portions of Mr. Bloomberg’s agenda, and especially his VSF raid, do not.

Now that the unions have begun to aggressively get their story out, rather than simply issuing press releases in response to the distortions peddled by the Mayor and his allies, the decision-makers in Albany should be able to separate truth from fiction.

[Enraged NYPD, FDNY unions cast Bloomberg as greedy 'liar' out to 'steal' pensions](#)

BY [ERIN EINHORN](#) AND [JONATHAN LEMIRE](#)
DAILY NEWS CITY HALL BUREAU



The rank-and-file police and fire unions angrily stepped up their attacks on [Mayor Bloomberg](#) Wednesday, slamming Hizzoner as a "liar" who is trying to "steal" their pension benefits. Using searing rhetoric unusual in its vitriol, the uniformed service unions blasted Bloomberg's attempts to eliminate the annual \$12,000 Variable Supplement Fund payout.

"The mayor of the [City of New York](#) has made statements that are completely untrue," said [Steve Cassidy](#), head of the [Uniformed Firefighters Association](#). "He's lying about the facts. What they are saying is patently false."

"As we approach the 10th anniversary of 9/11," Cassidy said, "Mike Bloomberg wants to say to firefighters and police officers who were there that day and didn't die, 'I'm going to steal money from your pocket.'"

Bloomberg, who has steadily agitated for pension reform, has said the city can no longer afford the \$12,000 benefit, which is paid out each December.

"Nobody wants to get cut back, I understand that," said Bloomberg at a different event Wednesday. "We have to make a decision: do we want to send out Christmas bonuses or have more teachers?"

The union heads slammed Bloomberg for repeatedly referring to the payout as a bonus and for framing the budget as a choice between paying the \$12,000 or laying off teachers.

"It's insulting to pit union workers - hard-working teachers and firefighters and police officers - against each other," said [Pat Lynch](#), head of the Patrolman's Benevolent Association. "That's a game they're playing."

"People who read the papers or listen to the mayor's radio show walk away thinking that cops and firemen have a Christmas bonus," said Cassidy. "That's a lie! It's a negotiated deal." "If he wants to change the date from just before Christmas, we'll move it up to July," Cassidy said.

More than 30,000 retired cops and firefighters receive the bonus, which was established in 1968 when the unions gave the city several million dollars to invest in the stock market. Twenty years later, the

deal was turned into a "defined benefit" which guaranteed the retirees \$12,000 a year no matter how the market fluctuated. The unions estimate the city has made \$4 billion from the fund since 1988.

Unlike other pension benefits, the \$12,000 payout is not constitutionally protected - so Bloomberg has appealed to [Albany](#) to scrap it, suggesting it would save the city \$200 million a year.

Though Cassidy is a frequent critic of Bloomberg, Lynch's union supported Hizzoner for his third term. But Lynch sounded a different note at the Wednesday rally on the City Hall steps. "We did endorse him in the past election," Lynch said, "but we're calling him a liar today because he's saying lies out in the public."

TO ALL DELEGATES AND MEMBERS

The PBA is challenging Mayor Bloomberg's shameful proposals to eviscerate our long-standing, legislatively approved pension benefits and collectively bargained variable supplement funds. In solidarity with all six other police and fire unions, we will use every legal, legislative and public relations resource at our disposal to fight these blatant attempts to undo the promises that were made to us when we were hired.

In an outrageous move, the mayor's labor commissioner went before the Municipal Labor Committee on Wednesday, Feb. 2, and proposed making wholesale changes to the pension system that would drastically reduce or eliminate the pension and VSF benefits that we have been promised and have every right to expect.

You should be aware that these drastic changes are just mayoral proposals and cannot be unilaterally implemented without enactment by the Legislature.

What the mayor has studiously ignored is the fact that these benefits were bought and paid for at the bargaining table and in arbitrations, that the unions sacrificed compensation and gave the city \$100 million up front for these benefits, and that the city reaped billions in surplus pension earnings from the agreements during the boom years of the 1990s.

In exchange, our members were promised these benefits, and now Bloomberg wants to renege on agreements made by himself and his predecessors. We won't stand for it.

The dramatic increase in the city's return on its pension-fund investments reminds us of the cyclical nature of the market. We must remember that during boom times the city benefited to the tune of billions of dollars in earnings taken in exchange for the defined benefits for our members. Viewed over the long term, the pension funds are much more stable than the city portrays.

The mayor's demand that the State Legislature transfer its authority to approve public pensions to his administration should be rejected. His latest proposals to gut our pension benefits show, as I've said before, that he can't be trusted to honor a negotiated deal when it becomes politically inconvenient for his administration.

Furthermore, police and fire pensions and other benefits, bought and paid for over the bargaining table decades ago, are in no way responsible for the state and city's budget problems. And to use them as scapegoats for cyclical budget shortfalls is a cynical and politically motivated betrayal of the contract-negotiating process and of the public trust. Besides that, it's shortsighted, ill considered, misdirected, counter-productive and, ultimately, a threat to public safety.

Drastic reductions in well-earned pension compensation can only result in police and fire recruitment problems – something the city can ill afford. We're down 6,000 police officers and we're losing 1,000 more. And these are the very same police officers that were responsible for the historic crime-rate decreases. This is no time to add disincentives for people to aspire to police and safety careers.

Finally, it's fiscally unsound to balance the budget at the expense of public safety, and that's what these proposals would do. Low crime rates and fire safety are the engines that drive the city's economy. With tourism at an all-time high, does the city really want to risk recruitment problems and a further spike in crime at a time when crime is already on the rise?

There are other, more sensible ways to solve the city's fiscal problems, including an effort to secure additional funding from the Department of Homeland Security and other federal sources. And we would suggest to the mayor that he look at cutting the waste from the workings of his own administration. How about the staggering \$722 million – and counting – that has been wasted on his City Time time-tracking system?

As I said, we will use every resource and power that we have to fight these regressive and unfair pension-gutting proposals and to make sure that the finest police officers on earth are not reduced to second-class citizens in the law enforcement community, and that the promises made to them when they were hired are kept to the fullest. We will keep you informed as the battle progresses. For examples of media coverage associated with this issue, click on the accompanying links.

PBA press releases: [2/2/11](#) and [1/19/11](#)
1010 WINS [morning](#) and [afternoon](#) 2/3/11
[Wall Street Journal](#) 2/3/11
[The Chief-Leader](#) 1/31/11
[Gotham Gazette](#) 1/21/11
[Newsday](#) 1/19/11
[International Business Times](#) 1/19/11

Fraternally,
Patrick J. Lynch
President

St. Paddy's Day Parade

Once again the Broward 10-13 Club participated in the St. Paddy's day Parade which took place on Saturday March 12th. Our honor guard and replica radio car were appreciated by all by those marching in the Parade and those watching it from the side lines.

It was a grand day for the Irish and those who wanted to be Irish. The attendance was also remarkable and it was attributed to the clear skies and beautiful weather. All our marchers had drinks and food waiting for them at our designated area in the park immediately after the march. May we all be around to do this again next year.



NYPD Cop count Sinking to 34000

By DAVID SEIFMAN City Hall Bureau Chief



Hammered by budget cuts, the NYPD will field its smallest force by the middle of next year than at any time since 1992 -- raising fears that, with fewer cops on the beat, a resurgence of crime could return to the city.

The city's Independent Budget Office projected yesterday that by June 30, 2012, the Police Department will have shrunk to 34,413 uniformed personnel, a record low since the 34,825 that were on the force on that same date 20 years ago when crime rates in the city were near epic highs.

NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said its own projection is actually lower -- 34,060.

"Crime statistics show there is a breaking point, and we're at it," declared City Councilman Peter Vallone Jr., chairman of the council's Public Safety Committee. "We can't absorb any more public safety cuts."

The Queens Democrat described the latest figures as worrisome. Vallone said that when he goes to community meetings these days, people complain that they no longer see police on the beat or on bicycles. "If every community has noticed that, you can be sure the criminals have noticed," he argued.

NYPD manpower typically increases every July 1, the start of the fiscal year, when new recruits come on the job. But this week, Police Commissioner [Ray Kelly](#) raised doubts whether he'd be able to maintain the schedule this year because of a new round of citywide budget cuts that will require the NYPD to come up with an extra \$101.4 million in savings from its \$4.5 billion budget.

The force is supposed to reach 35,367 on July 1, 2012. But that depends on Kelly being able to hire 540 recruits next month, 900 in July and 630 in January. Adding to the uncertainty are plans to cut 350 civilian positions to save \$30 million in 2012. The IBO said that would likely impact patrol strength.

"The Police Department acknowledged in September 2010 that there were already 621 'full-duty' police officers performing tasks that could instead be performed by less costly civilian personnel," the IBO noted. Spokesman Browne pointed out that the NYPD has managed to drive down crime and keep murders under 600 since 2002 despite operating with nearly 6,000 fewer officers than at the peak of 40,800 in 2001.

One analyst said the NYPD's impressive success actually works against it at budget time, since "it's not really clear what the decrease in size means in terms of public safety." Looming budget cuts could put the number of city cops at their lowest level since 1992, and mean drastic FDNY company closures, as well.* Only 34,413 cops on the payroll in 2012 — lowest projected total in 20 years (40,800 in 2001). david.seifman@nypost.com

The Broward 10-13 Club participated in the St. Paddy's Day parade on March 12, 2011 on Las Olas Blvd. in Ft. Lauderdale. We also joined our members in the St. Joseph Festivities on March 19, 2011 at St. Jude's Atrium on Toledo Road in Boca Raton. A great time was had at both occasions.



Join us next year for the great food and entertainment. This year The Five Boroughs brought back memories of the 50th when Doo Wop was king.

Those songs with understanding lyrics will never be forgotten as the dancing by those in attendance sang along with the numbers that were played.

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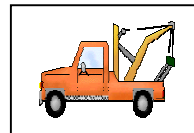
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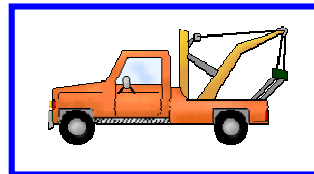
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Bloomberg Seeks a Sweeping Overhaul of City's Pensions

By DAVID W. CHEN

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg proposed sweeping changes on Wednesday to New York's costly pension system, seeking to save billions of dollars by fundamentally altering long-established rules that have awarded generous retirement benefits to municipal workers and have deepened the city's financial hole.

In trying to control soaring pension costs, Mr. Bloomberg is taking aim at retirement rules considered sacrosanct by the city's powerful municipal unions and their political allies.

The mayor wants to require most new municipal workers to work at least 10 years, or double the current amount, to qualify for a pension, and bar them from receiving pension checks until age 65. Now most no uniformed workers, including teachers, can get pension checks at age 57, and some police officers and firefighters can receive full pension checks after working 20 years, no matter their age.

New employees would also need to contribute more of their own money to their retirement accounts, according to the plan.

And Mr. Bloomberg would forbid all new employees to benefit from a time-honored practice: adding hundreds of hours of overtime at the end of their careers to balloon their final year's pay and their pensions.

The mayor did not spare current retirees, vowing to eliminate a \$12,000 annual stipend that retired police officers and firefighters get on top of their regular pension benefits.

"This reflects the dire fiscal circumstances the city faces, the devastating impact of increasing pension costs and the desperate need for aggressive reforms," said Marc La Vorgna, a mayoral spokesman.

The mayor's pension proposal — coming one day after a shrunken state budget from the new governor, Andrew M. Cuomo, with similar tough talk — represents a clear bid to capitalize on growing concerns about pension costs and rising anti-union sentiments, even among traditional labor allies.

Public pensions are being tightened in other states across the country where government employees, as in New York, receive far more generous retirement benefits than most private employees; many companies are eliminating pensions altogether.

But Mr. Bloomberg's proposal also represents a departure from his own past practices. His administration has been responsible for a significant portion of the growth in city pension costs, offering generous pension sweeteners during contract negotiations and repeatedly missing opportunities to rein in spending.

Indeed, pension costs are now projected to eat up one of every eight city dollars next year, in contrast to 1 in 28 when he took office in 2002.

Mr. Bloomberg's package could help the city save at least \$200 million a year immediately, and billions of dollars more in the future. But his proposal faces a potentially major obstacle because any changes in the city's pension system must be approved by the Legislature and the governor.

The mayor has potential allies in Mr. Cuomo and the new Senate majority leader, [Dean G. Skelos](#), a Republican. But [Sheldon Silver](#), the Assembly speaker, will most likely be the wild card.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Silver did not respond to an e-mail seeking comment. But one person close to Mr. Silver said it was quite possible that the speaker would support several proposals, if not the entire package, including the move to stop counting overtime for pension payments, and requiring employees to contribute more of their own money.

"Shelly is a realist about this, and clearly there is a movement to do something about the pension system," said this person, who insisted on anonymity so as not to jeopardize relations with Democratic lawmakers in Albany.

A spokesman for Mr. Cuomo, meanwhile, offered words of encouragement.

"As the governor has said since the beginning of his campaign, he is committed to reforming the pension system in order to reduce costs," the spokesman, Josh Vlasto, said. "We have discussed the mayor's pension reform proposal with his staff and are reviewing the details."

But one union official was irate after listening to Mr. Bloomberg's proposal.

The official, Harry Nespoli, chairman of the Municipal Labor Committee, an umbrella group of unions, said that Mr. Bloomberg had become "a dictator" and that "the mayor has set back labor relations 40 years."

Not long ago, Mr. Bloomberg was viewed as a reliable ally of labor. He offered generous salary increases in contract negotiations, and spoke with pride about the city's municipal work force, which is now about 300,000.

In 2008, as part of a merit-pay agreement with the teachers' union, the Bloomberg administration shepherded a pension package through Albany that allowed teachers to retire five years earlier than before, but with full pension benefits.

And in late 2008, just as the financial crisis began to explode, Mr. Bloomberg granted 4 percent raises for two consecutive years to the city's largest municipal workers' union, [District Council 37](#), without extracting support for pension givebacks.

Mr. Bloomberg's assiduous courting of labor paid political dividends: after getting virtually no labor support in his first campaign in 2001, he picked up dozens of union endorsements in his third-term victory in 2009.

But in recent years, Mr. Bloomberg has talked increasingly about the dangers of rising pension and health care benefits. And in his State of the City address, he vowed to make pension reform his top priority in Albany, and promised not to sign a contract with salary increases unless accompanied by reforms in benefit packages.

Can't Keep Cutting Cops

MICHAEL J. GORMAN the Chief | *To the Editor:*

The Chief's David Sims reported (March 25 issue) that District Council 37 Local 983 said that the 24-percent rise in major crimes in city parks can be attributed to the decline in the Parks Enforcement Patrol officers.

While this may be partly correct, there is the larger picture that emerges from the significant rise in crime in our parks. The crime statistics in the parks and in our subways have always been a pretty good barometer of the way crime is going throughout the city. A significant rise in crime in either of these two areas means that crime in the city is starting to creep back up.

We can't do much about the sagging economy and high unemployment rates, especially among young men, and this definitely contributes to rising crime rates. But this city can do something about the shrinking police department—reportedly down below 35,000 from a high of about 41,000. We can't afford a substantial reduction in the number of cops on the street, and we have to pay whatever it costs to keep crime rates down.

The effective strategies of William Bratton and his team—since carried on by Ray Kelly—require a large Police Department of 40,000 or more. If we go back to the Police Department numbers of the 70s and 80s (30,000 and fewer), we will see crime rates rise dramatically. And last I heard, the Pied Piper is not available to lead the rats into the river.

MICHAEL J. GORMAN

Editor's note: The writer is a retired NYPD Lieutenant and an attorney.



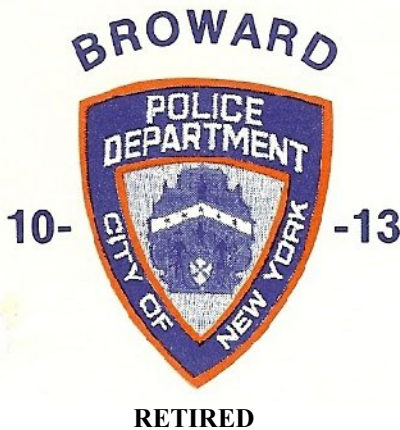
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More on the VSF

On February 25th, the DEA met with Councilman James Sanders, Chairman of the City Council's Committee on Civil Service and Pensions regarding the Variable Supplement Fund. The purpose of the meeting was to explain to Councilman Sanders the history and the facts about the VSF in an effort to counter the misinformation disseminated by City Hall, as well as urging him not to support any legislation placed before his committee by the Mayor to repeal or alter the VSF.

I am happy to report that as a result of our discussion, Councilman Sanders penned a very important letter to his colleagues in the Council urging them to stand in solidarity with the Police and Fire Unions and demand that the Mayor stop his campaign to legislatively abolish the VSF.

Mike Palladino, President