



Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 1 – East Pierce County

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 14th, 2025
Meeting Time: 10:00 AM – NOON
Meeting Place: Meridian Café
213 N Meridian, Puyallup, WA 98371

Hello members of Chapter 1,

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 14th at Meridian Café in Puyallup.

Agenda:

1. Brunch (covered by the chapter)
2. Guest Speaker Derek VanSpoor, RPEC Associate Director
 - a. Derek will provide updates on the outcome of the 2025 Legislative Session
3. Chapter 1 Nominations & Elections
4. Chapter 1 bank account signatories
5. Discussing Zoom meetings, future meeting dates & times

At the May meeting, the chapter will cover the meal cost for members in attendance. Please RSVP if you plan to attend: Bob Bandarra (360) 296-3005

Guest Speaker: Derek VanSpoor, RPEC Associate Director

At our May meeting, RPEC Associate Director Derek VanSpoor will speak about the outcome of this year's Legislative Session and how RPEC is gearing up to set the foundation for next year's session. Please attend to hear about our victories from this session and for an update on the progress in securing the Plan 1 COLA.

Help Keep Chapter 1 Alive — We Need You!

Chapter 1 is at a critical crossroads. At our upcoming May meeting, we'll be holding nominations and elections for key leadership positions — including President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and open spots on the Chapter Executive Board.

Right now, we don't have enough candidates to fill these essential roles, and without at least 10 members in attendance to meet quorum, we can't even hold a valid election. That puts the future of our chapter — and your local representation — at serious risk.

This is your chapter. Your voice matters. If you value having a strong RPEC presence in East Pierce County, please show up to support the process — even if you're not ready to run for a role yourself.

We especially encourage you to consider stepping up to serve, even temporarily. Your experience, your insight, and your willingness to contribute can make all the difference in keeping the chapter active and thriving.

You can nominate yourself or someone else either by contacting me directly or at the May meeting. If you have questions or are even just thinking about it, please reach out — I'd love to talk with you.

Let's come together and move Chapter 1 forward — but we need you to make it happen.

Bob Bandarra, Chapter 1 President
(360) 296-3005 | bandarrabob@gmail.com

RPEC is a retiree chapter of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Summary Notes for April 10, 2025

Our Chapter 1 meeting for April 10th was held virtually via Zoom at 10am. Thanks to Jakob Canup coordinating the link.

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order by President Bob Bandarra at 10:03 am. Unfortunately, the online gathering was not an official meeting. The constitution requires a minimum of 10 members to have a quorum.
2. **Introductions** – There was no sign-in list distributed. In addition to Jakob and myself only Kris Bandarra and Frank Muhammad attended. Frank listened in by phone.
3. **Guest Speaker** – There was no guest speaker.
4. **Approve the March 13, 2025, Meeting Minutes** – There was not a quorum available to approve the previous meeting minutes.
5. **Treasurer Report** – A Treasurer's report was not available. Ken Williams was unavailable due to health concerns. Follow-up will be forthcoming.
6. **Chapter President Update**
Our chapter needs more member participation. The upcoming meeting on Wednesday, May 14th at the Meridian Café; 123 North Meridian in Puyallup at 10:00 AM, will be an **Election Meeting. We need at least 10 members in attendance to have a quorum. In order to attract members to attend, we will pick up the cost of their meal for this meeting. Please RSVP so we have adequate space available. Contact email below.** I will be standing for reelection as president. We currently have no other members interested, to date, to fill the remaining positions of Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

We currently have 258-chapter members but only half a dozen that actively participate. April's ROBO call process attempted to call 222 members. 102 phone calls were accepted; 66 went to answering machines and the remaining 54 were unresponsive for various reasons. I have requested an updated Chapter roster and plan on calling members to understand what changes we need to make to get their participation. **It appears that the future chapter meeting will only be virtual.** Any suggestions you might have are always welcome. You can email me at bandarrabob@gmail.com.

7. Next Meeting

Again, the next meeting will be May 14th at 10 am at the Meridian Cafe in Puyallup. See you there!

MAY 2025 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Sending a heartfelt “thank you” to each of you for your work this legislative session. From attending the virtual Legislative Week in early February to responding to our many “calls to action” to attending the weekly Legislative Update Calls held weekly, you stood by us and provided your support. It is the work of our members, as individual constituents and at a chapter level, that strengthens RPEC’s reputation as a policy and legislative retiree powerhouse!

I’m proud of our collective work, and specifically the many times you reached out to your legislators through in-person meetings, virtual meetings, phone calls, and emails to convey our priorities. Despite the terrible budget situation facing the state, we secured important victories for all members, especially on the healthcare front. Read on to learn more.

While the legislative session has wrapped up for 2025, our advocacy work is year-round, and advocacy is an essential responsibility of RPEC chapters. We ask you to continue to “lean in” as we work during the interim legislative session to strengthen our relationships with legislators and to seed in what we hope to see take place in 2026. Please reach out to your chapter officers and ask to be included in any legislative meetings that will be scheduled between June and December. If you have an interest in learning more about our legislative priorities, please consider attending RPEC’s Political Action Committee meeting on Friday, May 30th (10 a.m.-12 p.m.) and the Legislative Committee meeting on Friday, July 11th (10 a.m.-12 p.m.).

Legislature approves key RPEC bills

RPEC, in concert with partners, heavily advocated for the passage of the following bills, all of which were successful this legislative session:

- **E2SSB 5083:** Uses Medicare rates to cap the cost of hospitalization, primary care and behavioral health. The bill is especially beneficial to RPEC members who are not yet on Medicare.
- **SHB 1142:** Expands training for spouses, partners, family members, and professionals who provide in-home care for seniors. This training ensures that those providing in-home care for our aging RPEC members are well prepared for this task.
- **SJM 8004:** Urges Congress to make progress toward creating a national universal healthcare system. This has been a long-time priority for RPEC.

No one-time or recurring COLA for PERS/TRS 1

We are deeply disappointed that the Legislature chose not to provide a one-time cost-of-living adjustment for PERS/TRS 1 retirees, even though outgoing Governor Jay Inslee cited a one-time COLA in his preliminary budget (through RPEC’s advocacy work) and three bills were introduced in the legislative session that funded a one-time COLA and recurring COLA. (Two of the three bills RPEC helped to initiate through our strategic work, dating back to 2023. Through our lobbying and advocacy efforts, the Select Committee on Pension Policy [SCPP] sponsored two companion bills that funded both a one-time and recurring COLA.)

We are also deeply disappointed that the Legislature chose to approve SSB 5357. This bill changes the amortization rate from 10 to 15 years for the pension benefit improvements (ad hoc COLAs), thereby saving the state money. Instead of using the savings to fund another

one-time COLA or to pay for a recurring COLA, all the savings will be rolled into the State's operating budget to help reduce the projected \$15 billion deficit.

Next steps for RPEC regarding the PERS/TRS 1 COLA

The Legislature has directed the SCPP to "study the tax, legal, actuarial, pension policy, and administrative implications of merging the legacy pension systems as contemplated in Substitute Senate Bill No. 5085 (closed retirement plans) and terminating plan 1 of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system as contemplated in Substitute House Bill No. 2034 (LEOFF 1 restatement)." This is good news for RPEC members. Not only will the SCPP consider the bills it sponsored in the last legislative session, but it also will consider these two additional bills. Stay tuned! The first meeting of the SCPP will be May 20th. We will be mobilizing and applying pressure to ensure the SCPP advances companion bills in the 2026 legislative session that fund a recurring COLA for PERS/TRS 1 retirees.

Donate to RPEC's PAC

Do you want to see more pro-retiree candidates elected to the state legislature and state offices? If so, have you considered a voluntary contribution to RPEC's Political Action Committee (PAC) fund?

For more than 30 years, RPEC members have been voluntarily contributing money from their pensions, or through ongoing cash or one-time donations, to RPEC's PAC. The aim of the PAC is to ensure that more pro-retiree candidates are elected to the state legislature and state offices. Regardless of party affiliation, candidates are endorsed who prioritize retirement security for public sector retirees.

Members may donate any amount to the PAC. Please consider donating. You can access the PAC contribution form at <https://rpecwa.org/rpec-pac-contribution-form/>

Monthly Legislative Update Calls Begin May 2 at 2 p.m.

The Legislative Update Call will begin monthly during the interim legislative session. The monthly calls are held the first Friday of each month from 2-3 p.m. During each call, the Council Office professional team provides an overview of federal and state advocacy efforts. The Zoom link is available on the monthly calendar at www.rpecwa.org.

Important Dates

Visit the RPEC website at www.rpecwa.org for the full calendar:

- May 2: Strategic Plan Special Task Force (10:00 a.m.)
Monthly Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- May 5: Executive Board Meeting (10:00 a.m.)
- May 6: Executive Board Meeting – Strategic Plan Review (9:00 a.m.)
- May 8: Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 20: Select Committee on Pension Policy (10:00 a.m.)
- May 22: Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 26: Council Office Closed for Memorial Day
- May 30: PAC meeting (10:00 a.m.)
- June 16: Senior Lobby (10:00 a.m.)