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## Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 12 – Pierce County

*Carol Dotlich, President*

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<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>Gather at 11:30 AM – Meeting at Noon</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Homestead Restaurant</b>
<b>Meeting Address:</b>	<b>7837 S Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA 98409</b>

Greetings everyone,

I hope you've been able to enjoy the sunshine we've been having. Spring is my favorite season.

Our next membership meeting will be Wednesday, May 8th at the Homestead Restaurant (7837 South Tacoma Way Tacoma 98409). We gather at 11:30am and start the meeting at noon. Come and meet our newly elected officers: President Carol Dotlich, 1st Vice President Larry Turnbull, 2nd Vice President Mike Parker, Secretary Celeste Suliin Burris, Treasurer Brenda Moore, Executive Board members: Lin Swanson, Helen Parks, John O'Brien, Paulette Thompson, Dan Grey. Trustees: Steve Kirby, Lynne Hay-Chapman, Laurel Lemke.

For those elected and members interested, Leadership Training will be held on Monday, June 10th from 10am-3pm. This is a two-part training. The link to register is <https://2024.rpecwa.org/2024-leadership-training/>. The registration deadline is May 17th. AFSCME Financial Standards Training is on Friday, June 14th from 10am-1pm. All electeds are encouraged to register themselves and attend.

**SAVE THE DATE!** Our District meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 20th at Tower Lanes Entertainment Center (6323 6th Avenue Tacoma 98406) in the banquet room. Doors open at noon. Lunch will be served. Laurie Weidner, our Executive Director, will be our first speaker. Legislators from all over our District have been invited and many have agreed to speak and answer questions. In order to ensure we have enough food; I'm asking everyone to text me at (253) 985-3280 to let me know you'll be there. Last year was very successful and members from all three chapters asked to do it again.

The June membership meeting is cancelled by vote of the membership at the last meeting.

We are celebrating the one-time COLA Plan 1 members have gained in this past legislative session and planning to work hard for the permanent ongoing COLA we hope to achieve in the upcoming session in 2025.

We were also successful in gaining a waiver of healthcare premium in the month of death for those whose healthcare is insured through the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB). Previously, the Department of Retirement Services (DRS) was required to claw back any pension monies provided past the date of death. This action resulted in the healthcare premium not being paid when the individual did not receive an adequate prorated pension amount. Therefore, the family could receive a bill for medical services received by the previously insured. DRS is still required to claw back monies but will see that the healthcare premium is waived so that the member retains healthcare coverage in their final month of life. The pension money is only paid up to the date of death. If you insure a spouse or family member through PEBB, please make sure they know that they must pay the healthcare premium for themselves if that premium is coming out of your pension check.

RPEC Convention News: The Convention will be held at the Wenatchee Convention Center (121 N Wenatchee Avenue, Wenatchee, WA 98801) from September 24-26. Chapter 12 will be sending delegates. If you would like to attend, please come to our May meeting. Conventions are very exciting. Delegates to Convention set the RPEC agenda for the next two years!

At the March membership meeting, a change to the current Constitution of Chapter 12 was supported. In accordance with the Constitution, all members must be notified of amendments proposed at least 10 days before it is brought to a vote. We will vote on this change at the May membership meeting.

### **Proposed Constitutional Amendment for Tacoma Area Chapter 12**

In accordance with Article VII Section 4, which states "Chapters may adopt a two-year term by amending the Constitution." I therefore move to amend Article VII Section 4 to strike the words "The term of office shall be one year." and replace with the words "The term of office shall be two years."

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### **April 2024 Executive Director's Report**

#### **Federal Advocacy**

**Call to action on The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023:** If you have not already done so, please join your fellow RPEC members and AFSCME Retiree chapters nationwide in urging Congress to oppose The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 (H.R. 5779). If this legislation is approved, your federal benefits will be at risk. [The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](#) will create a 16-member fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Funding for Social Security and Medicare will be targeted for cuts. **Call 844-331-0441 today! Tell Congress to vote NO on this bill and similar proposals calling for fiscal commissions that aim to reduce your hard-earned retirement benefits.** A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

#### **Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) To Voted on Potential New Pharmacy Benefit, April 11**

On April 11, the PEB Board acted on a resolution that will change the pharmacy benefit for Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare. RPEC's Legislative Committee supports this change, as it will lower monthly premiums for most plan subscribers. The medical benefits in the plan will remain unchanged. The new pharmacy benefit will continue to be administered by Moda to provide continuity of service and care for retirees. By making this plan more affordable, the new benefit, if adopted at the April PEB Board meeting, will help to ensure that an employer-managed plan remains in the mix of healthcare plan options available to public sector retirees. Currently, all but two plans are privatized. Preserving traditional Medicare continues to be a key federal priority for RPEC, in addition to preserving these options for the public sector retirees in Washington. Members are encouraged to attend the April 11 meeting and offer comments during the Public Comment period. Visit [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov) for more details.

#### **Council Welcomes New Team Member**

Jane Hewitt joined RPEC in mid-March as our new Finance and Operations Specialist. Jane brings more than 40 years of relevant work experience to RPEC. She is married with grandchildren, originally hails from Great Britain, and is an animal lover with three rescue pets. Jane can be reached at [jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org](mailto:jane.hewitt@rpecwa.org). Please give her a warm welcome to RPEC!

#### **Upcoming Events**

Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

- May 3 Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- May 6 Executive Board Meeting (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- May 7 Executive Board, Strategic Planning (9:00-12:30 p.m.)
- May 9 Public Employees Benefits Board (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- May 9 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 17 Leadership Training Registration Deadline
- May 20 Political Action Committee (10:00 a.m.)
- May 21 Select Committee on Pension Policy (10:00 a.m.)
- May 23 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)