



Retired Public Employees Council

Chapter 3 Newsletter

April 2024

RPEC Chapter 3 Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

Razzi's Pizzeria

8523 Greenwood Ave N.

Upstairs Meeting Room

Served by Buses #5 from downtown and #45

Parking in back

**The chapter will pay up to \$10 off
each lunch, plus the tip!**

11:15 Executive Board Meeting

11:45 Arrive for Lunch

**12:00 Guest Speaker: Dale Hoover
from Sound Generations.**

12:45 Chapter Business Meeting

Food for the Needy: Please bring non-perishable food items. Ed Rodriguez will take it to West Seattle Food Bank.

This is a fragrance-free event. Use of masks is encouraged except when eating.

Note the new meeting location: upstairs at Razzi's rather than downstairs. Enter through the front door on Greenwood Avenue. If you park behind the building, you will find outside stairs at the left (north) side of the building, which will take you up to Greenwood Avenue.

Attend this meeting online on Zoom!

- 1) Go to www.zoom.us**
- 2) Click on "Join" in upper-right of screen**
- 3) Enter Meeting ID 831 7863 7496**
- 4) Passcode 8888**
- 5) Or dial 253.205.0468**

President's Message

Hello to all members of RPEC Chapter 3,

Our biggest win in the legislature this year was the approval of another one-time PERS/TRS 1 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2024. RPEC was heavily involved in securing passage of this bill. RPEC is also making significant progress in lobbying legislators to approve a permanent PERS 1 COLA in 2025.

RPEC has also led the effort to increase the power of retiree groups' influence on the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB). Many of us get our medical insurance through PEBB, and by the time you receive this newsletter, the PEBB Board will have voted on whether to modify the current UMP Classic Medicare plan to significantly lower premiums while maintaining similar coverage. Premiums have increased an unsustainable 46% in the last two years. For more information on this, go to www.rpecwa.org and read the last three or four weeks of the RPEC Weekly NewsFlash, which are always full of RPEC's hard work to increase our retirement security!

Our speaker this month is Dale Hoover from Sound Generations, who will present an overview of their services. Dale has been presenting their programs for 18 years and has insights into how senior adults use their programs. They offer food, transportation, community, home repair and critical support. Sound Generations served over 26,500 older adults in King County in 2022. I'm looking forward to the presentation; if I don't need their services now, I may well need them in the future.

Please note that we are moving our meeting at Razzi's from the basement to a much more comfortable room upstairs. See you there on the 16th.

Thanks,

Matt Groshong

Chapter 3 President

Mgroshong1@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report

Chapter 3 checking balance is \$2,624.34 after receiving \$704.28 from Olympia RPEC for February dues. Savings balance is now \$23,090.46, and CD balance: \$3,751.97.

We will be saving excess income of Chapter 3 for September 2024, when we will have the RPEC State Convention. We expect to send the maximum Chapter 3 delegates.

At the April meeting, I will present the first draft of next year's budget. In May, it will be finalized. So, bring any ideas to the next two meetings on how to spend our money.

David Rader

Legislative Action

TELEPHONE TREE LEGISLATIVE ACTION
Congressional Action: After the March newsletter deadline, we were asked to call congress to vote NO on the Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 (H.R. 5779) and similar proposals calling for commissions that aim to reduce our hard-earned federal retirement benefits. Passage would create a 16-member commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the budget. Funding for Social Security and Medicare will be targeted for cuts. Call number: 844-331-0441.

State Legislative Action Update:

HB 2481, which, for PEBB medical insurance subscribers who have premiums deducted from their pensions, would waive the final insurance premium payment the month of the subscriber's death to prevent loss of insurance coverage that month, has been signed by the Governor. The loss of insurance coverage in the month of death resulted in the deceased person's family

being responsible for massive, unexpected medical bills.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1985, our one-time 3% COLA bill for PERS/TRS 1 retirees, capped at \$110.00 per month, was signed by the Governor on March 26, 2024.

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY:

Bring a non-perishable food item for the needy to the Chapter 3 meeting. Ed Rodriguez will take our donations to the West Seattle food bank.

Colleen McGinn

Vote Forward to participate in the national election from home.

Vote Forward is a national, non-partisan organization that organizes get-out-to-vote activities in targeted states by writing letters from home. It is much easier than doorbell ringing or phoning. And it is easily accomplished while watching tv or listening to music – even with groups of friends. The organization is Vote Forward, which has an app. To sign up, go to votefwd.org/vote, or call 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683). This election is one of the most crucial and historically significant in our lives.

David Rader

April 2024 Executive Director's Report

Convention 2024, Sept. 24-26, Wenatchee Convention Center

Are you interested in serving as a chapter delegate to RPEC's biennial Convention? You do not need to be an officer or chapter committee leader to attend. Any member in good standing is eligible to serve as delegate. If you are interested in being considered for your chapter's delegation to Convention, contact your chapter president. Delegates are chosen by election at a chapter meeting. If you are selected to represent your chapter, your Convention registration fee and lodging will be covered by your chapter. Guests may also attend at their own expense. The registration fee is \$150, which covers the Convention packet

and all meals. The Convention hotel is the Coast Wenatchee. The RPEC rate is \$116.00 per night before taxes and fees. Visit www.rpecwa.org for more details or contact your chapter president.

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 Vote on Potential New Pharmacy Benefit,

April 11

On April 11, the PEB Board will act 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 for more details.

State Advocacy

Beginning this month, the Legislative Update Calls will be held monthly, the first Friday of each month. Please join us on April 5 from 2-3 p.m. Details are available at www.rpecwa.org.

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. Please give her a warm welcome to RPEC!

Upcoming Events

Visit www.rpecwa.org for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

- April 11 Public Employees Benefits Board (9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- April 11 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- April 12 Legislative Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 16 Select Committee on Pension Policy (10 a.m.)
- April 19 Pension Policy Workgroup (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Membership Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- May 3 Legislative Update Call (2:00 p.m.)
- May 6 Executive Board Meeting (9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- May 7 Executive Board Meeting, Strategic Planning (9:30-12:30 p.m.)
- May 8 Public Service Recognition Week (at Heritage Park, Olympia)
- May 9 Public Employees Benefits Board (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- May 9 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)