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# Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 12 – Pierce County

*Carol Dotlich, President*

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**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Meeting Time:** Gather at 11:30 AM – Meeting at Noon

**Meeting Location:** The Homestead Restaurant

**Meeting Address:** 7837 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA 98409

**Attention! Meeting time & location changed!**

**Speaker: Washington State Treasurer, Mike Pellicciotti**

As I explained in the last newsletter, Chapter 12 is trying out some new locations as we search for a venue that meets our needs. This month we will go to The Homestead Restaurant and Bakery, home of the mouthwatering cinnamon roll. The reservation was made under my name–Carol. We will meet in the banquet room, straight back as you enter the restaurant.

At the April meeting, further nominations for officers and elections were held.

### **Chapter Officers Elected by Acclamation**

Carol Dotlich - **President**

Larry Turnbull - **1st Vice**

**President**

Audrey Ahrens – **2nd Vice**

**President**

Celeste Suliin Burris - **Secretary**

Brenda Moore - **Treasurer**

**Executive Board:**

-Lynne Hay-Chapman

-John O'Brien

-Laurel Lemke

-Don Lockrem

-Mike Parker

-Paulette Thompson

**Trustees:**

-Dorette Markham

-Vacant

-Vacant

As you can see, we still have need of two Trustees. Trustees receive training. The duty is simply to audit the financial reports and minutes for the year to ensure that member dues are spent in accordance with the direction of the membership and the Board. It requires one meeting a year. Please contact me if you are willing to serve.

The legislative session is wrapping up. The good news is that the Senate version of the PERS 1/TRS 1 cost of living adjustment bill is on its way to the Governor's desk with unanimous approval. In July 2023, our Plan 1 members will receive a 3% cost of living adjustment capped at \$110 a month. Embodied in the bill is a requirement that the Senate Select Committee on Pension policy do a study and recommend a proposal to the legislature providing a permanent COLA for Plan 1 retirees. Plan 1 is the only pension plan without an automatic COLA. A heartfelt thank you to Senators Conway and Rolfes for the roles they played, and to our own Bev Hermanson who serves as our representative on the Senate Select Committee on Pension Policy. Most importantly, thank you to all our members who worked so hard to testify, send emails and letters, signing in pro on the bills, and going to Olympia to talk face to face with our legislators. This wouldn't have happened without the coordinated efforts of our members and staff. Hats off to all!

Our next step is to personally thank our legislators and show our appreciation. Please take the time to do that.

Some of you have participated in the HCA listening sessions regarding the healthcare plans through the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB). We are hoping for a budget proviso that will require the Health Care Authority (HCA) to provide a report to the legislature on the outcome of those sessions. We want HCA to take those comments into consideration as they consider plan offerings. Senator June Robinson wants budget dollars dedicated to researching how to make health plans offered more affordable.

If you have yet to participate in the listening sessions, you may still sign up. Details are also available on the HCA website retiree landing page at <https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits/retirees>. Registration is required. Space is limited.

Our PEBB representatives, past and current, have asked for a window to allow members who didn't timely file for a PEBB plan to be offered the opportunity to get into a PEBB health plan. Substitute Senate Bill 5490 narrowly opens a window. The member would have had to appeal the PEBB denial by 12/31/2022. It doesn't allow for enrollment into the Uniform Medical Plan.

A follow-up to the problem raised by our member who prefers in home hemodialysis. Through our member's advocacy and personal efforts working with PEBB, Kaiser has agreed to provide the treatment. This opens the door for other members who require similar treatments. Thank you for pursuing this issue to a successful outcome.

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### **April 2023 Executive Director's Report**

Dear RPEC Leaders:

April marks another successful whirlwind month for RPEC and its legislative priorities. This is also a big month for member engagement. We need your immediate assistance with an urgent state budget priority.

#### **All-member written survey – Please complete the survey and mail it back!**

In April, all RPEC members will receive a written survey (with a postage paid return envelope) via U.S. mail. The survey should arrive in your mailbox soon. Gleaning your insights and understanding the priorities and needs of our members is the first step in the strategic planning process for the Executive Board. Please take the time to complete the survey when it arrives at your home and mail it back right away, so that your input can be used to help shape the Board's priorities.

#### **Register Today for the Health Care Authority's (HCA) Virtual and In-person Listening Sessions and virtual public forums – Space is limited!**

All RPEC leaders and members who receive their healthcare benefits from the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) are asked to register today to take part in virtual and in-person listening sessions hosted by HCA. Registration is required. Space is limited.

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/news/announcements/register-pebb-medicare-listening-sessions>

Retirees and their spouses or partners who are covered under UMP Classic Medicare, a Kaiser Permanente plan, UHC, or Plans F or G are eligible to participate. The listening sessions and public forums are your opportunity to share insights with HCA staff about your healthcare plan and quality of services you receive from HCA. All virtual and in-person listening sessions will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Each session will be capped at 12 participants. HCA will follow-up with registrants via email and provide the questions, background information, Zoom log-in information (for the virtual sessions) and/or the location/directions (in person sessions).

In addition, HCA will also host **virtual public forums**. The virtual public forums will be held on May 17 and May 24 via Zoom from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Unlike the listening sessions, the public forums will function like a public hearing. Participation will be limited to 30 participants who will each have 3 minutes to speak about whatever issue, challenge, or suggestion they want to convey to HCA staff.

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/news/announcements/pebb-medicare-retirees-participate-virtual-public-forum>

If you cannot attend a virtual or in-person listening session, the virtual public forum is another opportunity to share insights about your healthcare plan and the quality of service you receive from HCA. The virtual public forums are also open to those who have already participated in a listening session. You can also use your 3 minutes to offer suggestions to HCA regarding how they can improve communications and service to retirees.

### **Interested in Learning More About RPEC? Register to Attend the Two-part Leadership Training Sessions on June 26 & June 30**

All members-at-large who want to learn more about RPEC or who may be interested in serving in a leadership role within their chapter or the Council are welcome to register for the two-part annual Leadership Training , taking place on June 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and June 30 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Part 1, held on June 26, is designed for those who have been elected to serve as chapter officers or are serving in elected or appointed chapter chair positions. The training will cover everything you need to know about the organization, our mission, the Council Office, how to work with our professional team, legislative affairs, building chapter member engagement and more.

<https://rpecwa.org/2023-leadership-training/>

Part 2, held on June 30<sup>th</sup>, is the AFSCME Financial Standards Code Training. This training session is designed for all chapter leaders. The training will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

<https://rpecwa.org/2023-leadership-training/>

### **Monthly Legislative Update Zoom Call**

With the Legislative Session wrapped up for 2023, we will not be holding any more Weekly Legislative Updates. We will be resuming our Monthly Update calls beginning on Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, and continuing on the first Friday of each month until the 2024 Legislative Session begins.

Please join us on Friday, May 5th at 2 pm for our first monthly Legislative Update Zoom call.

To join the update calls:

**Via Computer or tablet:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89045365250?pwd=cHYvbU80d08xTXRLTmPOZGF1VW53QT09>

Or, go to: <https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 890 4536 5250

Passcode: 320296

**Via Phone:**

Dial: (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 890 4536 5250

Passcode: 320296

**Blogs & Weekly E-Blast**

Are you receiving the *RPEC Weekly Newsflash*? It is the best way to keep apprised of our weekly news and to learn about our legislative and government affairs priorities. Sign up on the RPEC homepage at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

**Upcoming events**

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

**May 2:** HCA Virtual Listening Session

**May 4:** HCA Virtual Listening Session

**May 5:** Legislative Committee Meeting

Monthly Legislative Update Zoom Call

**May 9:** HCA Virtual Listening Session

**May 10:** HCA Virtual Listening Session

**May 11:** Health Care Workgroup

**May 16:** HCA In-Person Listening Session, Bothell

**May 17:** HCA Virtual Public Forum

**May 18:** HCA Virtual Listening Session

Best,  
Laurie