



# Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

## CHAPTER 19 KITSAP COUNTY

**PRESIDENT: SANDIE REYNOLDS: 253-820-6620 OR [sandielee@comcast.net](mailto:sandielee@comcast.net)**

**NEXT MEETING: April 12, 2023 @ Noon**

**ALL STAR LANES & CASINO**

**10710 SILVERDALE WAY NW, SILVERDALE, WA 98383**

**NO MEETING IN MARCH!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Dear Members,

Our February meeting was full of discussions about our budget and the expense of our current venue. We reviewed the Legislative Day activities and meetings with legislators. We also reviewed the bills currently affecting our pensions and other Medicare issues.

Our District Rep., Mike Marston, was very instrumental in helping us to come up with a plan regarding our meeting venue. The bottom line is that we decided to go back to quarterly meetings, and at those meetings we will pay for lunches for those who attend. We are still looking into the option of hybrid meetings, a blend of both in-person and Zoom, that may allow more members to participate in the meeting. This will drop our annual venue expenses from approximately \$1500 to \$600.

Another of the big issues we face with low attendance is the issue of approving motions when we do not have a membership quorum. This is not an uncommon issue for RPEC chapters. After discussing this issue with RPEC Council, we will contain the approval of a motion to the attendees present and not on the number of total members. Officers and executive board members will be able to approve/disapprove motions without a total membership vote. Essentially, each person attending and voting on a motion will be a "delegate" for those not present. This is a practice done at Convention when a few delegates represent the membership in their chapters.

Newsletters will continue to be written monthly to keep folks up to date with important RPEC issues.

Once again, I would remind folks to PLEASE check in with their legislators. It might be helpful to periodically make an appointment with your legislator and gather other members to discuss current issues at hand. We are getting hit from all sides with cutbacks and changes and it is absolutely necessary for our legislators to know where we stand.

Hope to see you at the next meeting in April. Elections will be held at that time.

Sandie Reynolds  
Chapter 19 President

## **Executive Director's Report – February 24, 2023**

Dear RPEC Leaders & Members:

The legislative session is off to an exciting start. For the first time in a decade, three bills, introduced in January, pertain to finally addressing a recurring cost-of-living (COLA) for Plan 1 retirees. Moreover, a handful of bills also directly relate to increasing oversight of the Health Care Authority (HCA), which selects and administers healthcare plans for public sector retirees. Please read your emails and take part in our weekly Legislative Update Calls, held each Friday afternoon from 2-3 p.m. via Zoom, to keep apprised of our legislative affairs activities to find out how you can help.

Finally, your elected Executive Board will be tackling strategic planning this year. This month's letter highlights how you can share your input and insights to shape the Board's strategic planning efforts.

### **Hundreds of RPEC members act to support priority bills**

The long 105-day legislative session kicked off on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Since that time RPEC's members statewide and your professional team at the Council Office have been hard at work advancing our legislative priorities which include increasing accountability and improving service from the Health Care Authority (HCA) and securing a recurring cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Plan 1 retirees.

The week of January 23 was one of the most important for RPEC members with four of our priority bills scheduled for public hearings. A big thank you to all RPEC Executive Board members, chapter presidents, chapter officers, committee, and workgroup chairpersons and members-at-large who took the time to sign in with PRO positions in the public record, and to submit written testimony on our priority bills. Thousands of retirees signed in to support these bills; many were our members! Thank you!

- **SB 5350/HB 1057:** RPEC worked with the Select Committee on Pension Policy to craft the language for these companion bills (the language is identical in each bill). The bills provide a legislative path to a recurring cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and a one-time 3% COLA, effective on July 1, 2023, for Plan 1 retirees. We coordinated two panels to testify. More than 2,000 seniors signed in to support the bills. Neither bill has been scheduled yet for Executive Session.
- **HB 1459:** This bill fully restores a recurring COLA for Plan 1 retirees effective July 1, 2023. We arranged for two panels of RPEC and Washington Education Association-Retired (WEA-R) members to testify. More than 1,200 seniors signed in to support the bill. The bill was scheduled for Executive Session on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. No action was taken.
- **SB 5169:** This bill preserves health care choices for public sector retirees and adds accountability for the Health Care Authority. We arranged for two panels to provide testimony. One included members from the PEBB Stakeholders' Medicare Coalition. The other included PEBB beneficiaries recommended by RPEC, WEA-R and Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA). More than 600 retirees signed up to support the bill. The bill has not yet been scheduled for Executive Session.

To keep informed about these bills and others that align with RPEC's legislative priorities, attend the weekly Legislative Update Calls, held each Friday via Zoom from 2-3 p.m. The Zoom link, as well as a current list of the bills RPEC is monitoring, is available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Legislative Day – A great success!**

Legislative Day 2023 was held in person with participants taking part in 70 meetings. Once again, the event included members from the Washington Education Association-Retired (WEA-R). Attendees, grouped by legislative district, met with their elected representatives in the House and Senate. Some appointments also were held with legislative assistants. The day culminated with a reception attended by 20 legislators and their staff.

We thank all of those who took the time to take part. The feedback gleaned from these meetings will help inform RPEC's Political Action Committee (PAC) endorsements and contributions. Read more about Legislative Day in the winter edition of the RPEC Today! newsletter.

### **Membership surveys and telephone poll in March**

In May and August, your elected Executive Board will begin a strategic planning process led by AFSCME Retiree Council. The first step in that process is to hear from our members about the things that matter most to you. In March, all RPEC members will receive a written survey (with a postage paid return envelope) to fill out. Please complete it right away and mail it back, so that your input can be used to help shape the Board's priorities.

AFSCME Retiree Council will also be placing phone calls to a cross-section of members to glean insight for the strategic planning process. If you receive a call from AFSCME's research team, we hope you will take the time to participate. It will only take 10-15 minutes of your time.

Finally, in April, members will be invited to take part in a virtual listening session, hosted via Zoom by AFSCME Retiree Council staff. This virtual listening session is another way you can provide input for the Board's consideration. More details will be forthcoming in the March and April Executive Director letters, chapter newsletters and via email.

### **HCA Pilot Listening Session – February 28, 10 a.m.**

It's finally here! After working with the Health Care Authority (HCA) staff since last summer, the Public Employees' Benefits Board (PEBB) Stakeholders' Medicare Coalition has finalized the details of the pilot listening session. The pilot will be held by Zoom on February 28 from 10-11:30 a.m. Given the short timeline for retiree recruitment to participate in the pilot, Coalition partners will identify the 12 participants based on their healthcare plan coverage. The pilot will include retirees who are beneficiaries of each of the healthcare plans offered by PEBB. The pilot will be used to refine the listening session model for the full roll out of the listening sessions in March.

At this time, HCA's proposed dates for the virtual listening sessions include March 14, 16, 21, 23, 28 and 30, April 4, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 25 and 27, and May 2, 4, 9, 10, 16, 18, 23, 25 and 30.

The listening sessions will be held via Zoom from 10-11:30 a.m. More details will be available soon.

### **Chapter officer elections – April**

Chapters around the state will be electing officers in April. Are you interested in getting more involved as an officer? Or serving as a chapter committee chairperson? Not only is serving as an officer or chapter leader a great way to stay informed about RPEC's legislative affairs and advocacy activities, but it also is a great opportunity to meet like-minded public sector retirees who share your interest in preserving retirement security. No experience is necessary. All training is provided by RPEC's Council Office through a leadership training held in June and monthly Leadership Calls.

Want to learn more? Reach out to your chapter president. We also invite you to take part in the monthly Leadership Call, which is a great time to hear from other members about the strategies to build our chapters and better engage members. The next monthly Leadership Call will be held on February 24. The Zoom link is available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Free annual RPEC membership – Recruit 2 new members**

For a limited time, RPEC is offering members a chance to earn one year's free membership. For every two new members you recruit, you will receive a check for \$84! To get credit, your name must appear in the "Recruited by" field on the new members' membership applications. Associate members do not count until they become full dues-paying members. Checks will only be issued to current members in good standing. If you recruit just two new members, your annual membership in RPEC will be free for a year!

### **Top-Recruit 2 champions this month**

Congratulations to Robin Rego, president of Chapter 21, and Colleen McGinn, vice president of Chapter 3, for recruiting the greatest number of new members so far this year.

### **Upcoming events**

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

**Mar. 9:** Healthcare Workgroup

**Mar. 10:** Legislative Update Call

Best,  
Laurie