



Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 37 – Lynnwood Area

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Meeting Date: Thursday, June 1st, 2023
Meeting Time: 1:00 PM
Meeting Location: Old Spaghetti Factory
Meeting Address: 2509 196th St SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036

Hello Chapter 37 members:

Our June meeting will **exclusively be an in-person meeting.**

This is our annual luncheon. Our chapter will pay for the lunch and non-alcoholic drinks of any member and spouse! **Our guest speaker for this meeting is Emmett Mills, RPEC Government Affairs Coordinator, who will be visiting us from the Council Office in Olympia.** He will speak on our recent gains in the Legislature and what comes next.

Please call Bill Dehmer at 206-313-2845 by May 26th to reserve your place at the luncheon.

Bill Dehmer
Vice President
RPEC Chapter 37

May 2023 Executive Director's Report

Congratulations! Sine Die, the end of the legislative session, occurred on April 23, and, due to your advocacy efforts, RPEC's top legislative priorities were passed by the Legislature. Read the full end-of-session legislative report in the spring edition of the membership newsletter, which will be in your mailboxes by the end of this month. It will also be posted later this month to RPEC's website at www.rpecwa.org.

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

The Executive Board embarked on a strategic planning process earlier this year that began with information gathering from members. One piece of that process is asking all members to complete a written survey. Your input will help the Executive Board identify our strategic direction and goals to carry the organization for the next 5 years. Your feedback matters. You should have received the survey by now. If you have not yet filled it out, please do so, and mail it back to the Council Office right away.

Two key legislative victories

Throughout the legislative session, RPEC leaders and members advocated for SB 5350. This bill unanimously passed the Legislature after a battle over amendments that were concerning for RPEC. Ultimately, our Senators prevailed, and the bill passed without the alarming amendments. In July, PERS 1 and TRS 1 retirees will receive a one-time 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) not to exceed \$110 per month. That bill also requires the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP) to study and recommend a proposal to the Legislature for a recurring COLA.

We also prevailed in ensuring greater accountability for the Health Care Authority (HCA) through a proviso that Senator June Robinson fought hard to secure in the final budget act. The proviso provides funding to HCA to report to the Legislature their findings from the stakeholder engagements with retirees (see below) to improve services. The proviso also requires the agency to identify additional government self-insured plans, like the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare, that offer great benefits but have more affordable premiums for retirees.

Stay tuned! Our advocacy work will begin soon. We have work to do together this summer and fall with the SCPP. And, we have more work to do with HCA so that the agency provides better service to retirees. Again, look for the full end-of-session legislative report in the spring edition of the membership newsletter.

Health Care Authority's (HCA) Virtual and In-person Listening Sessions and virtual public forums wrap up this month

All RPEC leaders and members who receive their healthcare benefits from the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) are asked to register to take part in virtual and in-person listening sessions hosted by HCA. All stakeholder engagements will conclude this month. There is still space available in all sessions. <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, Kaiser Permanente NW Senior Advantage, Kaiser Permanente WA Medicare plans, Premera Blue Cross Medicare Supplement Plan G, UnitedHealthcare PEBB Balance, or UnitedHealthcare PEBB Complete are eligible to participate. The listening sessions and public forums are your opportunity to share insights with HCA staff about your healthcare plan and the 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. HCA will follow-up with registrants via email and provide the questions, background information, and Zoom login information (for the virtual sessions) and/or the location/directions (for in-person sessions).

Two more **virtual public forums** are also available on May 17th and 24th from 10-11:30 a.m. The public forums function like a public hearing. Registrants will have 3 minutes to speak about whatever issue, challenge, or suggestion they want to convey to HCA staff. Space is still available. <https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/news/announcements/pebb-medicare-retirees-participate-virtual-public-forum>.

If you cannot attend a virtual or the last 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 but have more to share or say. 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 26th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and June 30th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Part 1, held on June 26th, 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 30th, is the AFSCME Financial Standards Code Training. This training session is designed for all current chapter leaders. The training will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. <https://rpecwa.org/2023-leadership-training/>.

Legislative Update Calls are held monthly from May through December

With the legislative session now over, the Legislative Update Calls will move to a monthly schedule from May through December. The next call will take place on May 5 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. That day, the Legislative Committee will also meet from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. If you are interested in learning more about our advocacy efforts or have interest in getting more involved, please plan to attend the Legislative Committee meeting and the Legislative Update Call. Visit www.rpecwa.org for the login information and more details about both virtual meetings.

May is Older Americans Month

Through the adoption of the Older Americans Act of 1965, the month of May became the federal monthly observance of Older Americans Month. This month is a time for us to continue to speak out and collectively act to protect Social Security, Medicare, and efforts here in Washington to restrict access to quality healthcare. RPEC is the state's premiere advocacy organization for public sector retirees like you. We are focused on the priorities that matter most to you in retirement, including protecting pension and healthcare security. Older Americans Month is the perfect time to reach out to your state legislators to thank them for their support of RPEC's legislative priorities and to remind them that public sector retirees are a valuable resource and constituency.

Upcoming events

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

May 22: Executive Board Strategic Planning Work Session

May 23: Executive Board Meeting

May 25: HCA Virtual Listening Session
Healthcare Workgroup

May 29: Council Office Closed for Memorial Day

May 30: HCA Virtual Listening Session

May 31: HCA Virtual Listening Session

Best,
Laurie

Chapter 37 May 5, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The Zoom/in-person meeting was called to order by Vice President Bill Dehmer at 1:15 pm.

Roll call of officers: Brenda, President (excused); Bill Dehmer, Vice President; Cathy Chapman, Treasurer; Linda McCullough, Secretary.

Introduction of members and guests: Lucy Massick, Darlene Johnston, Adrienne Fraley-Monillas, Warren Warfield, Cheryl Moser, District 1 Representative

District Report: Provided by Cheryl. Discussed the District 1 meeting scheduled for June 6 at 1 pm at Hubbs Pizza in Arlington. All legislators were invited to attend. Warren made a motion for the chapter to pay mileage for attendees and to contribute \$50 to Chapter 6 to help cover the expenses of the lunch. Lucy seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Linda, Brenda, and Adrienne are interested in attending this event.

Cheryl also encouraged all members to complete the RPEC survey and mail them.

Council Executive Board Meeting: May 23, 2023

Legislative Update: Warren provided an update.

The one-time Plan 1 COLA was passed as part of the next biennium budget and with the governor's approval. It is effective July 2023 with a 3% cap not to exceed \$110 per month.

Emmett highlighted his experience with the 2023 legislative session as RPEC's Government Affairs Coordinator. His biggest take-away was that the best way to achieve a recurring Plan 1 COLA was ongoing communications with legislators. Another effective pathway is through the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP) as it is required to study and recommend to the Legislature during 2023 options for achieving a recurring Plan 1 COLA.

The following strategies were discussed for the RPEC Pension Policy Workgroup (PPW) to address in 2023:

- continue to communicate and work with the SCPP for a recurring COLA
- recruit more RPEC members to participate at SCPP meetings. Make our presence known.
- encourage more members to communicate with their legislators, either through chapter meetings or directly, regarding the need for a recurring COLA.
- the glide path approved will be the template for bringing the UAAL imbalance to zero. The PPW will monitor OSA's assumptions to determine if the glide path may require tweaks.
- The PPW will conduct ongoing monitoring of OSA's assumptions used in presentations regarding future COLAs and impacts on employer contributions to the Plan 1 pension plans.

Warren Warfield completed a reference guide for the PPW Chairperson. It will be submitted to Olympia for review and digitizing.

Monthly Leadership Call: no call last month

Political Action Committee: Adrienne said she is on this committee. This committee oversees the PAC donations to legislators.

Treasurer's report Kathy Chapman: Balance forward \$9069.53

Dues (187 members at \$1.25 each) \$253.40

The new checking account has been set up. Just need Brenda's signature on the signature card. Motion made to accept the Treasurer's report by Adrienne, seconded by Warren, and motion approved.

Minutes of 4/6/2023: Bill provided copies of these minutes. Motion made to accept these minutes, seconded by Lucy, and motion passed.

Membership: Darlene reported membership 187 after two members moved and two members died.

Unfinished Business:

Scheduled a date for an audit of Chapter 37's finances. Agreed to do the audit on 5/19/2023 at 11 am at the Mountlake Terrence Library.

Discussed the scheduling of our luncheon/meeting on June 1st at 1 pm for Chapter 37 members (and their spouses) at the Old Spaghetti Factory. The chapter will pay for everyone's lunch and drinks. **Remember: there are no chapter meetings in July and August!** Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 7th. We will keep you posted of any significant developments when we are not meeting.

Let Brenda or Bill know about any topics of interest or people who can present at our monthly meeting.

New Business: None

Good and Welfare:

- 1) Announced the death of two members, Stephen Olsen and Nancy Bilmer.
- 2) Adrienne encouraged us to recruit younger retirees.

Adjournment at 2:30 pm