

From: Sharon Hoffbeck  
To: RPEA Members--All  
Date: 9 December 2017  
Subject: RPEA Yearly Planning Meeting Report

Hi Everyone—

The RPEA Executive Board recently held its annual planning meeting. Below are highlights from that meeting:

Housekeeping:

RPEA has decided to hire an accounting firm, The Hahn Company, to perform all of RPEA's accounting, payroll, reporting and tax preparation duties. Past practice was to require the RPEA treasurer to perform extensive accounting and financial reporting duties, which placed an unreasonable burden on a volunteer. Hiring Hahn avoids some potential legal liabilities that can affect volunteer-run organizations. It also provides economy of scale, since payroll for part-time office staff and yearly tax preparation have always been outsourced at significant cost. Consolidating all functions to the accounting firm is a fiscally responsible move and gives RPEA a higher level of accountability.

Membership:

When a membership is about to expire, RPEA sends out an automatic renewal reminder, but—sometimes people can miss seeing it. In order to continue receiving critical benefit information, please be sure that your membership is current. You can renew online with a credit card—link below--or mail a check to RPEA, 3310 Arctic Blvd., Ste 200, Anchorage, AK 99503. **Also--please be sure to let us know if you change your email address.**

If you know of anyone who is a retiree and not an RPEA member, please share information with them concerning benefits, and remind them of the importance of becoming RPEA members. RPEA is the largest Alaskan retiree organization for a reason! We proactively monitor and safeguard retiree benefits, and take action when those benefits are at risk or diminished. Membership fees are RPEA's only source of revenue, and in order to continue to do the work we do, membership must continue to grow.

RPEA Website Address:

<http://www.rpea.apea-aft.org/>

### Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board:

The Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board was recently established by Administrative Order 288. The Department of Administration is in the process of reviewing applications for all seats on the Board, including the PERS and the TRS seats. Per AO 288, the Governor's selection for these 2 seats can either be from one of the names submitted by retiree organizations **or** can be someone of the Governor's choosing without input from retiree organizations. RPEA has submitted the following names for the PERS and TRS seats:

#### Seat 3: PERS—

##### **Pat Nault**

Ms. Nault is a PERS retiree who holds a Master of Public Administration degree. Ms. Nault has substantial experience in health plan policy and administration from her employment in the Medicaid program and in public health programs. She was also responsible for all aspects of employee health plan administration while serving as a trustee for the ASEA Health Trust for six years. Through the International Foundation for Employee Benefit Plans, Ms. Nault holds certifications in Public Plan Policy and Board Governance.

##### **Mauri Long**

Ms. Long is a PERS retiree and long-time partner at the law firm of Dillon & Findley. Her practice included significant work with doctors, hospitals, and other medical providers. She brings extensive knowledge of the medical industry, as well as skills as a negotiator, arbitrator, and mediator.

##### **Russ Webb**

Mr. Webb retired after 32 years of public service. He was a program officer with AMHTA (Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority), and he served as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services. He held additional leadership positions within the Department including service in the Divisions of Public Health, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and Family and Youth Services.

#### Seat 4: TRS—

##### **Gayle Harbo**

Ms. Harbo is an Alaska Retirement Management Board (ARMB) trustee, a member of the Alaska Retired Educators Association and previously taught mathematics in Fairbanks for 25 years.

**Judy Salo**

During her career, Ms. Salo was a 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher in Kenai, a Title I Program Assistant Director, and served in the Alaska State Senate from 1993 to 1996.

**Mitch Roth:**

Dr. Roth is a retired University of Alaska Fairbanks Professor of Computer Science and Software Engineering with a strong interest in the retiree health plan.

Once appointments are made, we'll let you know who was selected. At a recent meeting with DOA Commissioner Ridle, I was assured that implementation of the Board was a priority, and that she hoped to have the first Board meeting sometime in January. Board meetings are open to the public. RPEA will be attending all quarterly meetings, in addition to the proactive work we do with the administration, continuing to monitor and protect retiree benefits.

DVA Lawsuit:

In January 2016, RPEA filed a Declaratory Relief Lawsuit asking the court to do 3 things: 1) rule that the optional retiree health plans offered at the time of retirement are constitutionally protected just like the medical plan, 2) to determine if diminishment occurred in 2014 when the Division of Retirement & Benefits made significant changes to the Dental/Vision/Audio (DVA) plan, and 3) to have the court order restitution of benefits that were improperly denied by Moda.

In December 2016 RPEA won a partial summary judgment, the judge ruling from the bench that the optional retiree health plans are indeed constitutionally protected. The trial to determine if diminishment occurred in January 2014 is scheduled for April 2018.

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President

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