



Hello!

Welcome to the start of the RPEA's new 2023 fiscal year!

Much transpired over the past fiscal year and we are happy to start anew with all of thee in FY 2023! ☺ Here is the mid-year news:

Settlement Agreement Updates

The RPEA and the Division of Retirement and Benefits (DRB) have been actively working to satisfy the provisions of their signed Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”), dated February 28, 2022. This agreement, which settles two long-standing RPEA lawsuits against the State, requires the parties (RPEA and DRB) to work expeditiously together to meet the conditions of the Agreement.

Since that time, pursuant to the Agreement, we have seen:

-- an RPEA member (Mauri Long) appointed to the Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board's (RHPAB's) existing Modernization Subcommittee;

-- the RHPAB create a Regulations Subcommittee and appoint RPEA member Wendy Woolf to that new sub-committee;

-- the DRB adopt, effective June 1, 2022, a series of agreed to AlaskaCare Retiree Health Plan amendments; and

-- the DRB, in cooperation with the RHPAB regulations subcommittee, begin to draft the administrative process regulations so key to the Settlement Agreement, with an anticipated release-for-public-comment date of mid-to-late September, at the latest.

New Administrative Order Signed.

We are also pleased to announce, in accordance with another crucial provision of the Settlement Agreement, that on June 8, 2022, Governor Dunleavy released Administrative Order (AO) No. 336. This Order revoked previous AO #319, which continued authorization of the Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board first created by Governor Walker via AO #288. Per the Settlement Agreement, the sunset provision of the previous AO was removed and a member of the RPEA was added to the RHPAB. Under AO #336, the Governor will select an RPEA member in good standing to serve on the RHPAB from a list of three candidates submitted by the RPEA. Here's a link to new Administrative Order No. 336:

<https://gov.alaska.gov/admin-orders/administrative-order-no-336/>

Under the Agreement, the adoption of AO #336 triggered the dismissal of the Medical Diminishment lawsuit, which was ordered by Judge Zeman on June 24, 2022, based on a notice of dismissal jointly filed by both parties. Previously, also pursuant to the Agreement, once the Settlement Agreement itself was signed on 2/28/2022, the DVA lawsuit was to be dismissed and Judge Zeman signed that order of dismissal back on March 8, 2022. Therefore, both of RPEA's former lawsuits are now closed.

Solicitation of Member Interest in Serving on the RHPAB

Under the new Administrative Order #336, the RPEA must now submit the names of three RPEA members in good standing to the Governor for his consideration for appointment to the newly created eighth seat on the RHPAB.

The Executive Board is seeking applications from RPEA members interested in being chosen as a candidate for selection by the Governor to the Retiree Health Plan Advisory Board. The Executive Board requests the following information from persons interested in being considered for selection:

- an updated resume (the version that you would provide to the Governor, if selected to represent RPEA),
- a statement from you as to your healthcare related experience, and
- a statement as to why you think you would be a good representative of the interests of RPEA members on the RHPAB.

It is important for members to know the increasingly important role of the RHPAB in the preservation, development, and expansion of healthcare services for retirees. We are looking for persons who have good critical thinking skills and the ability to forcefully speak to the importance of the affordability, appropriateness, and quality of available healthcare services, especially for those who are aging.

Further, any RPEA member interested in serving as the RPEA representative on the RHPAB must be aware of the importance of this position to the Executive Board and the time commitment any candidate for this position will need to be prepared to make. The RHPAB meets at least quarterly, and there is also the work of its subcommittees. The materials that are provided in advance of the meetings are extensive and the information and presentations shared complex, requiring good analytical skills. In addition, the Executive Board expects that the person formally appointed to represent the RPEA on the RHPAB would become a member of the RPEA's vital Medical Information Committee (MIC). Further, the Executive Board would expect the RPEA RHPAB representative to regularly report to the Executive Board, especially following the RHPAB's meetings.

Finally, in order for an RPEA member in good standing to be considered for selection by the Executive Board, you will need to be prepared to complete the Boards & Commission on-line application found on the Governor's website, should your name be submitted [the link is here for your information: [Apply \(state.ak.us\)](#)]. Note that there is no requirement that RHPAB members file formal AS 39.50 Conflict of Interest Statements for an appointment to this RHPAB.

With this understanding, RPEA members interested in serving on the RHPAB should email their updated resume and statements to the Executive Board by no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 22nd.

You can email your materials to rpea.officemanager@gmail.com. Following an initial screening of potential candidates, the Board will schedule up to an hour-long Zoom interview with those remaining candidates being considered for nomination. The Board intends to submit its three names to the Governor's Office no later than the end of the first week in August.

We are hopeful that the Governor would make his appointment before the next meeting of the RHPAB, which is scheduled for September 27, 2022. RPEA will do its part to assure the names are submitted in time for an appointment to be made, if this is practical or possible.

We apologize for the level of detail provided here, but we want interested members to understand just how important a role the member appointed to the RHPAB has with respect to RPEA interests going forward. If you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please feel free to contact Executive Vice President Traber (fredtraber.RPEA@gmail.com), Secretary Rhoades (secretaryrpea@gmail.com), or myself (rpea.ak.president@gmail.com) with your questions.

Seeking a Treasurer for the Executive Board!

As you recall, Judi Slajer, elected RPEA Treasurer last year, regrettably passed away earlier this year. In the interim, Wendy Woolf, agreed to serve as the interim Treasurer, pending the selection of an RPEA member willing to fill the seat through the end of the Judi's two-year term (June of 2023). Under present bylaw and policy, the RPEA President, with input from the Board, fills officer vacancies by appointment.

Therefore, the Executive Board is seeking expressions of interest from any member in good standing interested in filling the Treasurer's role for the remaining year of the two-year term. Significant FY 2023 work has already been done by interim Treasurer Woolf, as the Board recently reviewed and adopted its proposed FY 2023 budget. In addition, RPEA retains a CPA

firm (Sramek Hightower) to provide monthly accounting services, so the work of managing the books and paying bills is generally without significant issue, given the close coordination of the RPEA's Office Manager and the Sramek Hightower staff. However, the Treasurer is responsible for tracking income and expenditures against the approved operating budget and notifying the Executive Board if the operating budget needs to be amended. It would be extremely beneficial if the Treasurer was comfortable working in MS Excel.

The RPEA in FY 2023 does need to contract for the services of a CPA firm to complete a required biennial audit, so that matter would be shouldered by the new Treasurer, with support from the office manager and Executive Vice President. The Treasurer presents the RPEA's monthly financial statements and operating budget at all regular Executive Board meetings. Financial statements are prepared by Sramek Hightower staff in association with the Office Manager and reviewed and approved by the Treasurer. The Treasurer uses this information to update the Excel operating budget with the actuals.

Any RPEA member interested in serving as the Treasurer on the RPEA Executive Board should please send an email the RPEA President (rpea.ak.president@gmail.com), expressing that interest by July 31st. Please provide a good phone number where you can be reached to further discuss your interest.

We have a nearly full board member complement now, and the present board works well together. We encourage any interested member to contact me ASAP. I would like to be able to make a recommendation to the Board and have the new Treasurer in place no later than the September 20th board meeting (we are not meeting in August).

Soliciting for that Elusive Northern Region Vice President Position!

Finally, we continue to seek the interest of RPEA members living in the Northern Region to consider applying for appointment as the Northern Region Vice President on the Executive Board. The Northern Region Vice President generally serves as the Fairbanks Chapter Chair. The position has now been vacant for the last year.

Over the past year, the Board has worked to greatly reduce the workload on Chapter Chairs, creating quarterly all-member meetings conducted by Zoom to cover topics of contemporary interest to all members, regardless of region, leaving it up to the three local chapters to decide the extent to which chapter members want to get together socially. The impact of Covid has greatly reduced the social interactions of RPEA Chapter members, thereby also reducing the programmatic challenges previously placed on chapter officers.

We ask any potentially interested RPEA Northern Region members to contact any member of the Executive Board, but especially current and recent past chapter officers about the role (Brenda Knapp, SE Chapter Chair; Wendy Woolf or Matt Nolan, SC Chapter Officers; or Clark Milne or Charlie Gallagher, former Northern Chapter officers), especially understanding how the role of RPEA chapters has evolved over the last 18 months or so.

If you are interested in the Northern Region Vice President position on the RPEA Executive Board, please contact me, the RPEA President, at your earliest convenience. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

That's it!

The next Executive Board meeting is July 19th, 9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m., followed by a special bylaw work session from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The regular August board meeting is cancelled; next regular Executive Board meeting will be September 20th. The agenda for the July Board meeting and Zoom information will be posted on the RPEA website at <https://rpea-ak.org/eboard.html>.

As you can see, we are encouraging members to get involved in RPEA programs and we look forward to presenting remarkable RHPAB candidates to Governor Dunleavy, finding a new Treasurer, and enticing the emergence of an officer from the Northern Region! Our next

concentrated focus will be on growing our membership through an upcoming membership drive and other associated efforts.

We hope you all are having a great summer, wherever you live, avoiding fires, drought (if possible), and floods. Be well!

Thank you for your continued support of RPEA.

Randall Burns

RPEA President

[***rpea.ak.president@gmail.com***](mailto:rpea.ak.president@gmail.com)

[***http://rpea-ak.org***](http://rpea-ak.org)

Retired Public Employees, your RPEA Membership is paid through . If you need to renew your membership, ***click here***. If you have recently paid your membership dues, please disregard. Thank you for being an RPEA member!

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