



RPEA Southcentral Chapter Membership Meeting Agenda March 13, 2018

Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

December membership meeting – Minutes were approved and posted on the SC Chapter section of our website at rpea.apea-aft.org. Review and approval process: Secretary Kris Warren provides his draft minutes to Fran. Fran reviews and forwards to the speaker to ensure we have accurately reported on speaker's keynote presentation.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Shirley Iverson will give a recap of our financial status.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Today's Membership meeting volunteers: Many thanks to Shirley Iverson, Kris Warren, Mel Monsen, Dixie Hudish, Nancy Mercer, and Wendy Woolf for helping to make this meeting a success.

SC Chapter Board Officer Seats – **Correction** to the December Meeting Agenda: This week I will send a notice to all SC Chapter members seeking nominations for **all** SC Chapter board positions.¹ Please consider becoming a board member for your SC Chapter. The Chapter cannot run without these critical board positions being filled. For questions please contact President Hoffbeck at sharonhoffbeck@gmail.com.

Executive Board Officer Seats – The RPEA Executive Board officer positions of President, Secretary, Director of Medical, and Director of Membership expire on June 30, 2018, the end of their two-year term. The Nominations Notice is in the March 2018 Newsletter.

Benefits Problem? RPEA would like to know and may be able to assist you with filing your appeal. Please contact Sharon Hoffbeck at sharonhoffbeck@gmail.com.

Next Membership Meeting – Tuesday, June 12, 2018 (same time/same place).

Today's Topics & Speakers

New Medicare Cards

Jeanne Larson, Lead Medicare Counselor

Linking Medicare to PERS

Rob Johnson, ARM Board Member

RPEA News and Updates

Sharon Hoffbeck, President

¹ Pursuant to RPEA Bylaws, Section 3, 2.: Each chapter shall elect a Regional Vice-President consistent with Article V, Section 4 of these bylaws. **Elections for all other chapter positions shall be held at the same time** (emphasis added).

**Retired Public Employees of Alaska
Quarterly SC Chapter Meeting Notes
Tuesday, March 13, 2018
Anchorage Senior Activity Center**

Dennis Geary opened the meeting at noon following a tasty meal of “Airline Chicken” provided by the kitchen staff at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center.

Dennis thanked the volunteers who helped organize the meeting, including Shirley Iverson, Mel Monsen, Dixie Hudish, Nancy Mercer, Wendy Woolf and Kris Warren.

The meeting agenda was approved and the past meeting minutes were previously approved by Fran and the note taker.

Shirley Iverson provided a brief Treasurer’s report that the Southcentral Chapter was “Doing very well!”

Dennis reported that nominations were now open for both Chapter and Statewide offices. Interested members should make themselves known to either Fran or Sharon. Nominations close 45 days from the date of the notice.

Jeanné Larson of the state Medicare office was the first speaker. Ms. Larson has worked for the State for the past 12 years in this capacity. She may be reached at 907-269-3680. There are also 2 Medicare counselors stationed at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center as well who are willing and able to help with Medicare questions and problems. New Medicare cards will be in the mail for Alaskans between April and June. The new cards will have random alpha-numeric numbers to replace the old cards which used Social Security numbers for identification. Once you receive your new card you should start using it immediately and destroy the old card. Beware of scams that are impersonating Medicare officials who are asking for funds in order to receive your new card. Medicare will not call you on the phone for anything, they will always contact you by mail or email nor will they ask you for money.

Rob Johnson of the Alaska Retirement Management (ARM) Board provided a history of how it came to be that PERS and TRS health care coverage is secondary to Medicare. Legislation provided that PERS/TRS coverage would be secondary, and a lawsuit filed by NEA in the 90s challenged that legislation as part of a claim having to do with Ad Hoc Post Retirement Pension Adjustments. NEA settled the lawsuit with the state agreeing to pay certain adjustments and the plaintiffs agreeing to no longer challenge legislation leaving Medicare as primary.

RPEA President, Sharon Hoffbeck, provided an update as to RPEA’s issues with the State. An Administrative Order has been signed by the Governor’s office establishing a PERS/TRS Advisory

Board to advise the state on issues pertaining to retiree benefits. However, the Board is comprised of a minority of PERS/TRS members, all of whom are appointed at the discretion of the Governor's office. RPEA is seeking legislative support for a stronger board comprised of a majority of PERS/TRS retirees who are selected by retirees. Rep. Scott Kawasaki has agreed to sponsor this legislation as House Bill 396. RPEA members are encouraged to contact their legislators to ask for their support, especially any Senate Majority members.

The second phase of the Dental, Vision, Audio trial is scheduled to commence in April. Members will recall that this suit was filed by RPEA 2 years ago to determine whether these optional benefits, paid for solely by retirees, were constitutionally protected just as the medical benefits have already determined to be. The Court ruled that these benefits are in fact so protected. The next phase of the trial will be to determine whether those benefits were diminished when Aetna took over the Administration of the plan in 2014, and if so, what will be the remedy. On a side note, Aetna and Moda have had their Administration contracts extended for another year through 2019.

Sharon reminded the members to send her any benefit denials they experience that they believe to be without merit. Aetna has been routinely denying claims for chiropractors and massage therapists.

In response to a question, Sharon reminded members that neither Medicare nor Alaskacare provide Shingles vaccine, which is covered by Medicare Part D but which very few if any PERS/TRS beneficiaries purchase. However, this vaccine can occasionally be received free of charge at the Municipal Health and Human Services office at 9th and L, depending on supply.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 PM.

Next Meeting: June 12, same time, same place.