

Retired Public Employees of Alaska
Southeast Chapter
Minutes of March 11, 2021

Chairperson Brenda Knapp called the meeting to order at 10:05 on a Zoom conference session. Our guest speaker, Rosemary Hagevig, had already joined the Zoom session, so we hurried through a few opening remarks and then let her give her presentation.

Mike Notar reported that local chapter member, Jim Wilson, has agreed to audit our books for this year. Brenda noted that there are only two more meetings before we break for the summer. The only event planned for this summer will be our annual picnic. Gary Miller offered to organize it and Brenda said she would reserve a shelter at Sandy Beach. We hope we can resume in-person meetings in September. Mike will contact St. Paul's and tentatively reserve the social hall space for the appropriate days. There was a quick discussion of upcoming elections. We will have elections for offices at the chapter level and there are several positions on the Executive Board that are up for elections this year. Anyone interested in a position on the E Board should notify the office in Anchorage so they can be included on the ballot.

Brenda then turned the meeting over to Ms. Hagevig. Ms. Hagevig is currently serving on the board of the Alaska Commission on Aging and the board of Bartlett Regional Hospital. She has been active on many non-profit boards in the past. The state Commission on Aging is one of four agencies that receive funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and the Commission has a reciprocal relationship with the Pioneer Homes board. (The board of each entity has a dedicated member from the other board.) The system of Pioneer Homes is unique to Alaska. The Commission is concerned with a number of issues/programs within the state. It actively promotes senior housing and the provisions of the Federal Older Americans Act. The Commission also has been actively working on the state response to the COVID-19 crisis, which predominantly affects older people with other medical conditions. Ms. Hagevig noted that there are limited opportunities in Southeast for senior long-term care.

The minutes of the February meeting were considered. There were no corrections and Kim Metcalfe moved to approve the minutes as presented. Sue Nielson seconded and the motion was approved.

Treasurer Mike Notar reported that the checking account has a balance of \$2,138.61. There were no expenses in the month and the only change was a small amount of interest accrued. The report was accepted.

Cindy Spanyers reported from the Legislative Committee. The most recent events have been dealing with a senator who has refused to abide by the Senate's rules regarding security and mask wearing. The Legislature has been struggling with issues regarding the budget and revenue shortfalls. Current law only allows the state to use 5% of the Earnings Reserve Account each year. There is only about a billion dollars in the Constitutional Budget Reserve Fund, which means additional revenue must be found or they must enact severe cutbacks in spending to balance the budget. The Governor's answer to the problem is to put the issue out to the voters to change the law. Senator Begich has introduced SB 100, which would re-institute a state income tax. The Legislature is also dealing with the unfunded liabilities in the pension systems. Senator Jesse Kiehl has introduced a bill to allow employees to return to a defined benefits retirement system. There are also questions about how Federal COVID relief act monies could help alleviate the budget problems.

There was no other business. There were announcements of a couple of upcoming meetings of concern to RPEA members.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Alan Davis, Secretary