



## Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

### Fort Steilacoom Area Chapter 10

*Evelyn Bogrand, President*

Olympia RPEC Office: 1-800-562-6097 ~ [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org)

#### Notice of Chapter 10 Nominations & Elections of Chapter Leadership

In accordance with the RPEC Chapter 10 Bylaws, we elect Officers and Executive Board Members in every odd-numbered year.

Nominations will be taken at the April 20, 2021 Virtual Membership Meeting. You may also forward them in advance of the meeting to Chapter Secretary Delores Anderson via email at [anderson\\_deloresp@comcast.net](mailto:anderson_deloresp@comcast.net) or telephone at **(253) 474-0845**.

Any member in good standing may nominate her/himself or another member. Elections will be held immediately following the close of nominations at the April Membership Meeting. The newly elected Vice President and two Board members will serve a one-year term of office, with the other two Board positions serving a two-year term. They will all be sworn in at the conclusion of the meeting.

If only one candidate is nominated for a given position, the presiding officer shall immediately declare said candidate elected by acclamation. In the event there is more than one candidate for a particular position, a secret ballot election will be conducted by U.S. mail.

Please consider nominating yourself or another member during this election cycle! For the duration of the COVID pandemic, all meetings are being held virtually so there is no travel time or expense involved. In general, the time commitment is minimal; average

#### RPEC Chapter 10 Virtual Membership Meeting

**Tuesday ~ April 20, 2021 ~ 11:00 AM**

#### Agenda

- **Nominations & Elections for Chapter Leadership Positions**
- **Legislative Session Update**
  - **RPEC District 8 Report**
  - **Other Chapter Business**

#### To Join the Meeting Online

Go to: <http://zoom.us>

Click on: "**Join a Meeting**"

Enter Meeting ID: **894 9078 5286**

Enter Passcode: **842092**

#### To Join the Meeting by Telephone

Dial: **1-253-215-8782**

Enter Meeting ID: **894 9078 5286**

Enter Passcode: **842092**

time spent is attending meetings and carrying out duties is approximately 3-5 hours per month.

**The current Chapter 10 Leadership Team includes:**

President: Evelyn Bogrand	Secretary: Delores Anderson
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President: Olivia Brown	Treasurer: Robert Lenigan
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Vacant	

Chapter Executive Board Member: Sandra Anderson  
Chapter Executive Board Member: Rita Harris  
Chapter Executive Board Member: Vacant  
Chapter Executive Board Member: Vacant

**Nominations are now open for the following Leadership Positions:**

**\*President** – The President presides at all Chapter 10 Membership and Executive Board meetings. The immediate past president serves ex-officio on chapter committees.

**\*Vice-President** – The Vice President assists the President and presides over Chapter Membership and Executive Board Meetings in the absence of the President.

**\*Secretary** – The Secretary takes minutes and notes of the Chapter and Executive Board meetings and retains the records of all proceedings.

**\*Treasurer** – The Treasurer generates and retains all financial records, makes payments, handles arrangements with the Chapter's financial institution(s), files required financial reports, and provides and accounting of fund balance and updates at Chapter Membership Meetings.

**\*Executive Board Members (Minimum of 4)** – Board Members carry out the purposes of the chapter as decided by the membership and/or the Executive Board.

**Henry Stockman Passes at age of 93**

It is with sadness that we mourn the recent loss of Henry Stockman, a long time WFSE and RPEC member activist. After retiring from a 47-year career as an LPN at Western State Hospital, Henry served as a Chapter 10 Executive Board Member, Convention Delegate and Chapter Vice President.

Henry is survived by Peggy, his wife of 69 years, and his children Barbara, Scott, Debbra and Steve. His son John passed away in 2019. We will remember him fondly for his endless sense of humor and dedication to the RPEC organization.

**Post COVID Vaccine Guidance**

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is adopting the guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding post-vaccine behavior. If someone has been fully vaccinated, they can:

- Gather indoors with fully vaccinated people in private residences without wearing a mask and,
- Gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household in private residences (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together) without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

The CDC is quite clear that vaccinated people should continue to wear masks when out in public, avoid crowds and take other precautions when gathering with unvaccinated people who are at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

If a vaccinated person has been around someone with COVID-19, they do not need to stay away from others or get tested unless they have symptoms. However, if a vaccinated person lives in a group setting and is around someone who has COVID-19, they should still stay away from others for 14 days and get tested, even if without symptoms.

Regardless of vaccination status, people should still take steps to protect themselves and others while in public settings. This includes wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

### **Tax-Aide Kicks Off Free Local Tax Preparation**

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program began taking appointments for its free tax preparation and e-filing services on February 12th. Due to the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional face-to-face preparation with a Tax-Aide counselor is being replaced with a Contact-Free approach.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program is an all-volunteer organization whose tax counselors are trained and IRS-certified every year to ensure they understand the latest changes to the U.S. Tax Code. All tax preparation interaction with taxpayers will take place via telephone and video conferencing. **The service is free and will be offered through April 15.**

Appointments for taxpayers living in Washington can be requested by calling 888-OURAARP (888-687-2277) and leaving a voicemail. A volunteer will call back to set up an appointment. Assistance may also be requested through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide website at [www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaide](http://www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaide).

### **CMS Survey is NOT a Scam**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) conducts an ongoing Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS). CMS contracts with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, a respected social science research organization, to conduct the MCBS survey.

If you are contacted by mail to complete the survey, please know that this survey is not a scam. A professional interviewer will contact selected beneficiaries to complete the

survey. If you are chosen to participate, you can contact the NORC Respondent Care Center at 1-866- 856-6672 or email them at [surveyhelp@norc.org](mailto:surveyhelp@norc.org) to confirm the validity of the study and interviewer.

### **RPEC Olympia Headquarters Office Installs New & Improved Phone System**

The Council Office has finally installed our new phone system. You will find things a little different now. While the office remains closed due to COVID, we have implemented a menu system to help direct your calls directly to the person/department you wish to speak with. You may also, upon hearing the message begin when you call, simply enter the person's extension that you are trying to reach. The new extensions are as follows:

Emmett Mills, Administrative Assistant	100
James Cockburn, Executive Director	101
Catherine Walborn, Accountant	102
Tara Jo Heinecke, Membership Coordinator	103
Derek VanSpoor, Information Technology & Communications Specialist	104
SHIBA Ombudsman	105

Our new system is a digital, voice over internet system which also allows us to utilize an application on our mobile phones that mimic our extension at the office. So, when you are calling a staff member, they will either immediately pickup, or if busy, you will get their voicemail. The staff person then receives notification via their phone and email that they have the voicemail.

We hope this system will provide you with a quicker response from the Council Office and allow us to better serve you while we operate remotely.

### **RPEC Executive Director's Report**

**Legislative Bill Update:** The state Senate has taken the first step towards addressing the state's upside-down tax code. **SB 5096**, which would tax high-end capital gains for the top 2% of Washingtonians passed out of the Senate by a 25-24 vote on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The House is expected to quickly approve the bill and send it to the Governor.

This bill takes a forward leap to address the issues with our current tax code and raises over 550 million dollars in revenue for important programs. Legislators are beginning to understand that funding the state by taxing the average retiree 7 times more than the wealthiest and large corporations is not sustainable.

The emergency clause was removed. However, opponents of the legislation will have time to perfect their arguments and legal briefs with the expected court action taking a detour this fall for a referendum vote.

As retirees, RPEC members have an important role in the discussion around the tax code and it is important that your Legislators continue to hear from you. A full list of the bills we are tracking, and their status can be found on the RPEC website at: [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

**We encourage our members to join our weekly Legislative Update Zoom Meeting every Friday at 1:00 PM. To join us via computer or tablet visit: [www.zoom.us/join](http://www.zoom.us/join) and enter the Meeting ID: **828 6634 6713**, then enter the Passcode: **205507**. You can also dial in by telephone at **1-253-215-8782** and enter the same Meeting ID and Passcode.**

**Federal Update:** The U.S. Senate approved their version of American Rescue Act in early March. This legislation includes \$1,400 in direct checks for Americans making under \$75,000, a \$300 per week supplemental unemployment bonus, money for vaccine distribution, and funding to aid schools and state and local governments which will help ease the pressure on their budgets.

The legislation was subsequently approved by Congress and was signed into law by President Biden on March 11th. The sweeping domestic policy injects hundreds of billions into the ailing economy at this most critical time in our nation. Distribution of this third round of stimulus checks to taxpayers will begin as early as Saturday, March 13th.

The Biden Administration announced its plans to improve Social Security Benefits for both current and future retirees. Eligible workers would get a guaranteed minimum benefit equal to at least 125% of the federal poverty level. Retirees who have received benefits for at least 20 years would get a 5% bump. Widows and widowers would receive about 20% more per month.

The Administration also supports changing the measurement for annual cost-of-living increases to the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly, or CPI-E, which could more closely track the expenses retirees face.

AFSCME and RPEC will encourage our Senators and Congressional Representatives to support these improvements.

Sincerely,



James Cockburn  
Executive Director  
RPEC of WA

#### Important Dates

March 29, 2021	RPEC Legislative Advocacy Review Committee Meeting
April 20, 2021	Chapter 10 Virtual Membership Meeting & Chapter Elections
April 26, 2021	RPEC Finance Committee Meeting
April 27, 2021	RPEC Membership Committee
May 6, 2021	RPEC Executive Board Meeting

\*Meetings will be held virtually until it is safe to meet in person\*

For details about meeting times and how to join the meeting, call the RPEC office at 1-800-562-6097 or view the calendar on the RPEC website at: <https://rpecwa.org/calendar-3/>