



## Retired Public Employees Council of WA Chapter 21 – Tri-Cities Area

Robin Rego, President  
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### Chapter 21 Virtual Membership Meeting

**Tuesday – May 25, 2021  
Sign on at 12:45 PM ~ Meeting at 1:00 PM**

#### Featured Speaker

**WA State Representative Brad Klippert  
8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District**

#### Other Agenda Items

**Legislative Session Wrap Up  
RPEC District 4 Report  
Chapter Business**

**To Join the Meeting Online, go to:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81419674160?pwd=aHFqcGdidTBRT2tvUXdhcklZa0lXZz09>

**Or go to: <https://zoom.us/join>  
Enter Meeting ID: **814 1967 4160**  
Enter Passcode: **dvC4sZ****

**To Join the Meeting by Telephone:**  
**Dial: 1-253-215-8782**  
**Enter Meeting ID: 814 1967 4160**  
**Enter Passcode: 876439**

### Chapter President's Message

One of our State Legislators, Senator Sharon Brown was our guest speaker at our Chapter meeting last month on April 27. Sharon spent the time in Q and A and explained some of the intricacies of the legislative process, which helped and sometimes hindered her sincere efforts to look out for our interests.

Representative Brad Klippert will be our guest speaker at the upcoming Chapter Meeting on May 25. This will be a good opportunity to hear first-hand from one of our legislators, if you missed the last two meetings.

Please see the report from our Executive Director James Cockburn on the State Legislative update on page 5. You will see the benefit of belonging to this organization and the importance of being more engaged.

We are working hard to reach out to you to encourage participation in our meetings from the comfort of your home. If you are not inclined to learn

how to use Zoom on a computer, the telephone method works just fine. The dial-in information is included in the meeting notice box on the front page of this newsletter.

We welcome Jeremiah Coughlan, who has stepped up to be our Vice President. Jeremiah and Ismael (Izzy) Rodriguez (Executive Board member) were sworn in by our

RPEC Statewide President Kandy Kraig at our meeting last month. We are still hoping to fill two more Executive Board positions.

RPEC is fortunate to have members that also represent our interests and serve on important boards and committees such as the Select Committee for Pension Policy (SCPP), the Washington State Investment Board (WSIB), the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB), and the Health Care is a Human Right Coalition. We are also lucky have advocates at the federal level, including lobbyists working to protect our Social Security Medicaid and Medicare benefits.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact me at 253-370-9899 or [rarego1213@gmail.com](mailto:rarego1213@gmail.com). I look forward to seeing and/or hearing you on Zoom on Tuesday, May 25 at 1 PM. As a reminder, you will hear my voice on a Robocall and receive an email.

In Solidarity,

Robin Rego, Chapter 21 President

### **About Our May Speaker**

We are fortunate to have Washington State Representative Brad Klippert on deck to join us for our May 25<sup>th</sup> Virtual Membership Meeting. Rep. Klippert was born and raised in Sunnyside and he has served in the state House since 2008. He presently sits on the Children, Youth & Families Committee, the Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee, and is Assistant Ranking Minority Leader on the Public Safety Committee.

Brad holds a master's degree in Teaching from City University in Tacoma. He has taught at elementary, middle, high school and college levels. He also holds a bachelor's degrees from Northwest University in Kirkland in Behavioral Science and Biblical Studies.

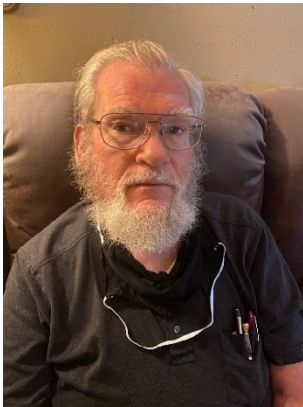


As a 27-year county law enforcement officer, Brad has served communities in western and central Washington. He currently works as a deputy sheriff with the Benton County Sheriff's Office. He also works as a school resource officer and is dedicated to keeping students, faculty, and the community safe during the academic school year. Before his time in central Washington, he worked as a deputy sheriff for Pierce County.

A strong advocate for improving the state's criminal justice system, Brad has worked tirelessly across party lines to ensure justice is fairly and equally applied. He serves on the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, Juvenile Sentencing Reform Task Force, Washington State Justice Reinvestment Task Force, and the Washington Impaired Driving Work Group.

Brad and his wife, Kim, reside in Kennewick and have two daughters and a son.

### **Meet Our Newly Appointed Chapter 21 Leaders!**



**Vice President Jeremiah Coughlan:** The oldest of seven children, Jeremiah was born in Delaware and raised in New Jersey and Massachusetts. He graduated from Acton Boxborough Regional High School in 1964 and went on to earn a BA in Political Science, a minor in Speech and Drama and a minor in Sociology from Western Kentucky University in 1969.

Following college, Jeremiah made his way west and went to work for the Office of Probation and Parole in Seattle as a Parole Officer 1969. He rose to the level of Supervisor before leaving the agency in 1990 after 21 years of service.

Jeremiah moved to the Tri-Cities area in 1977, working as a supervisor for the parole office and moonlighting at Fred Meyer in the Home Electronics department. Jeremiah retired from both jobs in 2012. Post-retirement, the father of six spent the next two years in his motorhome in Alaska before settling back in the Tri-Cities.

On the civic volunteer side of things, Jeremiah is a past president of the Kennewick Band Boosters, past president of the Tri-Cities Amateur Hockey Association and served on the committee that designed the Ben Franklin Transit Main Office and Bus Barn.

### **Ismael “Izzy” Rodriguez, Executive Board Member**

Following graduation from Central Washington University (CWU) in 1987, Izzy went to work with Evergreen Legal Services. As a paralegal, he represented farmworkers and working closely with the United Farm Workers Union (UFW).

In June 1991, Izzy launched a career in safety and health compliance with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I). He joined WFSE Local 1253 soon thereafter, becoming a shop steward, chapter secretary and policy committee member until 2016. Thereafter, he continued as Chapter 1253 Executive Board Member until he retired from L&I in 2021 after nearly 31 years of service.



### **Please Give: Pacific NW Blood Shortage Prompts “Code Red”**

Seattle-based Bloodworks Northwest recently declared a “Code Red” alert in response

to a now four-week-long blood shortage. The blood provider says it now has less than a 24-hour supply, far less than the four-day inventory it needs. Only 85% of blood needed by local patients is now available, according to a news release.

Blood shortages are being felt nationwide, meaning the Pacific Northwest cannot rely on other regions to help. Most donors can give blood every 56 days, and there is no waiting period before giving blood after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

There is a vital need for blood and plasma donors right now! Use your favorite search engine, contact your medical provider, or go to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) to find a local blood bank near you.

### **Why You Should Not Post COVID-19 Vaccination Card on Social Media**

Multiple government agencies and viral videos are warning about the risks of posting vaccine card images online. "Photos of COVID-19 vaccination cards should not be shared on social media. Posting content that includes your date of birth, health care details, or other personally identifiable information can be used to steal your identity," according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The cards show medically sensitive information that you do not want to float around the internet for anyone to see. All those details in one place makes you vulnerable to scams and identity theft.

### **REAL ID Act Enforcement Delayed to 2023**

The Department of Homeland Security recently announced that they will delay enforcing the REAL ID Act until May 3, 2023. This decision is expected to promote social distancing in the months ahead by reducing the number of people visiting driver licensing offices to obtain compliant identification. Passed by Congress in 2005 to strengthen security standards after 9/11, the REAL ID Act had been scheduled to take effect October 1, 2020.

When enforcement of the REAL ID Act does begin, every air traveler 18 years of age or older will need a compliant form of ID in order to fly within the United States, cross a border between the US and another country, or access certain secure federal buildings including military bases.

Washington state issues 2 types of REAL ID-compliant documents: enhanced driver licenses and enhanced ID cards. These can be obtained only by visiting a driver licensing service office. Right now, driver licensing offices in Washington are by appointment-only, and are for people with urgent needs who cannot go online or get what they need some other way.

Residents with standard driver licenses and IDs who will eventually want an enhanced version can renew online now and upgrade later for only the difference in cost (\$4 per year). For further information, go to: <https://info.dol.wa.gov/real-id-enforcement-date-delayed-again/?ref=morenews>

### **U.S. State Department Expected to Expand Travel Advisories Due to COVID Risks**

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. State Department announced plans to expand travel advisories urging U.S. citizens to stay home as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose "unprecedented risks" around the globe. The updated travel guidelines are intended to curb visits "to approximately 80% of countries worldwide" which are currently experiencing dramatic spikes in cases, the department said in a statement. New guidance is expected to be released later this week.

The latest recommendations come as the coronavirus "continues to pose unprecedented risks to travelers," and the new guidelines "better reflect the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's science-based Travel Health Notices," according to the notice.

**To view the latest State Department Travel Advisories by country, go to:**

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html.html>

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

**State Legislative Update:** The 2021 Legislative Session concluded on time on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The final budget preserved the PEBB Medicare Benefit, fully funded the employer contributions to the pension systems, and will enact a progressive tax on high-end capital gains for the first time ever. These achievements are due in no small part to the advocacy of retirees like you, so thank you for reaching out to your legislators. It has made a difference.

Unfortunately, the proposal to provide a one-time increase to Plan 1 retirees did not survive the budget negotiation process. This is especially frustrating given the modest nature of the increase which was capped at \$22 per month, and the fact that it was included in the house budget with unanimous support.

The RPEC Legislative Committee and Executive Board will be working with our leaders, allies, and Legislative Champions to develop strategy to move a proposal for a substantive and consistent COLA in the upcoming 2022 session.

**Monthly Post-Session Legislative Update Zoom Call:** During the post-session interim, we will have a monthly update on our Legislative priorities and activities on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 2:00 pm. Please join us on June 2nd for our first update. We will send an email reminder out as the date nears.

The Zoom login information will be the same each week. To join the weekly update calls via computer, tablet, or smart phone, go to <https://zoom.us/join>. You will need to enter the meeting ID: 828 6634 6713, and the passcode: 205507. Or, via telephone, dial 1-253-215-8782, enter the meeting ID: 828 6634 6713, and passcode: 205507.

**Leadership Training:** Our virtual Leadership Training will be on Monday, June 14th from 10 AM - Noon. This event is designed to help provide Chapter leaders and those looking to get more involved in RPEC with the tools and resources they need to empower and engage their fellow retirees.

All members are encouraged to attend the Leadership Training even if they are not chapter officers.

**To RSVP for this event please visit:**

<https://rpecwa.org/2021-leadership-training/>

**Online Membership**

**Application:** We have updated the "Join RPEC"

page on our website to provide the option for new members to sign up for dues deduction or payment via credit card. Please encourage any fellow retirees to utilize this new convenient and secure option to sign up today at: <https://rpecwa.org/join-rpec/>

Make sure the applicant lists your name in the "Recruited By" field so you can be entered into our membership recruitment rewards program.

Sincerely,



James Cockburn, Executive Director  
Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

**Important Dates – RPEC Meetings & Events**

- May 6, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting
- May 24, 2021 – RPEC Treasurer's Training
- May 25, 2021 – Chapter 21 Membership Meeting
- June 7, 2021 – RPEC Political Action Committee Meeting
- June 14, 2021 – RPEC Leadership Training
- June 18, 2021– RPEC Legislative Committee Meeting
- July 27, 2021 – Chapter 21 Membership Meeting
- July 27, 2021 – RPEC Membership Committee Meeting
- August 16, 2021– RPEC Finance Committee Meeting
- August 24, 2021 – Chapter 21 Membership Meeting
- August 25, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting
- September 28, 2021 – Chapter 21 Membership Meeting
- October 20, 2021– RPEC Membership Committee
- October 26, 2021 – Chapter 21 Membership Meeting
- November 8, 2021 – RPEC Finance Committee Meeting
- November 15, 2021 – RPEC Executive Board Meeting

\*Meetings will take place virtually until such time as 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/>

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**Draft Chapter 21 Membership Meeting Minutes for 3/23/2021**

**Flag Salute**

**Meeting Called to Order:** 1 p.m.

Members present were Robin Rego, Steve Gamble, Dave Fassler, Carol Travis, Shirley Hankins, Ismael (Izzy) Rodrigues.

Guests present were Tara Jo Heinecke, Debbie Lippincott, Jack Cooper, Kandy Kraig, Earl Wilson, Matt Boehnke.

Rep. Boehnke gave a brief update on what is happening in Olympia and what he hopes to get done in this session.

**Minutes** were approved as presented in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bank Balance of \$13,005.66. On subject of Robo Calls there was charge of \$24.00 for March 2020. It could cost maybe \$50.00 a month to do Robo Calls for meeting reminders.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** It was moved and seconded to dissolve the Petty Cash fund and reopen it in the future if needed. Motion passed.

It was moved and seconded to move \$100.00 from Checking to allocate for Robocalls. Motion passed.

President Rego said that we still need Officers (Vice President and Executive Board Members). We are continuing our drive to improve membership attendance. He would like to keep holding Zoom meetings at least through September of this year. We will meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 2:50 p.m.

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**Draft Chapter 21 Officers Meeting Minutes for 4/23/2021**

The Zoom meeting was called to order by Chapter 21 President Robin Rego at 1:57 PM.

The following officers were present: President Robin Rego, Treasurer Steve Gamble and Secretary Carol Travis

After discussion, the following actions were taken:

- M/S/C to appoint Jeremiah Coughlan fill the vacant position of Chapter 21 Vice President.
- M/S/C to appoint Ismael "Izzy" Rodriguez to fill the vacant position of Chapter 21 Executive Board Member.

Both appointees will be sworn in at the next Chapter 21 General Membership Meeting on April 27, 2021.

There was discussion about the need to establish a robocall account, deadlines for monthly newsletters, upcoming RPEC virtual training events for Member Leaders and Chapter Treasurers, and our summer general membership meeting schedule.

- M/S/C to cancel plans for a June 2021 General Membership Meeting.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 2:00 PM

Submitted By,  
Carol A Travis, Secretary

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### **Draft Chapter 21 Membership Meeting Minutes for 4/27/2021**

#### **Flag Salute**

**Meeting Called to Order:** 1 p.m.

Those present gave introductions as way of Sign-In. Those present were Robin Rego, Steve Gamble, Harlan Fortner, Kandy Kraig, Jeremiah Coughlan, Izzy Rodriguez, Sharon Brown, Tara Jo Heinecke, Carol Travis, and Emily (Legislative Assistant for Senator Brown).

Senator Brown gave a short presentation on what is happening around the district, the Hanford Medical Program and the Rainy Day Fund.

**Executive Board Minutes** were approved as read.

Kandy Kraig swore in Izzy and Jeremiah.

Everyone was reminded of the upcoming Leadership and Treasurer training.

**Treasurer's Report:** There is \$13,005.66 in the bank and \$54.00 in petty cash. M/S/C to approve this report. Steve is working on getting E-Banking set up for Robin and Steve.

**Old Business:** The Robocalls are being set up and we are getting information on how to pay for them.

**New Business:** None

**Good of the Order:** Robin thanked everyone for all the work being done to get the Chapter up and going again.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 2:12 p.m.

Submitted By,  
Carol A Travis, Secretary