



RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COUNCIL CHAPTER 3 NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Attend this meeting online on Zoom!

- 1) Go to www.zoom.us
- 2) Click on "Join" in upper-right of screen
- 3) Enter Meeting ID 831 7863 7496
- 4) Passcode 8888
- 5) Or dial 253.205.0468

RPEC Chapter 3 Meeting

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Razzi's Pizzeria

8523 Greenwood Ave N.

(Party Room downstairs)

**Served by Buses #5 from downtown and #45
Parking in back**

**The chapter will pay up to \$10 off
each lunch, plus the tip!**

11:15 Executive Board Meeting

11:45 Arrive for Lunch

**12:00 Guest Speaker: Elena Huizar from
the state Attorney General's Office to de-
scribe the dangers from fraud.**

12:45 Chapter Business Meeting

Food for the Needy: Please bring non-
perishable food items. Kent Questad will
take it to North Helpline Food Bank.

**Wearing masks when not eating or drinking
is strongly suggested given the susceptibili-
ties of our age group.**

Enter our lower meeting room via Razzi's park-
ing lot at the rear of the restaurant, off Palatine
Avenue North. Please allow extra time to park
since new apartments have been built in the
area. There are up to 12 free parking spaces in
Razzi's lot. Please leave them for those with
limited mobility. **This is a fragrance-free
event.**

President's Message

Hello Chapter 3 Members,

An often-overlooked source of important
information is the RPEC website:

www.rpecwa.org. Under the drop-down menus
at the top of the page, you will find a wealth of
information: RPEC history; organizational
structure; Board members and Council Office
staff; member benefits, the latest newsletters
from each chapter; legislative priorities and
updates; the RPEC Constitution/by-laws and
the event calendar, plus much more.

It's an excellent way to stay up to date on our
organization's mission to protect and strengthen
our retirement security!

Our special March speaker is Elena Huizar
from the Office of the Attorney General. She
will talk to us about our rights under the
Consumer Protection Act and show us
strategies on fraud protection and how to avoid
countless scams everywhere. Scammers are
getting more and more sophisticated, so let's
learn from an expert on what we can do to
protect ourselves.

Thanks,

Matt Groshong,
Chapter 3 President
Mgroshong1@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report

Chapter 3 checking balance is \$2,196.37 after
receiving \$1,108.80 from Olympia RPEC for
January dues. Savings balance is now
\$23,086.97, and CD balance: \$3,743.90.

We will be saving excess income of Chapter 3
for September 2024, when we will have the

RPEC State Convention. We expect to send the maximum number of Chapter 3 delegates.

David Rader

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

Everybody was asked to register a pro position on our top priority bills, Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1985 and House Bill (HB) 2481, which would waive the final insurance premium payment the month of subscribers' death to prevent loss of insurance coverage that month. As of our newsletter deadline, both bills are awaiting scheduling for a floor vote. By the time you receive this, we will know the outcome.

INDIVIDUAL RECRUITING RESULTS FOR 2023

Cassie Ingram [RIP], Colleen McGinn, Gregory Routt and Ed Rodriguez recruited 6 new RPEC members. In our district [King County], this was 5 more than Chapter 28 [University], 3 more than Chapter 30 [So King Co], 4 more than Chapter 35 [King Co government], and 6 more than Chapter 46 [Eastside]. Statewide, 3 each recruited by Sharon Etheridge, Chapter 13 [Spokane] and Colleen McGinn were first.

FROM THE STATE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

From the 2-1-24 Membership Committee meeting and approval at the 2-26-2024 Executive Board meeting, the "Recruit 2, Get Your Dues" program will continue. Changes could be made to encourage more members to participate.

MEMBERSHIP TABLE APPEARANCE

On February 24, there was a membership table at the Washington Federation of State Employees [WFSE] Policy Group meeting. Staffing was by Herman Gilman and Colleen McGinn, Chapter 3, Debbie Haigh, Chapter 30 [South King County] and Katie Kerfonta, Chapter 46 [Eastside]. Results: Associate member apps taken for 2 people each, Chapter 6 [Everett] and

Chapter 7 [Bellingham]. 1 contact person for Ch 6. 1 potential member for Chapter 1 [Bonney Lake, Puyallup]. 2 potential members for Chapter 14 [Medical Lake] to retire within the next year, and 1 contact person.

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY:

Kent Questad will take our donation to the North Helpline food bank in Lake City.

Colleen McGinn

March 2024 Executive Director's Report

Federal Advocacy

Call to action on The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023: Your federal retirement benefits are at risk if Congress passes [The Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](#). This legislation will create a 16-member fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Funding for Social Security and Medicare will be targeted for cuts. **Call 844-331-0441 today! Tell Congress to vote NO on this bill and similar proposals calling for fiscal commissions that aim to reduce your hard-earned retirement benefits.** A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Update

Based on the information available to date, it appears the Health Care Authority (HCA) will recommend the PEB Board adopt a new pharmacy benefit for Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare at its April 11 meeting. The medical portion of the plan will remain unchanged. The pharmacy benefit will transition to a Part D employer-managed plan - eligible for federal subsidies. With the transition to the Part D plan, retirees are expected to see a decrease in monthly premiums in 2025. Moda will remain as the plan administrator to provide continuity and a seamless transition for UMP Classic Medicare enrollees. If you are interested in learning more about HCA's proposal to the PEB Board, visit www.hca.wa.gov. This topic

will dominate the agenda of the Board's next meeting on March 21. You can access the agenda, meeting materials, and obtain the Zoom link by navigating to the Retiree webpage at www.hca.wa.org. The PEB Board links are on the right side of the page. RPEC members wishing to comment during the meeting will have opportunities to do so.

State Advocacy

The Legislative session will conclude on March 7. Thus, the information included in this Letter will only be current through the date of publication. To learn more about the status of RPEC's key legislative priorities, access the bill tracker at www.rpecwa.org.

SHB 1985: Ad Hoc COLA for PERS/TRS 1 – The House passed SHB 1985 in early February and funded it in their initial budget proposal. The bill has cleared Senate Ways & Means and Senate Rules and could be voted on the floor on any day. The bill is likely to be funded in the Legislature's final supplemental budget. If the legislation is funded in the final budget act and signed by the Governor, the COLA will be implemented in July.

HB 2481: Month of Death Public Employees Benefits Board Benefit – The bill waives the payment of healthcare premiums for plans managed by PEBB during a retiree's month of death. This bill also has a high likelihood of passing, given its broad support in both chambers.

SSB 5986/HB 2285: Curbing out-of-pocket healthcare costs – The bill curbs the cost for ground ambulance services for healthcare plan enrollees. The bill is supported by all RPEC's healthcare partners and has received strong bipartisan support. It was sent to the Rules Committee on February 26.

ESB 5241: Material changes to the healthcare marketplace – This bill is designed to provide greater protections to consumers due to healthcare mergers, acquisitions, and contracting, with the goal of ensuring that consumers receive the same or greater access to quality, affordable care. The bill was sent to the Rules Committee on February 26.

Legislative Updates: The last weekly legislative update call will take place on March 8. All members are invited to attend from 2-3 p.m. The Zoom link is available at www.rpecwa.org. A final legislative session report will be issued by the Council in April and available to all members on the website. Starting in April, the monthly legislative update calls will be held the first Friday of each month. Please join us on April 5 from 2-3 p.m.

Executive Board Update

At the February 26 Executive Board meeting, the Board unanimously approved the formation of a special task force that will meet virtually to create a process, to be piloted this year and next, for regular review of the organization's governance and fiscal structures. Recruitment will begin soon. It is anticipated that the task force will begin meeting by Zoom in June. The Board also tasked the Membership Committee with developing plans to recruit and engage former union leaders and those with workplace leadership experience to become active in RPEC chapters. The Legislative Committee was tasked with embellishing the organization's federal policy and legislative agenda. The Executive Board's next meeting is on May 6 via Zoom. The link and more details are available at www.rpecwa.org. All members are invited to attend.

Upcoming Events

Visit www.rpecwa.org for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

- March 7 Sine Die (end of the legislative session)
- March 8 Last weekly Legislative Update call (2 p.m.)
- March 14 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- March 15 Legislative Committee (10 a.m.)
- March 15 Open Zoom Convention Questions (10a.m.-4p.m.)
 - Stop by anytime if you have questions.
- March 21 PEBB meeting (9-4 p.m.)
- March 22 Political Action Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 5 Monthly Legislative Update call (2 p.m.)
- April 11 PEBB meeting (9-4 p.m.)
- April 11 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)
- April 12 Legislative Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 16 Select Committee on Pension Policy (10 a.m.)
- April 19 Pension Policy Workgroup (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Membership Committee (10 a.m.)
- April 25 Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 p.m.)