



# Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 44 – Adams-Lincoln County Area

*Callie Moore, President (509) 659-1513*

## Chapter President's Message

We hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well in this new year. It seems like ages since we last gathered for an in-person luncheon meeting. Little did we know at the time, that we would be plunged into a world-wide pandemic for the better part of a year with no end in sight for the immediate future.

Despite the circumstances, RPEC has continued to hum along at the statewide level. Staff have been largely been working remotely from their homes since mid-March. All meetings and events, including our Biennial RPEC Convention, have been conducted via the internet, emails, and conference calls.

At the Chapter 44 level however, we have not fared as well. While we gained some ten members in this past year, we have also suffered some losses as members passed away. Our current membership stands at 45.

We have always been geographically challenged as a group, and distance prevented many members from participating in our pre-pandemic in-person meetings. Our current Chapter Officers have valiantly served well beyond their terms of office and are not inclined to continue to do so indefinitely.

**Unless there are some other members who would be willing to step up to the plate, we will recommend dissolution of Chapter 44 to the membership at our virtual meeting on January 26, 2021.** This is not to say that we will not continue to support the RPEC organization at the district and statewide levels! We will continue to heed the call to contact our legislators and support the fight to protect the benefits and rights that we

## Chapter 44 Virtual Membership Meeting Tuesday – January 26, 2020

**Sign on at 9:45 AM ~ Meeting at 10:00 AM**

### Featured Speaker

**James Cockburn, Executive Director  
Retired Public Employees Council of WA  
Re: Legislative Priorities & Session Update**

**~Special Order of Business~  
Chapter 44 Reorganization or Dissolution  
**Note: Votes may be taken****

### To Join the Meeting Online

Go to: <https://zoom.us/>  
Click on: **“Join a Meeting”**  
Enter Meeting ID: **878 7704 0205**  
Enter Passcode: **600421**

### To Join the Meeting by Telephone

Dial: **1-253-215-8782**  
Enter Meeting ID: **878 7704 0205**  
Enter Passcode: **600421**

have earned and we strongly encourage all members to join us in doing so.

**Whether we nominate and elect new chapter leaders, or decide to dissolve the chapter, every member has a voice and a vote in the future of our small group. Please make every effort to join the discussion on Tuesday January 26, 2021. You can participate by regular telephone or online using a computer, tablet, or smartphone by following the steps outlined in the Meeting Notice Box on Page 1 of this newsletter.**

**In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any ideas, questions, or concerns.**

**In Solidarity,**

**Callie Moore, RPEC Chapter 44 President  
509-659-1513 or [calliem1@centurytel.net](mailto:calliem1@centurytel.net)**

**Tara Jo Heinecke, Membership Coordinator  
206-708-5578 or [Tarajo@rpecwa.org](mailto:Tarajo@rpecwa.org)**

**Hard Won Legislative Victory Delivered a COLA for PERS 1 Members:** Governor Jay Inslee signed HB 1390 into law on April 3, 2020. Plan 1 Retirees received a 3% increase to their pension payment (capped at a maximum of \$62.50) beginning in July. We were tremendously grateful that the Governor chose to stand with and protect Plan 1 retirees during the COVID-19 crisis.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the state was facing a multi-billion-dollar reduction in revenue, and the Governor made the difficult decision to veto nearly 150 worthwhile and important investments totaling \$445 million dollars out of the state budget on the same day that he signed our COLA Bill into law.

**2020 RPEC of Washington Convention Update:** In the interest of member safety and health concerns, a one day “virtual” RPEC Convention was held on Wednesday September 23, 2020 instead of the usual in-person event. The purpose of the convention is to elect statewide Officers and District Representatives to lead us over the next two years, and to consider and adopt resolutions that determine the future priorities that will shape the course of our statewide organization.

The convention was conducted using the Zoom audio-visual program, which allowed members to participate through telephone or the internet with a computer, tablet, or smart phone.

**Congrats to Our Newly Elected Statewide Officers and Executive Board Members!**

President: Kandy Kraig  
Secretary: Mary Marbles  
District 1 Rep: Joel Hall  
District 2 Rep: Tomas Sandoval  
District 3 Rep: Karol Hoffman  
District 4 Rep: Jack Cooper  
District 5 Rep: Maurice Garrott

Vice President: Bill Ziegler  
Treasurer: Clair Olivers  
District 6 Rep: Johanna Standish  
District 7 Rep: Lisa Randlette  
District 8 Rep: Carol Dotlich  
District 9 Rep: Alma-jean Marion  
District 9 Rep: Claude Burfect

Please join us in offering our new leadership team your support and encouragement! Thank you to all candidates for their willingness to serve, and a super big thanks to our outgoing Vice President Nancy Heley of Olympia Area Chapter 2, Treasurer Johanna Standish of Grays Harbor Chapter 18 for their years of dedication and service.

### **Key Actions Taken by Delegates at the RPEC Virtual Convention on September 23, 2020**

#### **Summary of Convention Resolutions Passed:**

- To evaluate RPEC legislative efforts at all levels to ensure effectiveness
- To allow chapters to assess the cost/benefit of allowing members to voluntarily elect email newsletters in lieu of, or in addition to, hard copies
- To ensure that, within 90 days of election, Council Executive Board members shall receive board orientation/training
- A late resolution pertaining to universal healthcare was sent on to the Resolutions Committee for consideration

#### **Summary of Constitutional Amendment Passed:**

- Retired employees of public employee unions, excluding law enforcement and firefighters' unions, are eligible for RPEC membership
- Members who prefer not to have RPEC dues deducted from their pension checks by DRS, may opt to pay dues directly to RPEC by cash, check (annual preferred), credit card, bill pay or other secure electronic payment from a personal account
- The annual RPEC Audit Report will be sent to Chapter Presidents in non-convention years
- The Executive board may meet by audio or video on request of the President in accordance with Appendix E of the International Constitution

#### **Other Business:**

- RPEC Legislative Priorities for the 2021 session were fine-tuned

**The 2021 Legislative Session is now underway.** Due to the pandemic and budgetary impacts at the state level resulting from the economic fallout, it will truly be a session like no other.

Some changes to expect this session include:

- As always, the first order of business is to adopt rules and a calendar for the session, outlining cutoff dates to introduce bills and such. This year, legislators voted to adopt rules that will allow them to meet and vote virtually rather than in person for meetings.
- The offices of Senators, House Members and the Capitol Building itself will not be open to the public.
- Most legislative assistants will be working remotely throughout the session.
- There will be no opportunities for constituents and lobbyists to meet with

- legislators in person or pull them “off the floor” for a quick conversation.
- Public testimony on bills will only be held virtually. There will be no opportunity to offer comments in person.
  - When the bodies meet for floor action, many legislators will be seated in the capitol rotunda and environs since the senate and house chambers are not large enough to socially distance. Big screens will be set up throughout the rotunda area so legislators can view the podium. Cameras and microphones will be set up so that legislators can speak, make motions, vote, and conduct the business of the legislature from wherever they are seated in the building. The proceedings will be live streamed online and televised on TVW ([www.tvw.org](http://www.tvw.org)).
  - While it may come as no surprise, it is worth noting that there will not be an Inaugural Ball this year.
  - Constituent groups (including RPEC) have often hosted Legislative Receptions to afford their members the opportunity to interact and meet directly with elected officials in a less formal manner. There will not be any of these types of events this session.

### **RPEC Executive Director’s Report**

**Happy New Year!** I hope the new year brings you continued health, safety, and many reasons for renewed hope and gratitude.

**Federal Update:** Federal Lawmakers have finally passed a new COVID-19 relief bill. The package includes a second round of direct payments and boosts unemployment benefits. Unfortunately, it does not provide support to state and local governments, which will make balancing the state’s budget more difficult for Legislators. \$600 relief payments are expected to begin arriving in early January.

**2021 Virtual Legislative Day:** Our 2021 Legislative Day will look different from previous events. It will kick off with a virtual Legislative Training on Monday, February 8th, 2021 at 10:00 am via the Zoom video platform.

Then, throughout the week of February 8-12th, members will attend virtual meetings with their legislators. These meetings will be scheduled by RPEC staff. Attendees will be asked to indicate which day works best for them during registration.

**Fast Action Team and Legislative Text Alerts:** We are looking for members to sign up to be a part of our Fast Action Team. Fast Action Team members may receive time sensitive requests during the legislative session to testify on bills or call/email key Legislators.

- **To sign up for the Fast Action Team, please email us at: [info@rpecwa.org](mailto:info@rpecwa.org)**
- **To sign up for our text message alerts on important Legislative actions, please text RPEC at 237263.**

Sincerely,

James Cockburn, Executive Director  
Retired Public Employees Council of WA