



Retired Public Employees Council
Chapter 20 – Cowlitz & Wahkiakum Counties
Judy DeVoe, President
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Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 21, 2022
Meeting Time: Lunch at Noon, Meeting at 1:00 PM
Meeting Place: Longview Country Club
Meeting Address: 41 Country Club Dr
Longview, WA 98632

Dear Chapter 20 members,

Please join us at our chapter meeting on **Tuesday, June 21**. The no-host lunch will begin at noon, and our meeting will begin at 1:00 PM. **Our guest speaker will be Cowlitz County Sheriff Brad Thurman** who is running for re-election this year. We will also be finalizing which members will serve as delegates to the RPEC Convention.

Our meeting will have a virtual component, meaning that you can connect to it via Zoom if it isn't convenient for you to attend in-person. Please find the meeting login information below:

Computer/Tablet/Smartphone

Go to www.zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 811 7395 8572
Passcode: 545558

Telephone

Dial in: (253) 215-8782
Meeting ID: 811 7395 8572
Passcode: 545558

We look forward to seeing you on June 21!

Judy DeVoe
President, Chapter 20
Retired Public Employees Council

Executive Director's Report

Our pace quickens in the Council Office, as we dive deeply into the logistics associated with the Political Action Committee (PAC), work to expand relationships to increase the visibility of RPEC and the value of membership and address the many moving parts that come together to ensure a successful Convention. Here's a round-up of our latest news:

Free annual RPEC membership

June marks the kick-off of Recruit 2, Get Your Dues, a member-to-member recruitment campaign. For every two new members you recruit, you will receive a check for \$84! To get credit, your name must appear in the "Recruited by" field on the new members' membership applications. Associate members do not count until they become full dues-paying members. Checks will only be issued to current members in good standing. If you recruit just two new members, your annual membership in RPEC will be essentially free for a year! The chapter that recruits the most new members per capita, and the top-performing member-to-member recruiters will be highlighted in the Executive Director's Monthly Letter and the quarterly newsletter. How many new members can you and your chapter recruit to join RPEC?

Leadership training, June 13 & 17

Please plan to join us for our annual Leadership Training via Zoom on June 13. The training is designed for all new and returning chapter leaders and members who may have an interest in serving in a chapter or Council leadership role in the future. The training will cover everything you need to know about RPEC, the Council Office, and the roles and responsibilities of chapter leaders. Special breakout sessions are planned in the afternoon for key leadership roles, including chapter presidents and secretaries.

On June 17, AFSCME will host a Financial Standards workshop for all presidents and treasurers. This training is also open to all members who have an interest in learning more about financial reporting for chapters.

Council staff will be leading monthly Leadership Calls for all chapter leaders and anyone interested in learning more about chapter leadership. The schedule of topics for the monthly Leadership Calls will be provided at the June training sessions, promoted through the events calendar on the website at www.rpecwa.org and promoted through my monthly letter to chapter leaders. The summer Leadership Calls will be held on July 22 and August 19.

PAC individual contributions reach new record high

Through your resounding support for our PAC, individual member contributions have nearly tripled this month. Thank you for stepping forward and providing pension deductions and individual cash contributions. Soon, the PAC will be meeting to disburse the funds to worthy candidates. The funds are especially critical now due to the impending primary election on August 2, and many pivotal races in both chambers. With your help, RPEC's funds will support candidates who prioritize our issues.

PAC endorsements

The PAC finalized the list of early endorsements of incumbents and has sent candidate questionnaires to those who we have not previously endorsed. We have consulted with our lobbyist for insights on the most critical races to help inform final endorsements and the distribution of PAC contributions leading into the primary election on August 2. In addition, this month, PAC and Council leaders will also be interviewing the candidates for Secretary of State to identify endorsements. The full list of endorsements will appear in the summer edition of the Council membership newsletter, which will be published in early July.

Are you a policy wonk? Do you enjoy following the political landscape in Washington? If so, there are and will be many opportunities for you to volunteer your time during campaign season. One of the most immediate ways you can get involved is to conduct candidate interviews that will be coordinated by Council staff. Chapters that are interested in conducting candidate interviews in local legislative races should contact Emmett Mills at emmett.mills@rpecwa.org as soon as possible.

In addition, candidates running for state offices always need help with their campaigns. Volunteering is a great way to introduce those running for office for the first time to RPEC and our legislative priorities. Claude Burfect, District 9 representative, will be sharing best practices for candidate relationship-building on the July 6 Monthly Legislative Call.

If you're not available to volunteer now, there will be opportunities in mid-July to participate in phone banking organized by WFSE/Council 28 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Scripts are provided and all calls will be made

to union members to inform them about key races and endorsed candidates. If you have interest in getting involved, reach out to your chapter president. More details to follow.

ACO REACH – help us learn more to inform legislative action

Over the past few months, members and Council staff have been hearing and learning about ACO REACH, a federal program under the auspices of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation. Under this program, groups or coalitions of medical providers coordinate care, take on different levels of financial risk, in return for the ability to provide beneficiaries (retirees) with enhanced benefits. The goal and ultimate test of the model, from the retiree perspective, is whether this new arrangement can improve the quality of care, especially for those with complex care needs. The program was recently revamped by the Biden Administration to remove concerning features added by the previous administration. ACOs (Accountable Care Organizations) began under the Obama administration. The program is being piloted through December 2026.

As an affiliate of the AFSCME Retirees, RPEC relies on AFSCME Retirees to provide counsel and support regarding our federal relations priorities. Ann Widger, AFSCME Retirees Director, participated in the Special Executive Board, held on May 26, to provide more information and answer questions. To date, many national unions are monitoring the program and have not taken a formal position. Some local retiree organizations have signed on to letters opposing the program.

The Board approved the motion below, calling upon staff to undertake additional research that will be shared with the Legislative Committee for the development of a letter to policy makers that articulates the concerns and issues of our members. We also anticipate teaming with AFSCME Retirees on our next steps.

Some of our members have already received information about ACOs and ACO REACH through their medical providers. Members from Chapters 13 and 27 have provided us with samples of the kinds of brochures, fact sheets and letters they are receiving.

Have you received information from your medical provider about ACO REACH? We would appreciate receiving a copy of the materials you have received. What are your concerns about the proposed program and the materials you have received? We want to hear from you to inform our next steps. Email me at me: laurie.weidner@rpecwa.org.

Executive Board Motion:

M/S/C: The Committee recommends the Executive Board adopt the following position: RPEC follow the counsel of AFSCME Retirees and will monitor this issue with the intent of crafting our own communication to the Congressional delegation focused on the specific concerns of our members. Staff, in concert with the Executive Committee, will broaden education of and outreach to members about this program. Staff, in concert with the Executive Board and chapter leaders, will gather more information from other partner organizations and examples of materials being sent to members. This information will be used to craft our own communication to the Congressional delegation that will outline member concerns aligned with our federal policy priorities.

Search begins for new administrative assistant

Kelly Houck, who has been with RPEC since last summer, has accepted an exciting new opportunity with the WA Department of Ecology in Lacey. Kelly's degree is in biology, and she is excited to be moving into a role that will pave the way for her to use her degree. Her last day with us will be June 16. Please extend thanks to her for her service.

We are searching for a new administrative assistant. A temporary staffer will fill the position while we search for a permanent candidate. The job description is posted on the website at www.rpecwa.org.

Nominees sought for Norm Schut Award

Please send in your nominations for the Norm Schut Award. The award is given to a member in good standing who has provided exceptional service to RPEC. Nominations are due in writing to the Council Office no later than August 5. The awardee will be chosen by secret ballot by the Executive Board at the August 24 meeting. If you have questions, please call the Council Office.

Important Dates

Visit the RPEC website at www.rpecwa.org for a full calendar of Council and chapter events and meetings. All meetings noted are virtual via Zoom except Convention, which will be held in person in Wenatchee in September.

June 13: Leadership Training

June 14: PAC meeting

June 17: AFSCME Financial Standards Training

June 27: Legislative Committee meeting

July 1: Deadline for Convention Delegate Registration

July 6: Monthly Legislative Update (guest presenter will be Claude Burfect, District 9 representative)

July 22: Monthly Leadership call (chapter leaders and all those interested)

July 25: Membership Committee meeting

August 3: Finance Committee Meeting

August 5: Deadline for the submission of Norm Schut Award nominees

August 13: Resolution/amendment submittal deadline for Convention

August 19: Monthly Leadership Call (chapter leaders and all those interested)

August 24: Executive Board meeting

Sept 27-29: RPEC Convention (in-person, Wenatchee)

November 14: Executive Board meeting

Best,
Laurie