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**Retired Public Employees Council  
Chapter 30 – South King County  
Debbie Haigh, President – (509) 688-9489  
[debbie14haigh@yahoo.com](mailto:debbie14haigh@yahoo.com)**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
**Time:** 12:00 PM  
**Place:** Tuscany Restaurant  
**Address:** 21830 Marine View Dr S, Des Moines, WA 98198

CHAPTER 30 EXECUTIVE BOARD	
President	Debbie Haigh
Vice-President	George Chan
Secretary	Wilhelmina Daniel
Treasurer	Bill Riedler
Executive Board Member at Large	Ida Ott
Executive Board Member at Large	Harris Smith
Executive Board Member at Large	(vacant)

**OFFICIAL NOTICE OF CHAPTER 30 NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS**

*Chapter 30 Nominations & Elections will take place at the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:** The next Chapter 30 meeting will be held at 12:00 pm on March 13, 2024, at the Tuscan Restaurant located at 21830 Marine View Dr S Des Moines WA 98198. The Chapter will pay up to \$20.00 for your lunch (excluding tip, taxes, non-alcoholic drinks). The executive board will meet one hour (11:00 am) prior to the general union meeting.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Due to the cost of publishing our Chapter 30 newsletter (estimated cost \$1,349.16 yearly) we will be sending out the newsletters via email. I have a majority of your emails already, but I don't have everyone's. Some members did not include their emails when they joined RPEC. Could you please email me at [debbie14haigh@yahoo.com](mailto:debbie14haigh@yahoo.com) with your email address so I can update your information? For our members who do not have email/internet we will continue to send a printed copy to your address. We know it's important for our members to be current on events that could impact their future.

**ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD:** Looking to further your involvement in your retirees' Chapter? We will be holding elections for chapter officers, executive board, and trustee positions on March 13th. These positions are for a one-year commitment. If you are unable to attend the March lunch meeting and are interested in one of the positions, please email your name and what position you are interested in, and I will add your name to the nomination list. If only one candidate is nominated for a position, the candidate will be declared elected by acclamation. In the event there is more than one candidate for the position, a secret ballot election will be conducted by U.S. mail.

## Duties of the Positions:

President – presides at chapter and executive board meetings. Serves ex-officio on other chapter committees;

Vice-President – assists the President and serves as President if needed;

Secretary – Keeps and reports minutes and notes of chapter and executive board meetings;

Treasurer – cosigns checks and handles the chapter's financial affairs;

Executive Board member at large – participate in fulfilling the objectives of the chapter.

Trustee – annually audit the finances of the chapter and report to the membership on the results of the audit. Trustees are not members of the Executive Board.

**PRESENTATION:** At our last meeting we invited Traci Buxton, Mayor of Des Moines, to meet our members. Traci stated that the City of Des Moines is a mostly residential community that is situated along Puget Sound midway between Seattle and Tacoma in Washington state. The population as of July 1, 2022, was 32,408 and was the 39th largest city in the state. Des Moines is a long and narrow city, 6.3 miles long and 2.1 wide covering 4,340 acres. Major employers in Des Moines are Highline School District, Highline College, City of Des Moines, Federal Aviation Administration's Northwest Mountain Headquarters and two retirement communities - Wesley and Judson Park. She encouraged our members to check out the senior activity center which has trips, activities, and lunch. They want to create a sense of community for older adults and their families.

If you would like to have one of your representatives come to our meeting, please contact me. We would like to let these officials know that we have concerns about our pensions, social security, healthcare, utility costs, and housing.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Recruitment of the highest number of new members in more than a decade. The Council Office's efforts spring 2023 added 1,600 new members to RPEC! The 2024 Blind Mailing is under way.

As always, to keep our union strong we have two ways to encourage new members to join our organization. The *Recruit 2, Get Your Dues* program asks current members to contact co-workers to sign up to be a member. Many of us have family/friends that will be retiring within 18 months from a PERS, PSERS, SERS, or TRS plan and they can join us for a free membership until their retirement date. Associate members receive the RPEC newsletter, chapter newsletters and meeting notices, and may attend chapter meetings and the annual convention as a guest.

**GIFT CARD DRAWING:** There will be two drawings for \$100 gift cards at the end of the meeting. You will need to be present to win.

Debbie Haigh  
President, RPEC Chapter 30

## **February 2024 Executive Director's Report**

We are now about 1/3 of the way through the short, 60-day legislative session. Thanks to your individual and collective efforts, our priorities are known by legislators and are moving through the legislative process.

### **Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Update**

In response to our budget proviso from the 2023 legislative session, the Health Care Authority (HCA) released the findings of a study highlighting healthcare plan options that would have the same excellent benefits available through the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Classic Medicare but would have more affordable premiums. The report will be discussed by the PEB Board at its annual retreat on February 1<sup>st</sup>. HCA is recommending the adoption of a new configuration of UMP Classic Medicare. The medical benefits will remain unchanged in the new configuration. The pharmacy benefit would shift to an employer-managed Plan D pharmacy plan that nearly mirrors what is currently available in UMP Classic Medicare. HCA estimates this change will save retirees upwards of \$200 per month on premium costs. The new configuration is more affordable because the Plan D pharmacy benefit would be eligible for federal pharmaceutical drug subsidies. HCA will be hosting three virtual public forums and one in-person public forum in February to give retirees an opportunity to share feedback on this proposed new configuration. Details about how to register for the public forums will be available at [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov). Information will also be published in the weekly NewsFlash and at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **State Advocacy**

*Legislative Day 2024:* Eighty-three meetings were conducted with legislators and staff. All told, nearly 200 RPEC and WEA-R members participated. We appreciate the excellent meeting summaries provided by attendees. This information will be useful in the spring as RPEC's Political Action Committee (PAC) considers endorsements for those seeking reelection.

*Ad Hoc COLA for PERS/TRS 1:* Thanks to your efforts and meetings that we have also coordinated with top fiscal policy decision-makers, Substitute HB 1985 is poised for a House floor vote. The bill will provide a one-time 3% COLA for retirees vested in Plans 1 with a cap of \$110 per month. Please reach out to your legislators and urge them to continue to support this bill.

*Slightly lower premiums for the priciest PEBB healthcare plans:* Through our efforts with the Office of Fiscal Management and fiscal policy leaders, the Governor provided a \$10 increase to the Medicare Explicit Subsidy in his preliminary operating budget. The state provides the subsidy to lower monthly premium costs. Those who have chosen the more expensive healthcare plans will benefit from the increase. As budget negotiations begin in February, we will be advocating for this increase to remain in the final budget act.

*Weekly Legislative Update & bill tracker:* All members are invited to attend the weekly Legislative Update held each Friday via Zoom from 2-3 p.m. The bill tracker is also updated each Friday. The tracker and Zoom link for the Friday Legislative Update are available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Federal Advocacy**

*Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 Moves to House Vote:* Your federal retirement benefits are, again, at risk thanks to legislation that was approved in January in the House Budget Committee and is poised for a full House vote. The [Fiscal Commission Act of 2023 \(H.R. 5779\)](https://www.congress.gov/bills/118/5779) will create a 16-member

fiscal commission to search for ways to reduce the national deficit and balance the national budget. Retiree and senior advocacy organizations fear the Commission will prioritize Social Security and Medicare funding cuts over other federal expenditures. RPEC is sending official communication to House delegation members urging them to protect Social Security and Medicare benefits. A detailed [position paper](#) about the proposed debt commission is available at <https://retiredamericans.org>.

### **Executive Board Approves Strategic Plan**

The Executive Board approved RPEC's strategic plan at its November meeting. The plan will guide RPEC's priorities through 2027. The plan was informed by research conducted in spring 2023 by AFSCME Retirees and data gathered by the Council Office. A background document, summarizing the strategic plan goals, is available at [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org).

### **Upcoming Events**

Visit [www.rpecwa.org](http://www.rpecwa.org) for a full calendar of Council Office and chapter meetings.

Feb. 22 – PEBB UMP Classic Medicare Town Hall (2:00 pm, virtual)

Feb. 22 – Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 pm)

Feb. 23 – Legislative Update Call (2:00 pm)

Feb. 26 – Executive Board Meeting (9:00 am)

Feb. 29 – PEBB UMP Classic Medicare Town Hall, in-person in Olympia (10:00 am)

Mar. 1 – Legislative Update Call (2:00 pm)

Mar. 7 – Sine Die (end of Legislative Session)

Mar. 8 – Legislative Update Call (2:00 pm)

Mar. 14 – Healthcare Workgroup (3:30 pm)

Mar. 15 – Legislative Committee Meeting (10:00 am)

**Mar. 15 – Legislative Update Call (2:00 pm)**