

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Retired Employees of Alameda County
Monday March 13, 2023, 9:30 A.M.**

**Fairview Metropolitan Golf Course
10051 Doolittle Drive, Oakland, California**

Alicia Baptista, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM

Roll Call: Alicia Baptista, Renaye Johnson, Paul Reeves, Suman Sharma, Connie Land, Dawn Stevenson, and Linda Slater were present. Michael Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, Charo Panesi-Guerra, REAC Member and Administrative Assistant, Jon Orellana, REAC Director Emeritus, Rosalie Masuda, REAC member, Cheryl Watson, REAC Member, and Patty Hilst, REAC Member, were also present.

Minutes: Minutes of the February 13, 2023 REAC Board meeting were reviewed. Linda moved that the February 13, 2023 REAC Board Minutes be approved as submitted. Connie seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Announcements & Communications: There was no additional information to report.

ACERA: Michael Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, began his report on the February 2023 Retirees Committee meeting, which was held on February 1, 2023. Items discussed at that meeting included the Annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). The annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculation resulted in a change of 4.88%. Government Code Sections 31870 and 31870.1 require that the percentage change should be rounded to the nearest one-half percent, which is 5.0%. All Tier 1 and Tier 3 retirees/payees will receive a COLA increase of 3.0%. Tiers 2 and 4 retirees/payees will receive a COLA increase of 2.0%. Tiers 1 and 3 will bank 2.0% and Tiers 2 and 4 will bank 3.0%.

Michael also provided an explanation of the Supplemental COLA. In 1998, by the Board of Retirement action, the Supplemental Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) benefit was restructured to provide a benefit that maintained retiree purchasing power at no less than 85% of the member's original benefit. Therefore, those retirees who have an accumulated loss of purchasing power of 15% due to inflation are eligible to receive this benefit. There is an average of 649 retirees/payees (156 Tier 1 and 493 Tier 2) receiving the Supplemental COLA. The cost of this benefit for 2022 was \$941,730.91 and is paid for out of the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR).

Michael gave a brief report on the upcoming Annual Health Care Planning Meeting. ACERA Staff hosts an annual Health Care Planning meeting with Trustees, ACRE and REAC Board Members, their Benefits Consultant, and the County Benefits Management team. Last year this meeting was held virtually due to concerns related to the spread of the COVID-19 Coronavirus.

The Health Care Planning meeting is designed to discuss global issues, affecting multiple members, who are enrolled in a medical, dental and vision plans offered through ACERA or Via Benefits. The Health Care Planning meeting is a precursor to the annual renewal letters ACERA Staff sends to the County of Alameda as well as ACERA's dental and vision carriers for the next plan year. Concerns raised by both REAC and ACRE are often included in those renewal letters. The meeting this year has been tentatively set for April 5th, immediately following the Retirees Committee meeting.

Michael reported on ACERA's plan to conduct a Request for Information (RFI) for Individual Medical Plans Coverage and Services. ACERA currently provides individual medical and prescription drug plan coverage to Non-Medicare eligible retirees (early retirees) living outside ACERA's group plan carriers service areas and to Medicare eligible retirees, regardless of location. Subsidies toward plan costs are funded by ACERA, based on eligibility through Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRA's). ACERA contracts with Willis Towers Watson's (WTW) Via Benefits to provide both Benefit Advisory services and HRA administration to retirees. The Board of Retirement's Service Provider Policy requires contracts such as these go to bid every five years in order to determine if ACERA is receiving services that are competitive and appropriately priced.

Linda asked if current retirees, who are using Via Benefits, would be grandfathered in if any changes were made. Michael said that will be one of questions asked during this process.

Michael also reported that the 1099's were mailed the week of January 17th. The 1099's did not include the member's full Social Security numbers which was previously a concern.

ACERA surveyed members after the 2022 ACERA Virtual Health and Wellness Fair, and found that 54% preferred the virtual health fair, and 25% of the remainder liked the virtual health fair as much as the previous in-person event. The 2023 Health and Wellness Fair will be a virtual event.

Treasurer's Report: Suman presented the February 2023 Treasurer's Report. Receipts totaled \$8,170.30 and Disbursements totaled \$6,274.93. Suman reported that D&O Stipends totaled \$850, Red Arrow charges totaled \$1,792.90, and that Administrative Support costs totaled \$1,638.75. There were no unusual receipts or disbursements. The beginning check book balance was \$103,534.01 and the ending balance was \$105,429.38. Total Assets were \$236,393.66. Connie moved that the February 2023 Treasurer's Report be approved as submitted. Linda seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association): Connie provided an update on the CRCEA Long Term Care Ad Hoc Committee. As Connie reported previously, the Long Term Care Ad Hoc Committee is undertaking a project to publish an online petition urging Governor Newsom and the State Legislature to enact a program providing compensation to CalPERS policyholders who have been harmed by CalPERS' mismanagement of the Long Term Care Insurance Program.

Currently, the committee is in the process of compiling lists of organizations with email addresses to send the petition to. Work is continuing in this area with a lot of progress being made. The CRCEA Board meets on Wednesday March 15, 2023 at which time they are expecting to receive another update on the project.

Connie reported that the additional comments discussed at last month's Board meeting have been included in the CRCEA survey and that she will be submitting our survey today. The survey responses from all counties will be compiled and presented at the Spring Conference in April, 2023.

Connie reminded the Board that it will be REAC's turn to host the CRCEA Conference in the Fall of 2025. She stressed the importance of our beginning the planning now. There are guidelines on the CRCEA's website which we can use to help us. Many counties start their planning process 2 years in advance by getting sponsors, negotiating hotel room rates, creating a budget for the event, etc. As part of our planning process, she recommends that 2-3 REAC members attend the Spring and Fall Conferences to gain an

understanding of what it takes to be the Host County. Jon asked if there was any discussion regarding holding just one conference per year? Connie reported that yes, there was a great deal of discussions ongoing, which is why CRCEA requested each county complete the survey.

Connie also reminded the Board that the CRCEA 2023 Spring Conference will be held April 23-26, 2023 at the Ontario Airport Hotel. The host county is Retired Employees of San Bernardino (RESBC). Hotel room rates are \$119 per night, plus taxes, breakfast and parking included. You must reserve by April 1, 2023. They have sponsors already, the agenda and registration are being worked on. There's a flyer on the CRCEA website for your viewing.

The 2023 CRCEA Fall Conference, hosted by Retired Public Employees of San Joaquin County (RPESJC) will be held October 1, 2023 thru October 4, 2023 at the Hilton Stockton. Room Rates are \$159 per night plus taxes.

There are no new updates on the CalPERS Lawsuit. The last website update was November 7, 2022 and the information was reported at our February 2023 Board meeting. The trial is set to start May 15, 2023 and is scheduled to last 25 court days.

SACRS (State Association of County Retirement Systems): Paul reported that one of the keynote speakers at the SACRS 2023 Spring Conference will be Michael E. O'Hanlon. He holds the Phil Knight Chair in Defense and Strategy at Brookings, where he is also the Director of Research and the Director of the Talbott Center in the Foreign Policy program. O'Hanlon specializes in U.S. defense strategy, the use of military force, and American national security policy. For his SACRS session, O'Hanlon will share overarching trends and themes, along with the lessons for today and tomorrow including observations of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Paul reminded the Board that registration for the SACRS 2023 Spring Conference is now open. The Conference will be held May 9-12, 2023 in San Diego, CA. The SACRS website now includes information regarding the Conference registration, hotel reservations, and a preliminary Agenda.

Retirement Board: There was no additional information to report.

Investment Committee: There was no additional information to report.

Health Care (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Renaye reported that both Contra Costa County and Alameda County were still considered to be in the low COVID-19 level, which is always good news. She encouraged everyone to continue to wear masks when appropriate and keep up with their booster shots. She reminded the Board that the Kaiser's Silver&Fit program is ongoing. She also reported that we would be including a link to the Silver&Fit program in our website. She encouraged everyone to sign up and take advantage of the many options which are available.

Activities: Alicia reported that we will have 130 attendees at today's Spring Luncheon. She was very pleased with the turnout. She also reported that we will have guest speakers at the luncheon. From the 1st United Credit Union, Mr. Steve Stone and Mr. Derrick Fortier will answer questions regarding the Credit Union and from ACERA, Mr. Carlos Barrio, Assistant Chief Executive Officer will answer questions regarding the annual Cost of Living increase and the COLA Bank.

Membership and Recruitment: Charo reported that as of February 28, 2023, membership stood at 3,834 members, which was a slight decrease from the January 2023 numbers. She also reported that this last month we received no returns. (Newsletters returned as undeliverable.)

REAC Website Redesign: Connie reported that they now have all the documents they needed to complete the redesign of the Website, and that they were also going to add photos from today's Spring Luncheon to the website. Connie took a moment to thank Linda and Charo for all their help in completing the redesign of the website. They expect to launch the website very soon.

REAC News: The REAC Newsletter will include information regarding today's luncheon, the new REAC Website, and the Annual Health Care Meeting.

Other Reports: No information to report.

Old Business: No information to report.

New Business:

The REAC 2023 Goals and Objectives will be carried over to a future Board meeting.

For the Good of the Order:

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 AM

Respectfully submitted by Paul Reeves, Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: Monday, April 10, 2023, 9:30 am
Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting