

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Retired Employees of Alameda County
Monday, September 14, 2026, 9:30 A.M.**

Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting

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

Roll Call: Alicia Baptista, Dawn Stevenson, Paul Reeves, Liz Koppenhaver, Connie Land, Marsha Rice, Cynthia Baron, and Kathy Foster were present. Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, Charo Panesi-Guerra, REAC Member and Administrative Assistant, and Pete Albert, ACRE President, were also present.

Minutes: The Minutes of the August 10, 2026, REAC Board meeting were reviewed. Liz moved that the August 10, 2026, REAC Board Minutes be approved as submitted. Connie seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

Announcements & Communications: Alicia reported that she was contacted by our past president, Jon Orellana, and he was concerned that he was misquoted in our September Newsletter. He understands if REAC wanted to move the luncheon location in response to possible reasons why members are no longer attending. “He said that Castro Valley or San Leandro would be fine for him. However, he would not attend if it was in the northern part of the county, i.e. Oakland, Berkeley and Albany. He would also not attend if it was in the southern part of the county, i.e. Fremont and Union City, they are also too far. He would prefer somewhere in the central part of the county.”

Alicia also heard from another member who was having difficulty in getting reimbursement for medication. She said that Via was not reimbursing her because she did not have all the required information. To obtain reimbursement through Via Benefits, there’s a list of what their receipt needs to include. It must include who’s the doctor, what’s the medication, and who is the medication for? Unfortunately, she did not have that information. Alicia suggested that she go back to the pharmacy where she purchased her medication. The member contacted Alicia again and told her that she went back to her doctor and she received the required documentation.

Alicia reported that she heard from a member who was interested in going to the Healthy Living Fair at the Oakland Zoo. Unfortunately, by the time she received the August newsletter, there were no tickets left. This has happened before. Alicia mentioned that we included that information in our July newsletter. The Board decided to no longer mention that event in the August newsletter since the tickets are gone by the time that newsletter comes out.

Alicia also reported that she contacted Red Arrow to inform them that we decided to have our letterhead, and bereavement cards printed using another vendor. Red Arrow will continue to print our newsletter.

Paul reported that we received a request from a member who wanted to receive both a paper copy of our Newsletter and the electronic version of our Newsletter. Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to do that, so we will let the member know that she can only receive one copy. She can then choose which one she wants to receive.

ACERA: Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager reported on the September 2, 2026, Retirees Committee meeting. There were no Information items and three Information items. The first Information item was a presentation of the new premiums for Plan Year 2027. The new rate for the Kaiser HMO, that's for the non-Medicare retirees, is going to increase 3.01%, which is a moderate increase. The UnitedHealthcare HMO, that's also for the non-Medicare retirees, is going to increase 10.90%. The Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage rate will remain the same.

There was a great deal of discussion around the rate increase for the Kaiser Permanente HMO, non-Medicare retirees who are not yet Medicare eligible. The County wants to separate the populations going forward. This year and previously, the retirees who are not yet Medicare eligible, those under 65, have been grouped in with the active members in that Kaiser plan. When Kaiser is setting the premiums for the next year, they're looking at the experience of that whole group, and they then set the premium.

Since there are retirees in that population, and retirees tend to have more medical expenses than active members, that keeps the premiums higher. The county calculates the difference, on how much the premium has increased due to the retirees being blended in with the active population, and they then give ACERA the dollar figure on what the total cost is for the retirees being blended. ACERA then pays that amount to make it cost neutral for the County. That calculation is known as the implicit subsidy. This year the County decided they no longer want to do it that way. Now they get the blended rates and the unblended rates from Kaiser. It is what the blended rate would be if the retirees stayed blended with the actives and what the two rates would be if they don't.

The second Information item was a discussion on an optional Kaiser Medicare health plan group over-the-counter benefit rider. The committee did not ask ACERA to bring the issue back for action, but there was a possibility of bringing it back for action at the Retirement Board meeting. The Retirees Committee wanted a bit more information. They wanted ACERA to do another survey, so they will do another survey in 2027. This time, they will only survey the Kaiser Senior Advantage members. They will wait until they have actual information on what the premium increase would be. They will then do the survey. By waiting, they can ask members directly about the potential cost. For the previous survey, the data was not current, and the increase was reported to be only a \$1.84 increase per month for a total of \$84,000. When they had the updated numbers, the 2027 estimate was \$3.40 increase per month.

The third Information item was a report on the communication plan for notifying the under-age-65 population retirees in the service area of a new Individual Plan option. Following the Board of Retirement's approval authorizing non-Medicare retirees residing in ACERA group plan service areas to enroll in individual health plans through Via Benefits beginning with the 2027 plan year, ACERA developed a multi-channel communications strategy to notify eligible members. The communications

plan includes the use of Webpages, Letters, REAC Newsletter Notices, Email Blasts and SMS Blasts, Messages on ACERA's Main Phone Greeting, the Open Enrollment Packets, and the Health Fair.

Treasurer's Report: Liz presented REAC's August 2026 Treasurer's report. The Beginning Interest Privilege Account balance was \$38,700.25. Receipts included \$7,416.00 for membership and \$500.00 from the 1st United Credit Union advertisement. Total receipts were \$7,916.00. There were no unusual receipts this month. Disbursements included \$850 for stipends, \$787.75 for Creative Circle, \$1,308.13 for Select Staffing, and \$1,395.45 for Star Copy. At the bottom of the report, under Notes; Two: Two billings for Star Copy this month. The first billing was for Letterhead and envelopes, and the second billing should be corrected from Invitation Cards to Condolence cards. Red Arrow was paid twice this month because they were late in sending us their July 2026 billing. Total disbursements were \$8,516.14. The closing balance of the Interest Privilege Account was \$38,100.11. Total assets were \$264,853.13. Connie moved that the August 2026 Treasurer's Report be approved as submitted. Marsha seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

During the August 10, 2026, REAC Board meeting, the Board voted to retain the services of Star Copy, a local print and copy center, to produce non-Newsletter print requirements such as Letterhead, envelopes, and condolence cards, et al. The approved cost estimate of \$1,000 was insufficient to allow for purchase of the Board pre-approved items. Alicia motioned to increase the expenditure amount from the original \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00. Dawn seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

CRCEA: Connie presented her CRCEA (California Retired County Employee Association) Report. The August 12th, 2026, Executive Committee was canceled, and the regular monthly meeting scheduled for September 16, 2026, is also canceled. The first fall 2026 virtual business session is scheduled for October 21, 2026. This will be the first meeting under the new conference structure. The planning for the 2027 CRCEA Spring Conference, under the new structure, is in full swing and progress continues. There's no new information to report from last month. Alicia asked Connie to let the Board know that she was also taking care of the CRCEA membership survey, without being asked. Connie said it was just the usual kind of task. Alicia wanted her to know that she really appreciated all that she does.

SACRS (State Association of County Retirement Systems): Cynthia provided her SACRS report. The planning for November 10 – 13, 2026 SACRS Fall Conference is going well. The conference will be held at the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage, California. There will be two guest speakers. The first confirmed speaker will be Frank Abagnale who will be speaking on fraud prevention, cybercrime, and identity theft. He has worked with the FBI and currently advises banks, business, and law enforcement on document fraud, check swindling and cybercrime.

Retirement Board: There was no additional information to report.

Investment Committee: Kathy reported on the September 2, 2026, Investment Committee meeting. There were two Information items. The second Information item is the one of most interest to retirees. The second item was the Semiannual Performance Review for the Period Ending June 30, 2026 – Total

Fund Highlighting Public Market Asset Classes. The Fund is really doing excellent. Over the last year, the Fund returned 17.41%, ranking in the 8th percentile of its peer group. The Fund's assets totaled \$15.1 billion as of June 30, 2026. Over the past three years, the Fund returned 13.19% per annum, ranking in the first quartile of the peer universe.

There was some concern expressed regarding the SRBR sustainability. It is still the ACERA policy to keep the SRBR above a projected 15-year sustainability level. Looking at the June report by Segal, it did look like the projection period was going down, which was indeed as it was reported, and that figure will be the figure presented at the October meeting. However, one of the reasons for that is ACERA is smoothing out some losses that had to be recognized this time around. Next year, we'll have some earnings that will be recognized in the way the smoothing works. So next year should be a more accurate picture of the actual projected sustainability level.

Health Care (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Paul reported for Linda. COVID-19 has recently experienced a sharp increase, and the CDC is recommending that everyone take steps to protect themselves. Wear protective masks, avoid crowded groups, and get your COVID-19 vaccination.

The CDC is also encouraging everyone to get their flu shots, especially for high-risk individuals, which includes seniors and other individuals with compromised immune systems. Flu shots are now available, and if you are a Kaiser member, you can walk in any time and get your vaccination. There are two main types of flu vaccines: injectable flu shots (inactivated recombinant) or high-dose dose flu shots. If you are in the high-risk group, they recommend you get the high dose.

Lastly, there has been a significant measles outbreak nationwide. There have been over 3,290 cases since early 2026, with Pennsylvania being the largest hotspot. The most significant measles outbreak is in Pennsylvania, with 693 confirmed cases across 38 counties and four measles-related deaths as of September 13, 2026, all in unvaccinated individuals. The CDC continues to recommend vaccines as the best protection.

Activities: Alicia reminded the Board that our luncheon is scheduled for October 12th, and as always, reservations are coming in very slowly. Make sure you have sent your reservation to Charo, and you have made your meal choice. Kathy is still waiting for confirmation on our guest speaker. Aliscia also mentioned that she, Connie, Linda, and Cynthia are going to be at ACERA's Health and Wellness Fair, October 22, 2026. They will have Kleenex packets, clips to use for keeping bags closed, and small key chains to hand out.

Membership and Recruitment: Charo reported that as of August 31, 2026, our membership stood at 3,724, which is a slight decrease from last month.

Administrative Staff: No new information to report.

REAC Website: Cynthia provided a website report resulting from work on the Budget Committee. She reached out to the county's ITD Department, and they have the ability to do a number of things for us. One of them is to create a board-only access section on the website. They are willing to let us use their licenses if they're hosting it, so we would not have to pay for individual licenses, which she thinks goes up to about \$600 or \$700 per year. They are willing to redesign our website, and they also would be willing to host our information to the website. We don't know how much all of that will cost, but, as she understands it, it would not be a large fee. She spoke with the ITD Manager of that unit, and he has assigned somebody to work with us. They would like to have a meeting with us to talk about what specifically we want, and what we are looking for them to do for us.

They also mentioned security. Currently, there is one password for everyone. It was originally designed that way because REAC did not have the staff to manage the "I forgot my password" problem. They would like to set up individual passwords for everybody. If somebody forgets their password, there would be the option to click on "forgot your password," like you see on all kinds of websites, and people would be able to go in and reset their own password as opposed to having to contact REAC to say I don't know what the password is. This service is something they do for groups that are affiliated with the County, and they consider us to be affiliated. Dawn, Liz, Alicia, and Cynthia will meet with the ITD representative.

REAC News: The REAC News will include Charo's new REAC email address, voting in the next election, and the OTC discussion,

Other Reports: Liz gave a brief update on the Budget Committee's progress. They continue to consolidate the list of what we need to move forward.

Old Business: There was no old business to report.

New Business: Alicia was looking at the Spring Luncheon list of invited guests and realized that we used the same list for the Fall Luncheon. She felt that we should evaluate if we wanted to continue doing that. The consensus was no, we needed to create a Fall luncheon list of invited guests, and that it should be significantly shorter. Marsha agreed to review and rewrite the list, update titles, etc.

For the Good of the Order: There was no additional information to report.

Meeting adjourned at 11:21 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Reeves, Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: Monday, October 12, 10:00 am
DoubleTree by Hilton, 7050 Johnson Drive, Pleasanton, CA 94588