

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Retired Employees of Alameda County  
Monday, January 8, 2024, 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, Liz Koppenhaver, Paul Reeves, Connie Land, Cynthia Baron, Kathy Foster, Linda Slater, and Marsha Rice were present. Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, Charo Panesi-Guerra, REAC Member and Administrative Assistant, Pete Albert, ACRE President, Brenda Scott, member, James Lee, member, and Al Chavez, member were present.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the December 11, 2023 REAC Board meeting were reviewed. Marsha Rice moved that the December 11, 2023, REAC Board Minutes be approved as submitted. Liz Koppenhaver seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

**Announcements & Communications:** Alicia reported that she received a response from the member who was questioning the size of our bank balances. In his letter he also asked additional questions, one of which was questioning the font size used for the REAC News. He felt the font size was much too small, and therefore difficult to read. For those members who receive their Newsletter online, they can make it larger and therefore easier to read. For those members who receive the paper copy of the REAC News, they do not have that option. The only way to increase the font size for the paper copy would be to add additional pages. Additional discussion regarding this item needs to take place before any decisions are made.

He also suggested that we should consider presenting the Minutes in a more popular reader friendly format, which included summarizing, abbreviation, etc., and then keep the more detailed Minutes on the website. In the past the Board has talked about how the minutes are presented. The Minutes of each Board meeting should reflect, as accurately as possible, what is being said and what is being presented. Creating Minutes which are summarized, abbreviated etc. creates the potential for in accurate Minutes.

**ACERA:** Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager. There was no Retirees Committee meeting this month, but he decided to attend to our meeting in case we had additional questions or concerns. Brenda Scott, who was attending today's meeting, received a notice from Delta Dental, dated December 15, 2023, notifying her that Delta Dental learned of a Data Breach on June 1, 2023. They investigated the Data Breach on July 6, 2023, and determined the Data breach occurred from May 27, 2023 to May 30, 2023, and further, they determined that her personal information was affected. She wanted to know why it took so long to let her know that her information was affected by the Data Breach. They knew as early as June 1, 2023, yet they did not tell her until December 15, 2023. She called ACERA, and was told that ACERA knew of the Data Breach,

Mike reported that he was unaware of the Data Breach and he was very surprised that Delta Dental had not informed ACERA in a timely fashion. He will research what took place, when it took place, and why that information was not made available to all concerned in a timely fashion. Brenda mentioned that she did hear back from ACERA, and they left her a phone message, explaining that they were aware

of the Data Breach, and that Delta Dental offered to pay for a credit monitoring service if she wanted to use one. Kathy suggested that this is something that should be added to the ACERA website. Perhaps ACERA can write up what took place, why it took so long, and what ACERA is doing about it, and post that information on the ACERA website.

Kathy asked if VIA Benefits was considering creating an automatic reimbursement process for the Income-Related Monthly Amount (IRMA). If they agreed, would it be an automatic monthly reimbursement or a lump sum reimbursement? Mike stated that he was currently working on a letter regarding the issue, and hoped to have it completed soon. He will send Kathy a copy of the draft letter.

Cynthia asked if ACERA has created any information regarding the pre-designation of active employees. Mike has drafted information regarding the change to the web content, and is just waiting to hear back from their Chief Counsel. They have also have completed a draft of the Pre-Filed Disability Application form which will allow members to use DocuSign to complete the process electronically.

Al Chavez mentioned the difficulty he experienced with VIA Benefits. He said that their phone application is not user friendly. He has a lot of experience navigating those types of applications, and the VIA Benefits phone application is very hard to use. Mike thanked him for his feedback and he will take that information back to VIA Benefits to see if they are working on anything to update their app. Alicia asked Al if he would be able to send us some specific information regarding what types of problems he encounters when attempting to use the phone application. Al agreed to send both REAC and Mike the information. Jim Lee also mentioned that he agreed with Al. He felt trying to use the Via Benefits phone application was very confusing and very difficult to use.

Pete mentioned that a lot of information was given at the December 6, 2023 Retirees Committee meeting. One of the items was an ACERA report on researching the possibility of providing an additional \$1000 for hearing aids. It would probably require members to use VIA, since they cannot use Kaiser to access the reimbursement. Mike mentioned that it was one of the proposals discussed, but nothing was decided. It will be brought back at a later date for additional discussion.

***Treasurer's Report:*** Liz presented the December 2023 Treasurer's Report.

The total receipts were \$8,076.65 and the total disbursements were \$5,361.77. Disbursements included officer stipends, a payment to Select Staffing of \$177.67, and 1 payment of \$1,791.47 to Red Arrow printing. Red Arrow is still 2 months behind in their billing. Disbursements also included \$596.03 for USPS bulk mailing of our newsletter, a payment of \$600.00 to DoubleTree, as our deposit for the 2025 CRCEA Conference REAC will be hosting and \$524.05 for the D&O Luncheon at Trabocco in Alameda. There is also a \$600 Stipend payment which covers the gap between when Suman left and Liz took over as Treasurer and a reimbursement payment of \$351.80 for Liz, which is for expenses related to SACRS, Zoom, and IONOS. After all disbursements were paid, REAC ended the month with a surplus of \$2,714.88.

Liz was also able to move the funds from the CD which matured on December 22, 2023 to an 11 month Credit Union CD at 4.15%.

Alicia mentioned that we are still having difficulties with Select Staffing regarding their invoices. She hopes to have Select Staffing correct their invoices so that we can pay them appropriately.

Connie moved that the December Treasurer's Report be approved as submitted. Kathy seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

The presentation of the Treasurer's 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report will be carried over and presented at the February REAC Board Meeting.

Liz presented the proposed 2024 Annual Budget for final approval. The 2024 Annual Budget accurately reflected the previously approved proposed 2024 Annual Budget. Liz reminded the Board that changes to the budget, once approved by the Board, can be made as we move forward in time. Alicia questioned the 15% raise for Membership and Clerical Support (Select Staffing). Since we have had continuous billing issues with Select Staffing, Liz felt it was difficult to anticipate more precise numbers. In addition, while Charo has been paid, she has been asked to take on additional functions which were previously done by other Board members or were not done and needed to be done. It seems likely, once the billing issues with Select Staffing are fixed, that 15% is a more appropriate number.

Connie reminded the Board, that when membership was given a COLA increase, the Board approved giving our Clerical Support the same increase. She also mentioned that most Employment agencies often increase their base charges each year, so a 15% increase in this situation, seems appropriate.

Paul moved that the 2024 REAC Annual Budget be approved as submitted. Marsha seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Liz presented the 2024 Monthly Stipend amounts for approval. There were no changes to the 2024 Monthly Stipend amounts. Kathy moved that the 2024 Monthly Stipend amounts be approved as submitted. Connie seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

***CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association):*** Connie provided her CRCEA report.

The January Executive Committee meeting will be held on January 24, 2024. Since this meeting is after REAC's meeting, the meeting highlights will be provided at the February Board meeting.

The Conference Brainstorming Subcommittee has not scheduled any meetings to discuss if the CRCEA Spring 2024 Conference will be hybrid, in person only, or virtual only.

REAC 2025 Fall Conference Planning Committee Update: The Planning Committee met on January 5, 2024. Items discussed were proposed conference timelines, identifying area hotels, and review of past conferences final expenses. The Planning Committee members plan to visit 3 area hotels in January and February, 2024. Once again, they are seeking someone who is comfortable with soliciting funds, which will be needed to help offset the costs associated with hosting the Conference. This committee meets monthly via Zoom.

CalPERS Lawsuit Update: There is no new information to report.

***SACRS (State Association of County Retirement Systems):*** Paul provided his SACRS report. There is not much new to report for SACRS. They have posted some additional information regarding their 2024 Spring Conference which will be held at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort. The Conference takes place from May 7-10, 2024. The Conference registration and Hotel reservations will be open in

March 2024. At this point there is no information regarding topics. Paul plans on attending, and he will let everyone else who also wants to attend, know when the documents for attending are released.

**Retirement Board:** No additional information was reported.

**Investment Committee:** There was no new information to report.

**Health Care (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):** Linda provided her Health Care report. Kaiser and the East Bay Regional Parks Foundation are hosting the 2024 Trails Challenge. They will provide a 2024 Guidebook which contains a number of detailed trail maps for the Trail Challenge. The hikes will be for all levels of fitness from easy to challenging. It is designed to help people with their fitness. Linda will create a short write up for the Newsletter and send it to Dawn for review.

Linda also reminded everyone to get their Flu shots as well as their COVID-19 booster shots since there has been an uptick in the number of COVID-19 cases.

**Activities:** Alicia reminded the Board that the REAC Annual Membership meeting and the REAC Spring Luncheon which will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton. The Conference Committee, which includes Alicia, Dawn, and Charo, will be scheduling another committee meeting soon. Kathy mentioned that she did reach out to Kaiser regarding doing a presentation and is waiting for their response.

**Membership and Recruitment:** Charo reported that as of December 31, 2023, membership stood at 3,812 members which was the same as last month.

**Nominating Committee:** Paul gave the Nominating Committee report. The Nominating Committee, which included Kathy, Marsha, and himself, were pleased to report that the three Board members whose terms were set to expire on March 31, 2024, were all willing to serve an additional term. The three members whose terms expire are Alicia, Dawn, and Linda. The REAC membership will cast their votes at the March 2024 Annual Membership meeting.

**REAC Website:** Connie provided an update on the Website Subcommittee. The Subcommittee, which includes Connie, Dawn, and Linda, met on December 27, 2023 and January 3, 2024. They identified pages which needed minor modifications and pages which needed reformatting. They wanted to make sure the font size was the same throughout the site, to make sure the information on the calendar was current, to remove out-dated information and to add current information. They were concerned about the flow of information from the Subcommittee to the Website Designer. Paul mentioned that a number of the items which were identified as needing correction during the December 2023, have been corrected. Linda provided a Power Point presentation of the changes which the Subcommittee has made thus far. The Board was very pleased with all the work the Subcommittee has done to improve and modernize the REAC Website. The Board asked Linda if she could send us the Power Point presentation so that we can review it and then send them our feedback. Linda agreed to send us the presentation.

Alicia mentioned that she thought the financial reports were sent to the web designer at the same time the Board Minutes and Board Agenda were sent. Paul explained that he only sent the Minutes and the Agenda for the next Board meeting to the web designer. He did not include the financial reports. After some additional discussion, the Board decided that Paul should continue to send the Minutes and the Agenda, plus

send the financial reports. Any changes to the website, once approved, would be go through the Website Committee.

The possibility of including photos of REAC events on the REAC Website was discussed. There was some concern about confidentiality, suitability and what sort of review process would be required. It was also suggested that each photo, where possible, would be captioned. Additional discussions will take place before any final decisions are made.

**REAC News:** The REAC News will contain information on the REAC Annual Membership Meeting and Spring Luncheon, Linda's article about the Trail Challenge, and information about Ish Piña's retirement. Kathy will develop a brief article about Ish.

**Other Reports:** There was no additional information to report.

**Old Business:** There was no additional information to report.

**New Business:** There was no additional information to report.

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

Meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Reeves, Board Secretary

**Next Board Meeting: Monday, February 12, 2024, 9:30 am**  
**Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting**