

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF ALAMEDA COUNTY**

Monday, May 12, 2025, 9:30 A.M.

Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting

AGENDA

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

Roll Call: Alicia Baptista, Dawn Stevenson, Liz Koppenhaver, Connie Land, Kathy Foster, Linda Slater, and Marsha Rice were present. Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, Jeff Hutson, Principal Consultant, Relational Gravity, and My Penny Earned, Darnell Williams, Alameda County Acting Deferred Compensation Manager, Henry C. Levy, Alameda County Treasurer/Tax Collector and Board of Retirement Member, Charo Panesi-Guerra, REAC Member and Administrative Assistant, were also present.

Minutes: The Minutes from the April 14, 2025, REAC Board meeting were reviewed. Liz Koppenhaver moved that the April 14, 2025, REAC Board Minutes be approved as submitted. Marsha Rice seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

Announcements & Communications: Alicia heard from a new member who received her Welcome letter, which mentioned a See's store in San Leandro, where our members can use their discount. We knew that the store closed a couple of years ago. Alicia will work with Charo to update that part of the letter. Apologies for that oversight.

ACERA has invited REAC to participate in their Health Fair on October 23, 2025. Alicia accepted immediately. The Health Fair will be at The DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Alicia received a message from Select Staffing, Employbridge, that they have a new system for approving timecards. She was given a day's notice to learn the system before approving timecards for administrative staff.

Alicia reported receiving a letter from a member complaining about Delta Dental. The member, an Alameda County retiree for 10 years, along with her husband, shared a copy of a letter from her dentist, who has decided to leave the Delta Dental network. The dentist stated, "After careful consideration, we decided that the best way to deliver on our commitment to providing the highest quality care and the safest environment is to become independent of their network." The dentist also mentioned, "Delta Dental imposes a tremendous administrative burden on the practice, and we often have to battle with them to receive payment for even the most routine claims." Additionally, this member noted that her sister's dentist is also dropping out of the Delta Dental network because "it's just not worth it."

Alicia plans to forward the letter to Mike Fara.

Deferred Compensation: Jeff Hutson, Principal Consultant at Relational Gravity, gave a presentation about the new program related to Alameda County's Deferred Compensation plan, "My Penny Earned." This financial empowerment service was created in response to a survey of

Alameda County employees and retirees, including nearly 1000 participants. The service aims to provide financial education and resources to improve financial wellness.

The survey revealed that retirees and active employees wanted information on building emergency funds, managing retirement income, and understanding Medicare.

Many retirees reported having retirement savings they haven't accessed due to uncertainty about managing those funds.

The service includes an online platform where users can access courses and a monthly newsletter currently reaching mainly active employees.

Retirees can sign up for the newsletter and access the service through the "My Penny Earned" website, <https://mypennyearned.com/alameda/>, which provides relevant financial information.

Signing up is easy, with a video to guide them. This gets them into the newsletter and the site, where they can see coursework and other things.

ACERA: Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, reported that there was no Retirees Committee meeting in May. There are a few updates regarding the work plan for the Retirees Committee for June. The committee will be hearing the initial information about the Monthly Medical Allowance (MMA) and receive preliminary projections from Siegel and Company, and they will be able to have their initial discussion about whether to increase the MMA or not.

The committee is expected to decide as an action item to adopt whether to increase the MMA in July, typically when this decision is made. However, sometimes it can be postponed until August or September.

Additionally, in July, a report on the dental and vision plan experience and utilization will be presented as an information item.

And then in August, the committee will have the adoption of the dental and vision plan contributions as action items on the agenda.

Also, in June, there will be a presentation on the dental and vision Request For Proposal (RFP) as the contracts with Delta Dental and VSP will end this year. The RFPs were sent out earlier, and responses have been received. Siegel and Company, ACERA's benefits consultant, is reviewing and scoring the responses. In June, a report will be generated for the Retirees Committee to decide on the insurance companies for the 2026 plan year. Both VSP and Delta Dental, the current providers, have submitted bids.

Mike commented on the Delta Dental complaint letter that Alicia read from a member, explaining a theory from the benefits consultant, Siegel and Company, to understand the issue with Delta Dental. They have the largest network of dentists, but inflation and reimbursement adjustments have caused some long-time dentists to leave the network. Delta Dental has added new dentists, but retirees prefer to stick with their long-time dentists. This issue has been discussed during the RFP process, and the goal is to provide the best dental care for retirees. The letter mentioned contains new information that will be introduced into the process.

Treasurer's Report: Liz presented REAC's April 2025 Treasurer's report. The beginning Interest Privilege Account balance was \$32,786.17. Total receipts were \$7,924.59. We received \$7,424.00 in membership dues, \$500.00 from our 1st United Credit Union advertisement, and 0.59 interest from the checking account. We paid \$8,259.45 for the Spring Luncheon at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton. Alicia was reimbursed for a check she wrote for \$500.00 to pay the photographer for the Spring Luncheon. Disbursements totaled \$15,431.38, which resulted in a deficit of \$7,506.79 due to the reimbursement of meal expenses for our retirees for the Spring Luncheon.

Red Arrow, USPS, Creative Circle, our Web Designer, and Select Staffing have all been paid. We paid Ionos, our website host, \$211.97 for the year. \$6.73 was paid to Select Staffing for one pay period that did not include the raise for administrative staff.

Liz reported the differences this month for the CRCEA conference in Ventura, California, that three Board members attended. Alicia used the debit card to pay for meals and lodging for the three attendees.

The ending checkbook balance was \$25,279.38, and total assets were \$254,482.28. Liz stated that she and Alicia have scheduled an appointment to reinvest our 39-month CD, which matured on May 9, 2025. Linda moved to allow the Treasurer, President, and other members of the Finance Committee to investigate CD rates for maturing CDs to facilitate the rollovers. Kathy seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

Connie moved that the April 30, 2025, Treasurer's Report be approved as submitted. Kathy seconded the motion, which was approved.

CRCEA (CALIFORNIA RETIRED COUNTY EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION): Connie presented her CRCEA report. The CRCEA 2025 Spring Conference was held from April 13 to April 16, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ventura, California. The Retired Employees Association of Ventura County (REAVC) was the host county. REAC representatives attending some or all of the conference were Alicia, Kathy, and Connie.

The conference was well organized and informative. Great sponsorship came from CRCEA Affiliates, WB Britt Engineering Services, REAVC and also some individual Board members, and the Ventura Visitor and Convention Bureau. About 68 attendees came from various counties, and several had more than one attendee.

There were sessions of serious importance, sessions of general interest and interactive sessions to give and receive ideas to help County Associations with the way they do business.

The Business Meeting was informative. There were 18 of 20 counties in attendance. An update was provided on the change in hosting conferences. Divisions 1 and 2 have met with their respective representatives via Zoom and continue to discuss the best way forward. There appears to be support for holding one full in-person conference and one Zoom Business Session per year. This is based on research of hotel costs, etc., and other findings. The divisions will continue to meet, and the Conference Chair will provide updates to the Executive Committee at each monthly meeting.

The remaining conference schedules are:

Fall 2025: Alameda County-September 28-October 1, 2025, DoubleTree Hotel-Pleasanton

Spring 2026: Santa Barbara-April 19-22, 2026, Marriott Hotel-Buellton

REAC 2025 Fall Conference Planning Committee: Connie reported that the Committee met on May 09, 2025. Meeting highlights include training on the CRCEA Conference Website and role assignments, responses to solicitation letters and follow-ups needed, contacts to prospective conference speakers, review of the conference agenda and program booklet, sponsorship signage, etc. We're making progress toward a successful conference.

The next regular monthly meeting is Friday, June 13, 2025. This committee meets generally on the second Friday of each month via Zoom. We will meet more frequently soon to ensure all areas are covered.

SACRS (State Association of County Retirement Systems): Kathy will go to Palm Springs for the SACRS conference at Rancho Mirage. One of the key speakers will be Molly Bloom, who will address defying odds and themes of resilience and reinvention on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. Thursday, May 15, 2025, will include a virtual farm tour with Carl Evers Jr., Senior Director of Farmland Acquisitions, Pacific West from Manulife Investment Management, exploring California's agricultural industry and boosting local economies. Michael Edward O'Hanlon is an American policy analyst currently serving as director of research and senior fellow of the foreign policy program at the Brookings Institution. Adam Back, the CEO of Blockstream, will be presenting on the topic of Bitcoin for institutional adoption. There's a panel on investing in Asia and its global impacts. Kathy will report back to you next month.

Retirement Board: There was no Retirees Committee meeting this month.

ACERA Investments: There was no additional information to report.

Health Care (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Linda reported that we're in allergy season. Weather fluctuations have caused colds and hay fever. There are still incidences of COVID-19. If you are not feeling well and think it might be a cold, test for COVID-19. Wear a mask if you are not feeling well.

Activities: The REAC Fall Luncheon will be held on Monday, October 20, 2025, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton, CA. ACERA's Health Fair will take place on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton, CA. Planning for the CRCEA Fall Conference, which REAC is hosting, is continuing. The conference will be held from September 28 to October 1, 2025, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pleasanton, CA.

Membership and Recruitment: Charo reported that our membership stood at 3,729 members as of April 30, 2025, the same as last month.

Administrative Staff – Updates: There was no new information to report.

REAC Web – Updates: Connie provided her Website Activity report for April 2025. There were 149 unique visitors to the REAC website. This represents a slight decrease from last month for which it was 154. The average time spent on the site was 2 minutes and 56 seconds, a decrease from last month. The most-visited pages during April were Member Resources and What We Do.

Alicia reported that we have made an offer to website manager Beth Hansel. She's qualified and based in North Carolina. She was a referral from Creative Circle. Alicia has signed the rate confirmation at \$81.00 per hour. Her start date is Wednesday, May 14, 2025, and she is expected

to be fully operational by Sunday, June 1, 2025. There will be an overlap with Beth and Lori during this period.

Alicia moved that the Board approve that we make an offer to Beth Hansel to be our website administrator at the current rate of \$81.00 an hour. This payment will be made through Creative Circle. Connie Land seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

REAC News: The REAC News will include information regarding Jeff Hutson from My Penny Earned, the hiring of Beth Hansel as our website manager, REAC's Fall Luncheon on October 20, 2025, and ACERA's Health Fair on October 23, 2025.

Other Reports: There was no additional information to report.

Old Business: There was no additional information to report.

New Business: Alicia spoke with Mike Fara at the last Retirees Committee meeting and learned he was receiving a paper copy of the REAC newsletter. He asked if he could convert to electronic delivery. After this discussion, Alicia followed up with Charo, who then sent Alicia a list of the non-members who receive the newsletter. The list includes approximately 40 individuals, including ACERA trustees, various county officials, and Retirement Associations. Efforts are being made to collect email addresses to facilitate a transition to electronic delivery, which is expected to save on postage costs.

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Stevenson, Vice President

Next Meeting: Monday, June 9, 2025, 9:30 A.M.

Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting