

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Retired Employees of Alameda County
Monday, September 9, 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, Kathy Foster, Marsha Rice, and Linda Slater were present. Dave Nelsen, ACERA Chief Executive Officer, Mike Fara, ACERA Communications Manager, and Charo Panesi-Guerra, REAC Member and Administrative Assistant, were also present.

Minutes: Minutes of the August 12, 2024 REAC Board meeting were reviewed. Connie Land moved that the August 12, 2024 REAC Board Minutes be approved as submitted. Marsha Rice seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Announcements & Communications: Alicia reported she received a communication from a member who was surprised to hear that you could exhaust your MMA benefit. She explained that it happens rarely, but you can exhaust your MMA benefit for each Plan Year. She also heard from Carlos Barrios, ACERA Assistant Chief Executive Officer, regarding retirees who live abroad and want to be reimbursed for their medical expenses. ACERA will add one additional step to the reimbursement process. Before that can happen, the Retirement Board will have to approve a change in policy regarding what the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR) can cover.

ACERA: Dave Nelson, ACERA Chief Executive Officer, presented an Operations Update PowerPoint presentation. Dave spoke about ACERA's short and long-term performance in their relative peer groups. ACERA's goal has been met for the top 25% of their funds. The 25-year history of ACERA's total fund performance shows that although there have been short-term losses, in the long term, the Fund is performing well and meeting ACERA's goals. In fact, the ranking for year 25 of the 25-year history shows that the annualized total fund performance for ACERA returns is in the top 9% of funds amongst their size. The funding of pension systems, about 65% to 70% in a mature fund, of all the benefits that are paid out, is based on investment earnings; the rest is based on contributions. If you earn more in investment earnings, everybody else pays less in contributions to pay for benefits. The long-term overperformance has actually resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in contributions that employers and members have not had to make in order for ACERA to pay out benefits. Long-Term overperformance has a positive benefit for the membership of participating employers. Because of the funding structure of the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve (SRBR), long-term overperformance means that more money is going into the SRBR to fund health care benefits. There is real value in overperformance. Dave credits three things that have contributed to the healthy status of the Fund: The investment staff, the investment consultant, and the Trustees. They all have an equal share in making the right allocations over time. Stability in your investment environment results in better performance and there is great stability in ACERA's staff, consultant and Trustees.

ACERA: Mike Fara, ACERA's Communications Manager, stated there has been no Retirees Committee meeting since his August presentation. There will be a "special" Retirees Committee meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2024, to finalize a few healthcare items before the Open Enrollment documents are published. The Board will discuss medical premiums and hearing aids. The regular Retirees Committee Meeting will be on October 2, 2024. ACERA's annual health fair will be held in person and virtually on October 24, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Emeryville; additional information will be in the mail. The event will be Live streamed over Zoom.

Treasurer's Report: Liz presented REAC's August 2024 Treasurer's Report. The beginning Interest Privilege Account balance was \$28,941.07. Receipts totaled \$7,988.61 and included \$500.00 from our 1st United Credit Union advertisement, and \$7,488.00 from membership dues. Disbursements totaled \$8,648.94 and included \$2,302.41 to Red Arrow for the July Newsletter, \$2,298.20 to Red Arrow for the August Newsletter, \$597.61 for postage, \$750.00 for officer monthly stipends, \$1,238.22 for Select Staffing (4 payments), and \$362.50 for Creative Circle. It also included a \$1,000.00 deposit for the Double Tree by Hilton in Pleasanton for the CRCEA 2025 Fall Conference., The ending Interest Privilege Account balance was \$28,280.74 and total assets were \$253,158.67.

The Board discussed how best to proceed with the 13 Month Certificate of Deposit which matures on 09/24/24. Paul motioned that Alicia and Liz be authorized to meet with the Credit Union staff and then decide on the best course of action for that Certificate of Deposit. Marsha seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Connie moved that the August 2024 Treasurer's Report be approved as submitted. Kathy seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

CRCEA (California Retired County Employees Association): Connie presented her CRCEA report. The August 2024 Executive Committee meeting was cancelled. The next meeting will be on September 18, 2024. As a reminder, the 2024 Fall Conference dates are November 03, 2024 thru November 06, 2024. Location: Embassy Suites Hotel Walnut Creek, \$169 room rate. The link to register for hotel rooms including the phone number and group code are posted on the CRCEA website (crcea.org). The program agenda and other conference registration information are expected later this month.

REAC 2025 Fall Conference Planning Committee Update: The Committee met on September 04, 2024. The Committee identified the various subcommittees needed for a successful conference and they now have leadership for the majority of those committees. Each committee will need support from the entire Board and other REAC members. Next steps include receiving committee progress reports, and continuing the review of the CRCEA Conference Manual. This Committee meets monthly via Zoom.

The Committee also agreed to recommend to the REAC Board, that REAC donate four \$25.00 gift certificates, for door prizes at the CRCEA 2024 Fall Conference hosted by Contra Costa County. Contra Costa County supports our luncheons with gift certificates and it also shows our support for their conference. Connie moved that REAC provide four \$25.00 gift certificates to Contra Costa County in support of their Fall 2024 Conference. Liz seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Linda moved that the members of the Conference Planning Committee, Connie and her alternate, be authorized to attend the Contra Costa County 2024 Fall Conference, stay overnight, and to be reimbursed for their expenses. Linda further moved that any REAC Board Member who wishes to just attend a day of the conference, be authorized to attend and be reimbursed their expenses. Dawn seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The dates of the conference are November 3, 2024 thru November 6, 2024. The actual conference sessions will start the afternoon of Monday, November 4, 2024.

SACRS (State Association of County Retirement Systems): Kathy presented her report on the upcoming SACRS Conference. The Annual Fall Conference 2024 is being held November 12-15, 2024 at the Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel and Spa, Monterey, California. At this point, there is currently no information on the Website regarding the specific agenda for the conference. However, the featured speaker will be Chris Vasami, and his topic will be “Small Wins to Personal Greatness.” Kathy will be attending the conference and will be staying overnight.

Retirement Board: Kathy reminded the Board that there will be motions on the Retirees Committee Agenda for hearing aid benefits. Kaiser’s proposals for those benefits are much lower than the previous year. The Retirees Committee may ask REAC to be supportive of the hearing aid motions. One of the motions is to increase the hearing aid benefit by \$1,000.00, for both Medicare and Non-Medicare retirees, which would cost an additional \$1.48 per member per month for Plan Year 2025. The VIA Benefits proposal would be significantly higher than Kaiser, so going with Kaiser makes financial sense. Kathy moved that REAC support the motion to approve an increase of \$1,000.00 for both Medicare and Non-Medicare retirees for Plan Year 2025. Marsha seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Investment Committee: There was no new information to report.

Health Care (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Linda reported that there was nothing new on the CDC website. Linda also reminded the Board that ACERA’s annual Health Fair will be held in person and virtually on October 24, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Emeryville.

Liz mentioned that she recently attended the ACRE meeting, and one of the members mentioned that it was now much easier to obtain mental health services at Kaiser since their lawsuit was filed.

Alicia mentioned that travelers should be aware of mosquito-borne illnesses. Some of the illnesses include West Nile virus, Dengue fever, and Malaria.

Paul mentioned that he just received a message from Kaiser informing him that the new COVID-19 vaccine is now available.

Activities: Alicia reminded the Board that the REAC Fall Luncheon will be held next month, on October 21, 2024. It will be held at the DoubleTree in Pleasanton. Yolanda Smith, from Kaiser, will give a presentation on Silver&Fit. She also mentioned that we will be using a QR Code at the luncheon to make it easy for members to share their opinion on the See’s Candies benefit that is available to REAC members. REAC is planning on identifying other uses for QR Codes.

Membership and Recruitment: As of August 31, 2024, membership stood at 3,764 members, which is slight decrease from the previous month.

Alicia will be attending the ACERA Health Fair, and plans to be there all day. Charo will also attend. Rather than pass out the letter we use, she would like to create a bullet list of why retirees should join REAC. Linda and Alicia will work on developing the new document. They will also take that opportunity to hand out the remaining gifts to retirees who attend the health fair.

REAC Website: Connie provided her Website Activity report for August 2024. There were 171 unique visitors to the REAC website. This is a decrease from last month for which it was 238. The average time spent on the site was 4 minutes and 5 seconds; a slight decrease from last month. The most-visited pages this month were Member Resources, followed by Membership, and What We Do.

Alicia wanted to know if there was a way to create a page on the website which contained information the Board could access on an as needed basis, similar to the websites member's only section. The Board could use it to store instructional information or "How to" type documents, etc. Connie will ask our Website designer what is possible.

Alicia also suggested that we retain the services of a photographer to take photos during luncheons, of guest speakers, Board members, etc., on an as needed basis. After some discussion, Alicia moved that the Board hire a professional photographer to use, at Board discretion, on an as needed basis, for an amount not to exceed \$500.00. Dawn seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

REAC News: The REAC News will contain information regarding the Fall Luncheon, the See's Candies benefit, and information from Dave Nelson's presentation.

Other Reports: Alicia reminded the Board that our holiday lunch will be held on December 10, 2024. It will be at the Trabocco Restaurant in Alameda.

Old Business: Paul reported that he will finish work on the REAC Governance Manual by the end of the month and will be mailing those out to each Board Member.

New Business: There was no new business to report.

For the Good of the Order: There was no new business to report.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Reeves, Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: Monday, October 14, 2024, 9:30 am
Zoom Video Conferencing Board Meeting