ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Board Minutes

100 North Park Avenue, MPERA Conference Room

March 21, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The board meeting of the Association of Montana Retired Public Employees was called to order by Mike O’Connor at 9:30 A.M.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mike O’Connor, Lyle Manley, John McEwen, James Driggers, Cathy Kendall, Jim Lewis, Patty Mott,and Kristyn Bohlander (staff). Jan Brown and Dale Boespflug were excused.

GUESTS

Tim and Julie Reardon.

MINUTES

Cathy Kendall made a motion to approve the minutes, John McEwen seconded the motion, and the February minutes were approved unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mike O’Connor explained that the troubling bills were tabled last month. Patty and Mike attended the hearing for HB436, which required any increase in employer retirement contributions to be voted on by the people. Mike mentioned that there were no proponents of the bill and many opponents. This bill was problematic because the public, compared to legislators, is less informed on how the retirement systems work.

The board also discussed HB 499 and HB 383. HB 499 requires that bond rating interest assumptions be used as the assumed rate of return, instead of actuarial valuations. HB 383 provides actuarial funding for the Sheriff’s Retirement System, and decreases the accrual rate from 2.5% to 2.0% per year.

Another bill aims to privatize Worker’s Compensation. Mike explained that this is problematic as far as retirement systems are concerned. State agencies have a liability to the system regardless of privatization.

NEW BUSINESS

Lyle Manley shared an idea to promote membership growth. Since AMRPE is performing well financially, he proposed offering new members one year of free membership.

Board members discussed other ways to recognize and reward members, such as offering a “Dues Holiday” for 2018 (i.e. giving all members a free year of membership). This would be logistically difficult considering how the membership database functions. Board members also want to avoid the possibility of having to request donations (because of the lack of membership funds) in case the impending 2019 legislative session requires any extraordinary action by AMRPE.

AMRPE may host a social at Blackfoot Brewery, for Helena retirees, in an attempt to recruit new members.

Patty Mott moved to offer new members, joining before December 31, 2017, one year of free membership covering 2018 dues. James Driggers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT

John McEwen provided a financial and membership update. There has been a slow growth in income due to reduced inflow of renewals this past month. John stated that AMRPE has received 1,020 renewed memberships since January. Another renewal reminder will be sent out in May.

John McEwen moved to adjourn. Cathy Kendall seconded. The meeting adjourned at10:40 A.M.

The next meeting will be held in the MPERA conference room at 100 North Park Avenue in Helena on April 18, 2017at 9:30 A.M.