ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Board Minutes

100 North Park Avenue, MPERA Conference Room

April 18, 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, Jan Brown, Dale Boespflug, Jim Lewis, Patty Mott, and Shannon Voss (staff). Cathy Kendall was excused.

GUESTS

Leo Berry, Dave Galt, Brian Thompson, and Dore Schwinden

MINUTES

John McEwen made a motion to approve the minutes, Lyle Manley seconded the motion, and the March minutes were approved unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Dore Schwinden reported on the latest legislative activity. HB 101 revising MPERA public employee retirement systems has been transmitted to the Governor. HB 136 revising funding provisions for the game wardens’ and peace officers’ retirement system was tabled in committee. HB 383 providing actuarial funding for the sheriffs’ retirement system was returned to the House with amendments.

Dore reported that a couple of major bills that have been successfully opposed include HB 436, which would have required voter approval for employer contribution increases in retirement systems; and HB 263, which would have revised how public employee retirement funds may be invested.

Dave Galt provided the Board with a list of bills they have been following throughout the session. He explained that the intent of HB 383 (mentioned above) was to increase funding for the sheriffs’ retirement system so it will be actuarially sound. However, language has been amended to include changing from a 20-year sheriff retirement plan to a 25-year sheriff retirement plan.

Leo Berry cautioned that there is always a risk introducing new bills as they may get amended with language that is undesired by the individual/group introducing them.

Dave also mentioned they have been tracking HB 648. They were pleased that the bill included coal severance tax money to be directed to the general fund for statutory appropriation to the pension system.

Dave said that there were a lot of bills that were either not introduced or that were killed in committee. They will review their lobbying work which could potentially result in lower lobbying fees than anticipated.

OLD BUSINESS

**New Member Recruiting (Free Membership in 2018 for New Members)**

Board members agreed they would like to offer a one-year free membership to new members in an attempt to recruit more members. John McEwen said the Membership Committee will revise the September recruitment letter. The remittance envelope will also need to be edited to solicit new member contact information without requesting a membership fee.

**Membership Recruiting Social (Blackfoot Brewery)**

John McEwen reported that nothing has been planned yet regarding a membership recruiting social at Blackfoot Brewery. The Board discussed the idea of planning this event around the same time the September recruitment letter gets mailed. The letter can casually invite any interested local folks to attend the event.

NEW BUSINESS

**Newsletter Timeline**

John McEwen mentioned the Board usually sends a newsletter to AMRPE members in May to sum up the legislative session. He suggested sending a one-page tri-fold newsletter to minimize costs. The Legislative Committee will draft a couple short articles with the intent to mail the newsletter at the end of April/beginning of May.

TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT

John McEwen reviewed the treasurer’s report and provided a membership update. He noted that not much has changed. The previous lawsuit enabled AMRPE to grow its membership considerably and he feels the association is financially sound. John reported that AMRPE should be able to continue to grow its long-term savings.

Most of the expenses were normal expenses, other than AMRPE has paid two months of the lobbying bill. The number of membership renewals has slowed considerably so administrative costs were less than last month. A dues reminder letter will be sent the first week of May to remind people to pay their dues if they haven’t already.

John reported that he will start reporting the monthly interest earned on CDs. One CD comes due in August. The Board discussed what type of CD to buy. The Board cautioned not to buy a CD that would tie up savings over 18 months in case the association must lobby heavily or has to fight another lawsuit.

John McEwen moved to adjourn. Patty Mott seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:40 A.M.

The next meeting will be held in the MPERA conference room at 100 North Park Avenue in Helena on May 16, 2017at 9:30 A.M.