ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Board Minutes

100 North Park – PERA Office, 2nd Floor Conference Room and Video Conference Call

May 19, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The board meeting of the Association of Montana Retired Public Employees was called to order by Lyle Manley at 9:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Lyle Manley, Patty Mott, Cathy Kendall, Jan Brown, James Driggers, and Kim Hoxie(staff) were present. Connie Welsh, Dale Boespflug and Leo Hudetz were present by conference call and Jim Lewis was excused.

GUESTS

Brian Thompson, AMRPE Lobbyist

Dore Schwinden, Executive Director, MPERA

Mike O’Connor

MINUTES

Corrections: Legislative Finance Committee updates; Lyle Manley attended the Representative meeting

Changes “is” to “are” in 1st sentence under membership

Cathy Kendall made a motion to approve the amended January minutes, Jan Brown seconded the motion, and the amended January minutes were approved unanimously.

MPERA UPDATE

Dore Schwinden stated there were no agenda items regarding pensions at the Montana Public Employees Board (MPERB) meeting last week. The State Administration and Veterans’ Affairs (SAVA) meeting is next Thursday and there are no pension issues on the agenda. The Legislative Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for the middle of March. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) has been approved.

Patty Mott asked Dore Schwinden if it is a good time for AMRPE to write an opinion-editorial in support of the public pensions. Dore Schwinden stated that reminding the public of the benefits of the state pension plan is always beneficial.

Dore Schwinden announced Pepper Valdez will not be seeking another term on the MPERB and there are now three vacancies to be filled on the Board.

PUREVIEW LAW SUIT UPDATE

Brian Thompson stated that the Supreme Court has accepted the Motion to Leave and granted an amicus brief be written on behalf of AMRPE. Board of Investments, Teachers’ Retirement System and the state union have all been approved to write amicus briefs. Montana Association of Counties (MACo) has been accepted as and intervener to take the place of Lewis and Clark County. Brian Thompson will complete the amicus brief and send it to Lyle Manley for board approval. After all the briefs and the comments from MACo are submitted to the Montana Supreme Court, the Court will decide to hear the case and make a ruling or send it to District Court.

REPORTS

**Treasurer’s Report**

James Driggers mentioned that the CD that he planned to move to Rocky Mountain Credit union will stay at Stockman Bank because Stockman’s offered a better return rate. Therefore, he moved $60,000 into a new CD at Stockman and put the remaining balance in the Rocky Mountain Credit Union money market account. He also reminded the Board that the plan is to eventually have AMRPE investments divided into three CD’s, each with a term of three years, laddered so that one CD matures each year.

James Driggers followed up on the PayneWest letter discussed at the last board meeting. The PayneWest representative said that AMRPE can disregard the letter at this time because it would only apply if AMRPE were terminating the insurance plan

James Driggers commented he has been busy with renewal deposits and is pleased with the amount of renewal returns.

Leo Hudetz asked if renewal revenue was on target and Patty Mott stated yes. After a discussion of membership rates, the board decided to review membership rates to prepare for next fall’s membership drive. Cathy Kendall suggested a committee should do the analysis and recommend to the board a rate structure. Jan Brown commented that she will email everyone the historical summary of membership rates.

James Driggers stated that he re-budgeted more money to the Lobby & Legal category in the budget in anticipation of work done for the MPERA vs MACo lawsuit.

Cathy Kendall made a motion to approve the February financial statement, Patty Mott seconded the motion, and the February financial statement was approved unanimously.

**Membership**

Patty Mott stated renewal dues are coming in on target and currently 67% of the renewals have been returned. Last year’s total return on renewals was 75%. One year renewals are the biggest category totaling over 80% of the renewals received. People who renew for one year typically give a donation and two and three year renewals rarely give donations. The breakdown of renewals is as follows: Lifetime, 13 (2%); 1 year, 480 (84%); 2 year, 66 (11%); 3 year, 15(3%).

OLD BUSINESS

**Newsletter**

Kim Hoxie, CMS, stated that the newsletter is ready to be sent to the printers and will be mailed out at the beginning of next week.

NEW BUSINESS

**Renewal of CMS contract**

Cathy Kendall reported that she reviewed the contract with CMS and recommended moving forward with approving the contract.

Cathy Kendall made a motion to approve the CMS contract, Connie Welsh seconded the motion, and the contract was approved unanimously.

**Member Involvement**

The board discussed ways to reach out to members outside of Helena and encourage them to participate in AMRPE.

Dale Boespflug, Connie Welsh and Leo Hudetz will look at the membership and analyze areas where there is a concentration of membership and retirees and report to the board in May. They will also develop a plan to increase member communication and involvement in AMRPE.

**Opinion -Editorial Letter**

The board discussed the opinion-editorial letter and the final edits that need to be made. Cathy Kendall suggested the letter be submitted to the editors or buy space in the seven major daily newspapers and research the best smaller organizations to make sure the letter is seen throughout the state. Connie, Welsh, Cathy Kendall and Jan Brown will finalize the letter and the board members will work on distributing to the newspapers.

Lyle Manley adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

The next meeting will be held March 17, 2020, 9:30 a.m. at 100 North Park – PERA Office, 2nd Floor Conference Room.