

**ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**  
**Board Minutes**  
**100 North Park – MPERA Office, 2nd Floor Conference Room**  
**February 20, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting of the Association of Montana Retired Public Employees was called to order by Leo Hudetz at 9:30 a.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Lois Menzies, Melanie Symons, Carol Grell Morris, Dave Ashley, and Tyler Coenen (staff) were present in person. Leo Hudetz, Bruce Brensdal, Geoff Badenoch, and Barbara Martens were present by video call. Tom Livers was excused.

**GUESTS**

Dore Schwinden (MPERA Executive Director), Bill Holahan (MPERA Deputy Director), and Nick Domitrovich (MPERA Chief Legal Counsel) were present in person.

**MINUTES**

Lois Menzies moved to adopt the minutes as submitted and Melanie Symons seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**MPERA PRESENTATION**

Dore Schwinden reported that the next State Administration and Veterans' Affairs (SAVA) meeting is on March 14<sup>th</sup> and will delve into Senate Joint Resolution No. 4 (SJ4) topics, then a meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup> will start looking at some of the layered amortization policies. Dore also reported that the Budget Office Executive Planning is starting, and as of right now, all systems amortize soundly.

Board members questioned Dore, Bill Holahan, and Nick Domitrovich about the administrative actions taken that affected our members and the seeming lack of communication regarding these changes. The pertinent points by Dore, Bill, and Nick were that MPERA clarified the interpretation of "working hours" for working retirees to include vacation and sick time as MPERA states "working hours" has been interpreted incorrectly for the last twenty years. This change was reported to affect a relatively small number of retirees, and in the end, only negatively affected four working retirees. Nick, speaking for himself, felt that increasing the working hours limit from 960 to 1,040 hours per year in future legislation would be something he would be in favor of, as the 960 seems to be antiquated. Dore, Bill, and Nick emphasized that their mission is to make sure MPERA is fiscally sound and pledged to communicate with AMRPE in the future regarding any items that may affect our members.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

House Bill 569 (HB569) was added to the SAVA agenda for March 15<sup>th</sup>. HB569 changed how amortization was calculated for several systems. Employer contributions are of note as they can decrease with no floor, but they can only increase at a rate of 0.5% per year.

**REPORTS**

**Treasurer's Report**

Bruce Brensdal reported that revenue is a little bit behind expectations but with the renewal notice having been sent out, this is not a concern. The budget may need some updates from last month's discussion – the overall total will remain the same but some of the breakouts may move around. It was noted that changes can be made throughout the year, as needed.

Dave Ashley moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and Carol Grell Morris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Membership Report**

New members are still dribbling in. Lois worked with Patty Mott (previous Board member) to review the mailing list before it was sent to the printer. The renewal letter went to anyone who was last current from 2020 to 2023 and was sent to 1,302 members.

Dave moved to accept the Membership Report and Melanie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **SEGBAC**

The March meeting for AMRPE is at the same time as the next SEGBAC meeting. Bruce will decide which meeting to attend.

#### **Update on Database**

Tyler Coenen has been working with the database creator, Dave Cooper, to fix some of the functions and it was found that the database dropped 13 batches from late 2023. Tyler had the paper copies, so he was able to re-enter the missing data. Tyler also noted he found another issue with one of the functions that he will have to ask Dave to fix (regarding the 'constants' for developing a mailing list).

#### **Newsletter**

The Board is discussing a one-page update during non-legislative years. There was also discussion about an ad-hoc committee to take the lead on the newsletter.

Melanie moved to set up an ad-hoc committee with Carol as the chair and Dave and Lois as members. Geoff Badenoch seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **2024 Committee Membership**

Lois moved to approve the 2024 committee assignments and Dave seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Montana Non-Profit Association**

Geoff spoke with the Montana Non-Profit Association (MNA) but doesn't believe it to be a good fit as their members must be 501(c)3, but AMRPE is a 503(c)4 organization. IRC 501(c)3s are not permitted to lobby.

#### **MPERA Presentations**

Geoff volunteered to present at the February presentation being held on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Geoff expressed he was interested in continuing to present at these, even though it is considered a Membership Committee task. It was decided that Melanie, who sits on the Membership Committee, will be Geoff's backup in case he is unable to attend a presentation.

#### **Items for March Agenda**

Desk Manual changes regarding Board designees – Lois Menzies

Legislative Committee regarding hours worked limit discussion – Melanie Symons

Website Review – Geoff Badenoch

Newsletter Committee – Carol Grell Morris, Dave Ashley, and Lois Menzies

Database backup security and member renewal thank yous – Tyler Coenen

Dave moved to adjourn the meeting and Barbara Martens seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Leo Hudetz adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

The next meeting will be on March 19, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. by video conference call or in-person.