ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
Board Minutes
100 North Park – MPERA Office, 2nd Floor Conference Room
September 15, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Association of Montana Retired Public Employees (AMRPE) Board of Directors was called to order by President Carol Grell Morris at 9:31 a.m. The meeting was held in-person and by Zoom.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Carol Grell Morris and Lois Menzies attended in person. Leo Hudetz, Bruce Brensdal, Sheri Scurr, Chris Behan, Sandi Olson, and Steve Garrison attended by Zoom. Sheryl Olson was absent.

GUESTS

Bill Holahan, Executive Director, Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA); Brian Thompson, Browning, Kaleczyk, Berry & Hoven (BKBH); and Debbie Norhton, incoming Board member, attended. Greg Ross of Communication and Management Services (CMS) also attended.

MINUTES

Corrections were made to the attendance record and other minor items in the May 2026 meeting minutes. Lois moved to approve the May 2026 minutes as corrected; Steve seconded the motion. The motion carried.

MPERA PRESENTATION

Bill Holahan reported that MPERA is not proposing new legislation for the upcoming legislative session and anticipates a relatively quiet session regarding pensions. He will appear before the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee (SAVA) on October 27. In response to questions, Bill indicated that he was not aware of concerns regarding pension reserves and reported favorable amortization developments.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Brian Thompson reported that pensions have received little attention from SAVA or other interim committees and that he is not aware of pension-related bill drafts. He discussed the State's financial outlook and noted that the pension reserve fund, unlike pension trust assets, does not have constitutional protection and could be changed through legislative action. The Board discussed the importance of monitoring proposals that could affect the reserve fund or pension funding.

The Board also discussed developing clearer guidance regarding legislation AMRPE would support, oppose, or remain neutral on. Sheri will meet with Brian regarding legislative tracking, and the subject will be revisited in October. Brian introduced Celine Koepke, who will also serve as a registered lobbyist for AMRPE, and proposed a standing weekly call during the legislative session.

REPORTS

Summer Activities Update
Carol reported on activities completed over the summer. The President and Treasurer are now the authorized signers on the Association's account and former President Tom Livers has been removed. The June newsletter was distributed electronically and by mail, and the recently retired public employee recruitment letter was updated. SAVA met July 9, with Brian providing a written report; no SAVA or MPERA pension legislation is currently anticipated. The Board also discussed ensuring appropriate distribution of electronic newsletters and legislative updates.

Treasurer's Report - Bruce Brensdal
Bruce presented the September financial report. Steve moved to accept the report; Leo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Contractor Coordination Committee - Bruce Brensdal
Bruce provided an update regarding the CMS contract and insurance. Carol noted that contract review is included on the Board's off-session schedule.

State Employee Group Benefits Advisory Council (SEGBAC) - Bruce Brensdal
Bruce reported that enrollment remains relatively steady and reviewed projected 2027 State Plan changes. Medical costs continue to place pressure on the plan, while retiree rates are expected to increase by approximately four percent. The Board discussed the relationship between retiree premiums and claims costs and whether health benefit legislation falls within AMRPE's legislative scope. The next SEGBAC meeting is expected in November.

Membership Report - Lois Menzies
Lois reported no new members over the summer and reviewed membership renewals. Renewal reminders included with the newsletter continue to generate responses, including renewals from members whose memberships had not yet expired. A $400 donation was also received.

Nominating Committee - Sheryl Olson
In Sheryl's absence, the Board discussed upcoming membership and officer changes. Steve intends to leave the Board, and Debbie Norhton is expected to join in January 2027. Carol and Lois are up for renewal this year. The Nominating Committee will also address any officer changes.

Bylaws - Chris Behan
Chris reported that the bylaws are ready, subject to correction of several minor typographical errors. Chris will work with Fauna to update the document and post it to the website and Important Documents folder. Discussion regarding whether AMRPE's stated mission and online materials adequately reflect the organization's scope was deferred until the Board considers its legislative policies.

Member Communication - Carol Grell Morris
Carol recommended distributing a brief fall newsletter before the legislative session, consistent with the Association's practice during the previous two years. The Board discussed using the newsletter to explain what AMRPE will monitor during the session, provide legislative resources,

summarize relevant actuarial information, and remind members of AMRPE's advocacy and monitoring activities.

Audit Committee - Leo Hudetz
Leo reported that the Committee is developing audit procedures. The draft procedures will be brought to the Board for future discussion.

Legislation Committee - Sheri Scurr
Sheri reported on the Committee's summer activities, including review of the MPERA experience study and enrollment in MPERA's rule-review notifications. The Board agreed that AMRPE should remain on the MPERA notification list so the organization retains a record of notices, while the Secretary can confirm that the Legislative Committee Chair has received and addressed them.

OLD BUSINESS

MPERA/Empower Retiree Webinar Attendance
Sheri reported on AMRPE participation in MPERA/Empower ready-to-retire presentations, including efforts to reach retirement systems beyond PERS. The Board discussed the importance of having a backup representative when Sheri is unavailable. Sheri offered to mentor a backup, and Carol will solicit volunteers and place the matter on the next meeting agenda.

Board Policy and Procedure Manual / Implementation Task Assignment
The Board reviewed the draft table of contents for the Policy and Procedure Manual and discussed organization and terminology. Membership-related procedures will be reorganized, and the Bylaws Committee will be renamed the Bylaws and Policies Committee.

The Board then reviewed priority policy drafts addressing records retention, the Board yearly schedule, and the Legislative Committee process. The Board discussed consistent terminology for contractors, placement of recurring administrative requirements, and recognizing legislative work as a year-round activity. Sheri will recommend revisions to the yearly schedule, including a September Legislative Process Update so the full Board can review its legislative approach before the session. Lois will consult with Bruce regarding whether the IRS filing item should remain on the yearly schedule. The Legislative Committee Process draft will receive additional review and revision.

NEW BUSINESS / ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

There was no new business or additional comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Lois moved to adjourn the meeting; Steve seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:08pm.

The next regular meeting of the AMRPE Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. by video conference and in person at the MPERA Office, 100 North Park, 2nd Floor Conference Room.