

**ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**  
**Board Minutes**  
**100 North Park – MPERA Office, 2nd Floor Conference Room**  
**May 21, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting of the Association of Montana Retired Public Employees was called to order by Tom Livers at 9:31 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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

GUESTS

Bill Holahan (MPERA Acting Executive Director) was present in person. Brian Thompson (AMRPE Lobbyist with Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry, & Hoven) was present by video call.

MINUTES

Geoff Badenoch moved to approve the minutes as submitted and Leo Hudetz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MPERA PRESENTATION

Bill Holahan reported that he will be attending the next State Administration and Veterans' Affairs (SAVA) Interim Committee meeting to present DC account balances by years of service. It was also reported that the next Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA) board meeting will be conducting the election of officers. The MPERA Executive Director hiring will also likely be finalized within the next few weeks.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Board discussed the member request regarding taxation of pension benefits. This concept is introduced perennially, and it is always determined to cost the state general fund large amounts. AARP frequently brings this to the legislature. The AMRPE Legislation Committee met and discussed this issue and decided it would be in AMRPE's best interest to support this topic brought by a bill from another organization rather than bring one from AMRPE. Brian Thompson agreed and was asked to contact AARP to express AMRPE's support. Brian also reported that the results from the primaries should be available in June and certain board members will meet with Brian in June to discuss the results and to further discuss AMRPE's support to AARP.

REPORTS

**Treasurer's Report**

Bruce Brensdaal reported reorganizing some of the expense categories on the budget based on clarification questions from other board members. These changes match better with contractor invoices. Bruce also reported that the two CDs that matured in April were rolled into a new CD which will mature in April 2025.

Leo Hudetz moved to accept the Treasurer's report and Melanie Symons seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Membership Report**

It was reported that Patty Mott (previous AMRPE Secretary) is still involved and helping with membership renewals. There have been 5 new members and 42 renewed members since April. Renewal dollars are still lagging this time last year and there is hope that the newsletter will bump these numbers up. New member recruitment will start in September and go out in October.

### **Audit Committee Report**

The committee conducted financial review tests to ensure the system is working. All tests passed. AMRPE is taking advantage of the higher interest rates with CDs. There were higher costs in 2023 compared to 2022 due to the legislative session and lobbying costs. Membership dues were up in 2023.

### **Legislation Committee Report**

The committee discussed the MPERA admin rule notices and had no comments. These notices clarified the disability approval process but made no substantive changes.

### **Contractor Coordination Report**

The Board discussed the upcoming renewal that will be needed for the BKBH lobbying contract, likely changes to the hourly rate, and desired changes to the contract. The Board also discussed the Robson Valley Associates (RVA) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for yearly database maintenance without the need for specific board approval when something needs done. Some generic legal clauses were added that will need to be reviewed by RVA. A \$320 annual contract cap was proposed and accepted by RVA for this work.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### **Social Media**

The Board discussed the pros and cons of creating a social media page for AMRPE. The page would be private-invite-only for AMRPE members. Posting would be reserved for board members while active members could comment on posts. The main goal would be to communicate with members quickly and efficiently, especially during the legislative session. The Board instructed Tyler Coenen to create the page, some basic content, and send to a few board members to test it.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### **Items for September Agenda**

No update.

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

Tom Livers adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

The next meeting will be on September 17, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. by video conference call or in-person.