



# The Guardian

Mississippi Retired Public Employees' Association  
Quarterly Newsletter

Volume XX | Issue 1  
Fall 2015

Published November 2015

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## Directors (2016)

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## Immediate Past President

Howell Garner

## District Directors

1. Wynona Winfield
2. Tony Byrne
3. Rhonda Yates
4. Hilda B. Westbrook
5. Doss Brodnax
6. Vacant
7. Robert McNeil
8. Thomas E. Toney

*MRPEA Purpose: To promote the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) among all of its members.*



## President's Message October Board Meeting Recap

By Becky Cade

We had an excellent turnout for the October 12, 2015,

meeting of the Mississippi Retired Public Employees' Association (MRPEA) Board of Directors (Board). We started the meeting by discussing the usual business items, along with hearing a report from PERS. The remainder of the meeting time was spent reviewing the MRPEA purpose, director roles, and future high level organizational goals.

The Board will use five committees – Networking, Legislative, Communications, Membership, and Organization – to do our work this year. This structure will allow us to focus resources on five key areas: networking with other organizations that are interested in the well-being of PERS; keeping in touch with legislative actions; enhancing communications; increasing membership; and reviewing and enhancing the current and future operation of the organization.

While this year's goals and strategies are still a work in progress, the Board is excited to kick off activities that should enhance the organization's relevance to potential and current members. Some of these activities include: increasing the number of entities that we network with and enhancing coordination with those entities; holding *MRPEA Day at the Capitol* to get to know our legislators better; continuing the process of surveying Candidates for Elective Office that might affect PERS; having a board member from MRPEA present at Retirement Seminars around the state; and increasing communication and activity on the website and Facebook.

Our district directors are your local connection so their contact information is provided in this newsletter. The officers and other directors are also available via email at [mrpea@bellsouth.net](mailto:mrpea@bellsouth.net). We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you as we work together to protect PERS of Mississippi!

## District Director Contact Information

MRPEA divides the state into eight districts to provide members easy access to the Board. Contact information for the eight district directors is provided below:

**District 1** - Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Lamar, Pearl River, Perry, and Stone; **Wynona Winfield** | 601-268-6118 | [lcwjr@bellsouth.net](mailto:lcwjr@bellsouth.net)

**District 2** - Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, Lincoln, Marion, Pike, Simpson, Walthall, and Wilkinson; **Tony Byrne** | 601-431-2250 | [annetteb@cableone.net](mailto:annetteb@cableone.net)

**District 3** - Clarke, Covington, Jasper, Jones, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott, Smith, and Wayne; **Rhonda Yates** | 601-917-3509 | [rhondajyates@gmail.com](mailto:rhondajyates@gmail.com)

**District 4** - Hinds, Madison, Rankin, Warren, and Yazoo; **Hilda Westbrook** | 601-856-6351

**District 5** - Attala, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster, and Winston; **Dr. Doss Brodnax** | 662-323-9543 | [dossmar@bellsouth.net](mailto:dossmar@bellsouth.net)

**District 6** - Bolivar, Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, and Washington; **Vacant**

**District 7** - Alcorn, Benton, Itawamba, Lee, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union; **Robert A. McNeil** | 662-680-9024 | [ramcneil@comcast.net](mailto:ramcneil@comcast.net)

**District 8** - Coahoma, DeSoto, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, and Yalobusha; **Thomas E. Toney** | [thomasetoney@bellsouth.net](mailto:thomasetoney@bellsouth.net)

## MRPEA Committee Reports

### Finance Committee

The MRPEA Finance Committee chaired by Sam Valentine was asked to review the MRPEA finances. Members present for the committee meeting were Hoopy Stringer, Mike Larsen, Becky Cade, and Sarajeane Babin. In addition, the committee invited Mr. Norman McLeod, CPA, to assist with the review. Mr. McLeod, an auditor with extensive experience in the field of auditing, agreed to review the financial documents of our organization to look for any areas of weaknesses in financial controls and to look for areas where he might recommend

improvements in our overall accounting system.

Following a review of the Balance Sheets, Profit & Loss Statements and Check Registers for three years, Mr. McLeod advised that a full blown audit was not necessary. He felt the internal controls were good. He recommended a couple of extra steps that were presented to the Board and approved at our October board meeting.

### Other Committee Reports

No additional committee reports are available since new committees are being formed to reflect incoming board and officers.

## Upcoming MRPEA Outreach Activities

### MRPEA Day at the Capitol

MRPEA will be hosting *MRPEA Day at the Capitol* Wednesday, March 9, 2016, on the ground level of the rotunda at the New Capitol from approximately 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. This will be an excellent opportunity for us to get to know our legislators better and for our legislators to get to know about our organization.



### MRPEA at PERS Pre-Retirement Full-Day Seminars

MRPEA representatives will be present at PERS Pre-Retirement Full-Day Seminars to educate interested PERS members about MRPEA, to answer questions and to encourage interested individuals to join our organization. MRPEA representatives will be on hand at the following seminars:

Date	City	Representative
January 13, 2016	Starkville	Doss Brodnax
January 27, 2016	Hattiesburg	Wynona Winfield
February 3, 2016	Meridian	Rhonda Yates
February 10, 2016	Booneville	Robert McNeil
February 24, 2016	Gulfport	Wynona Winfield
March 2, 2016	Jackson	Hilda Westbrook
March 16, 2016	Oxford	Thomas Toney
March 23, 2016	McComb	Tony Byrne



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### Meetings and Events

MRPEA Annual Meeting  
July 11, 2016  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Hilton Jackson

## PERS News

### PERS Board Elections

At its October 27 meeting, the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) Board of Trustees (Board) certified results from its county representative election and announced open nominations for the public schools and community/junior college employees' representative.

The PERS Board certified results of the election between incumbent Lee County Chancery Clerk Bill H. Benson of Tupelo and Washington County Tax Assessor Mark K. Seard of Greenville. Benson's new term will run from January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2021.

The PERS Board is also seeking candidate nominations for the public schools and community/junior college employees' representative position due to the term expiration of Dr. Lee Childress, Corinth Public School District superintendent, in April 2016. Nominations are being accepted through 5 p.m. December 1, 2015. Candidates must be public school and/or community/junior college employees and active PERS members with at least 10 years of creditable service. Nomination forms, petitions, and a cover letter with a complete election schedule are available on the PERS website, [www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov).

Retirees will participate in a retiree representative election in early 2017 due to the term expiration of Dr. Richard C. Miller in April

2017. That election schedule, once adopted, will likely have nominations being accepted following the October 2016 Board Meeting until on or about December 1, 2016.

### Annual Actuarial Valuation Reports

PERS has posted its 2015 Actuarial Valuation Reports for its defined benefit plans under the Financial Overview section on its website. The annual valuation for PERS shows a slight decrease in its funded status on an actuarial basis from 61.00 percent as of June 30, 2014, to 60.40 percent as of June 30, 2015. Primary factors contributing to this decrease in the funded status are 1) the change in the investment return assumption from 8.00 to 7.75 percent, 2) an investment return for the year (3.40 percent) that was less than the 7.75 percent assumption, and 3) various changes to demographic assumptions. Even with these factors, PERS still appears positioned to meet its goal of being at least 80 percent funded by 2042. Projection reports should be available and posted to the Financial Overview section of the PERS website in late December 2015. The projection report for PERS will show whether PERS remains on target for meeting its funding goal.

### PERS Return-to-Work Guide

PERS has created a guide for retirees who decide to go back to work for an employer that participates in PERS. The guide, which is available under the Publications section on the PERS website, covers all aspects of returning to work with a PERS-covered employer.



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## **MRPEA Membership Application**

MRPEA welcomes both retirees and active employees who are members of PERS into our membership.

- Annual Rate, \$15 (August 1 - July 31)
- Life Rate \$250

Willing to serve on a MRPEA Committee

**Please print clearly.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: 601-919-0670 E-mail: [mrpea@bellsouth.net](mailto:mrpea@bellsouth.net) [www.mrpea.org](http://www.mrpea.org)