

MISSISSIPPI RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES

OCTOBER 10, 2016, BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD – JACKSON, MS

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

President Becky Cade called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance, including those who attended virtually via computer and telephone. Board members in attendance included: Mike Black, Becky Cade, Howell Garner, Mike Larsen, Ed LeGrand, Mike Lightsey, Robert McNeil, Mike Myrick, Bob Rhoads, Hoopy Stringer, Ann Thames, Curt Thompson, Thomas Toney, Sam Valentine, Evelyn Webb, Wynona Winfield, and Marty Wiseman. Guests included: Brooke Doggett, director for training and professional development for the Mississippi Community College Board; Davetta Lee, counsel and policy advisor for the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS); Deirdre McGowan, president of Insight, Ltd. and office manager for MRPEA; and Shelley Powers, communications director for the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS). Brooke Doggett served as the meeting moderator.

II. INVOCATION

Cade called on Howell Garner to deliver the invocation. Garner led the prayer.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Cade asked for approval of the board meeting agenda. A motion was made by Garner to accept the agenda as presented, and the motion was seconded by Mike Larsen. Motion carried. The agenda is attached to these minutes as *Appendix A*.

IV. PERS UPDATE

Cade asked Davetta Lee to provide an update on PERS. Lee reported that PERS' Executive Director Pat Robertson had just released an open letter to all PERS members and retirees as a rebuttal to recent negative editorials about the financial status of PERS. Lee stated that Robertson's letter titled "The Affordability of PERS" was recently published in *The Clarion-Ledger* and *The Sun Herald* and should help to alleviate concerns about the financial status of PERS.

Lee reported that the PERS Board of Trustees will receive its annual actuarial valuation report at its Oct. 25 meeting. This report will provide the current funded status of PERS, which was 60.4 percent as of June 30, 2015.

Lee reported that the PERS Board of Trustees is scheduled to consider and approve its 2017 legislative agenda at its Oct. 25 meeting. This year's legislative agenda is likely to include only minor technical amendments bills for PERS and the Mississippi Deferred Compensation Plan.

In response to a question from Cade, Lee reported that PERS was not scheduled for a Legislative Budget Office (LBO) budget hearing this year. Ann Thames expressed concern about state agencies not having budget hearings this year. Lee reported that PERS is not concerned about not having a budget hearing this year.

Larsen asked Lee whether it was essential that PERS introduce any legislation this year. A brief discussion ensued relative to the advisability of introducing legislation during what could be a very contentious legislative session.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Treasurer's Report

Cade called upon Mike Lightsey to present the Treasurer's Report. Lightsey reported fiscal year-to-date (Aug. 1 through Sep. 30) revenue of \$11,712.00 and expenses of \$5,717.58 with net income of \$5,994.42. Lightsey reported that, as of Sep. 30, the reconciled Trustmark checking account balance was \$43,121.33 and the Regions CD balance was \$44,970.20. A motion was made by Thames to accept the Treasurer's Report and was seconded by Evelyn Webb. Motion passed.

B. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from July 11, 2016, Board Meeting

Cade called upon Bob Rhoads to present the Secretary's Report. Rhoads asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes that had been distributed in advance of the meeting. There being none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Garner moved for approval; Thames seconded. Motion carried. Cade reported that unless any board members objected the approved minutes will be posted on the MRPEA website so that members will have access.

b. Acceptance of minutes from July 11, 2016, Annual Meeting

Rhoads asked for a motion to accept the minutes as provided in advance. Webb moved for acceptance; LeGrand seconded. Motion carried. Rhoads stated that these minutes will be presented for approval at the MRPEA annual meeting scheduled for July 10, 2017.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on status of Directors and Officers and General Liability Insurance

Cade reported that – with the board's prior approval of the expenditure – a directors and officers liability insurance policy is now in force; however, MRPEA has no general liability insurance coverage at this time. Cade and Deirdre McGowan will continue to pursue general liability insurance coverage so that the organization has coverage at our future MRPEA-sponsored meetings and events. No formal action was required.

B. Approval of MRPEA 2016-2017 Strategic Plan

Cade submitted the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan for approval. Larsen asked that the fourth bulleted strategy under the goal of enhancing communication with partner organizations be expanded to include not only PERS Board nominees but legislators and statewide elected officials. A brief discussion ensued regarding hiring a lobbyist to represent MRPEA at the Capitol. Cade stated that the requested change to the strategy would be made and then asked for a motion to approve the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan. Thames moved for approval with the requested amendments; Black seconded. Motion carried. The strategic plan has been made a part of these minutes as *Appendix B*.

C. Resignation of Martha Garrett

Cade reported that Martha Garrett resigned from the Board effective Sep. 7. Cade reported that the vacancy would not be filled because of the recent change to the Constitution and By-laws to reduce the number of multi-year elected board members from 15 to 10. With Ms. Garrett's resignation, there are now 14 multi-year elected board members. No formal action was required.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Networking

Cade called upon Larsen to present the Networking Committee report. Larsen stated that his committee continues to work on adding new partners and, with assistance from Donna Echols, recently added the Mississippi Fire Chiefs Association, the Mississippi Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Mississippi State Troopers Association. Larsen is planning to have a meeting of representatives from the partner organizations before the upcoming legislative session and is in the process of asking questions to learn more about the communications capacity of each organization. Larsen reported that a joint letter to the members of the Mississippi Legislature is planned to show a strong coordinated effort among the various partners. Larsen solicited assistance from committee members and provided his contact information.

B. Legislative

Cade called upon LeGrand to present the Legislative Committee report. LeGrand reported that the joint letter to the members of the Mississippi Legislature and statewide elected officials will request support for leaving PERS as it is today with no changes. LeGrand expressed concern about LBO budget hearings not being held this year for all agencies, which is unprecedented. LeGrand stated that Robertson's open letter to members was very timely. LeGrand reminded board members about MRPEA Day at the Capitol scheduled for Feb. 8 and asked board members to support the joint letter.

LeGrand encouraged PERS to not propose any legislation this year unless absolutely necessary. Lee stated that she would share the concern with leadership at PERS. Lee also addressed the concern about the lack of a budget hearing and reiterated that PERS was not concerned.

Thames reported that she and Larsen had discussed sending a letter from MRPEA to members of the Mississippi Legislature requesting confirmation of legislative commitment to support PERS as it is today with no changes. The joint letter would follow after the letter from MRPEA. Thames reported that it is no longer business as usual at the Capitol. Thames also reported that finding a lobbyist to work with MRPEA could prove to be difficult because of competing interests. Thames stated that she wants to set up a schedule to maintain an MRPEA presence at the Capitol throughout the session, and she asked for volunteers. Thames stated that she would draft the letter from MRPEA to members of the Mississippi Legislature; however, she asked for help to personally address the letters. Cade offered to assist along with McGowan.

Cade called upon the district directors to identify a point person in each county within their district to help ensure that members within each of the eight districts are familiar with what is taken place in MRPEA. Cade suggested that district directors consider meeting with members within their districts. Cade further suggested that district directors solicit members within their areas to help in making presentations to groups, including, but not limited to, retiree groups for each of the universities. Cade volunteered herself and McGowan to assist in these efforts.

C. Communications

Cade called upon Rhoads to present the Communications Committee report. Rhoads stated that a written report of activities had been provided in advance of the meeting. Since the last report in July, the committee had generated the summer issue of the newsletter and will begin working on the fall issue in late October. The committee continues to make

necessary updates to the website, post to social media platforms, and assist with communications as needed. The Communications Committee report has been made a part of these minutes as *Appendix C*.

D. Membership

Cade called upon Garner to provide a report of the Membership Committee. Garner reported that MRPEA added 92 new members since January 1, 2016, and that there are now 2,276 active members and 543 inactive members on the membership rolls. Garner reported that committee members continue to hand out business cards to potential members and remain focused on recruiting active employees in addition to retirees. Garner reported that the Membership Committee will meet before the next board meeting.

Garner recognized Marty Wiseman for representing MRPEA at the Sep. 29 meeting of the Mississippi State University Association of Retired Faculty where several individuals joined MRPEA. Pat Robertson was the guest speaker at that meeting. Garner encouraged all board members to assist in promoting MRPEA.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Cade reported that volunteers are needed to attend Mississippi Gaming Commission's open enrollment to help educate their employees about MRPEA. Cade provided the meeting dates, times, and locations and asked anyone who is interested in helping out to contact her. Thames and Thomas Toney expressed interest in helping.

Dates, times, and locations are as follows:

Jackson – 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Oct. 17 and 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., Oct 18

Tunica – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Oct. 19 and 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Oct. 20

Biloxi – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Oct. 26 and 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m., Oct. 27

Cade reported that with assistance from Halpern & Associates MRPEA had obtained a letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) dated September 7, 2016, confirming that a tax determination letter was issued to MRPEA in December 1984 recognizing MRPEA as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(4). A copy of the referenced letter from the IRS was provided to board members for informational purposes only.

Cade reported that the Jan. 9 and Apr. 10 board meetings will be held at the Mississippi High School Activities Association in Clinton.

Thames made a motion to increase the budget for the Feb. 8 Day at the Capitol event from \$200 to \$600; LeGrand seconded. Motion carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Bob Rhoads
MRPEA Secretary



AGENDA

MRPEA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

October 10, 2016

- I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER Becky Cade

- II. INVOCATION Howell Garner

- III. AGENDA APPROVAL Becky Cade

- IV. PERS UPDATE Davetta Lee

- V. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Treasurer's Report Mike Lightsey
 - B. Secretary's Report Bob Rhoads
 - a. Approval of Minutes from July 11 Board Meeting
 - b. Acceptance of Minutes from July 11 Annual Meeting

- VI. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. D & O and General Liability Insurance Becky Cade
 - B. Review of 2016-2017 Strategic Plan and Next Step Becky Cade
 - C. Resignation of Martha Garrett Becky Cade

- VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - A. Networking Mike Larsen
 - B. Legislative Ed LeGrand
 - C. Communications Bob Rhoads
 - D. Membership Howell Garner

- VIII. OTHER

- IX. ADJOURNMENT



MRPEA

Strategic Plan 2016-2017

Vision

The Mississippi Retired Public Employees' Association (MRPEA) envisions a financially secure retirement system with stable benefits supported by members and retirees of the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) and public officials.

Mission

The mission of MRPEA is to protect the financial security and benefits of PERS for current and future retirees.

Goals

MRPEA will seek to accomplish its mission by:

- Enhancing communication with partner organizations;
- Increasing its legislative presence; and
- Promoting membership in MRPEA.

Strategies

MRPEA will seek to achieve its stated goals using the following strategies outlined under each goal:

Enhancing communication with partner organizations

Spearheaded by the Networking Committee

- Continue to partner with organizations that are committed to protecting the retirement benefits provided through PERS;
- Meet with partner organizations to establish communications protocol;
- Further develop relationships with PERS Board Members, as well as with state and local elected officials; and
- Increase contact with PERS Board nominees, legislative candidates, and statewide office candidates to vet and share their stance on benefit security prior to the election.

Increasing our legislative presence

Spearheaded by the Legislative Committee

- Attend PERS Legislative Budget Office Hearing in the fall to publicly show support for PERS;
- Write a letter to all members of the Legislature after the budget hearings thanking them for their past support and seeking their continued support during the 2017 Legislative Session;
- Meet with PERS Executive Director before the 2017 Legislative Session to help determine communications strategy for the upcoming session;
- Establish communications protocol that will allow the President and/or Vice President to immediately issue communications to members should the need arise;
- Maintain a regular presence at the Capitol throughout the 2017 Legislative Session; and
- Conduct a large group rally at the Capitol should it become necessary.

Promoting membership in MRPEA

Spearheaded by the Membership Committee

- Make presentations on MRPEA at PERS pre-retirement seminars;
- Meet with employer representatives and provide information about MRPEA;
- Conduct recruitment of active employees and retirees;
- Maintain inactive accounts indefinitely; and
- Consider offering free membership for the first year in MRPEA.



Communications Committee Report (10/11/2016)

NEWSLETTER

Summer issue posted online August 4, emailed August 5, and mailed on or about August 11

Fall issue to be emailed/mailed in late October or early November

WEBSITE

Updates to pages and links

- i. Updated Annual Meeting tab/page with meeting summary and handouts
- ii. Added a Meetings & Events tab/page to replace the listing of meetings and events on the home page
- iii. Added MRPEA address and contact information to the home page to address repeated requests for that information

Will continue to make website updates/revisions when and as needed

SOCIAL MEDIA

Posting about weekly to Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/MississippiRPEA/>

- i. Facebook page is slowly and organically gaining more likes (775 at last count)
- ii. Most popular recent posts include:
 1. *MRPEA Annual Meeting photos (posted July 11)*
 2. *Dr. Cecil Hill remembrance (posted July 18)*

Posting less frequently to Instagram account @ MyMRPEA

- i. About 100 followers thus far
- ii. Will take time to grow a significant following on this platform

OTHER

Drafted final membership renewal campaign letter

Assisted MRPEA office manager with selected communications as needed