



Volume XXI | Issue 3
Spring 2017

The Guardian

Mississippi Retired Public Employees' Association
Quarterly Newsletter

Officers | Board Members

Becky Cade
President

Ann Thames
Vice President

Mike Lightsey
Treasurer

Bob Rhoads
Secretary

Immediate Past President
Howell Garner

Life Directors

Virgil Belue
Alton Cobb
Lester Herrington
Wylma King
Thomas Loftin
Billy Thames
Anita Toler
Sam Valentine
Wilma White

2019 Directors

Jane Dykes
Mike Larsen
Ed LeGrand
Michael Myrick

2018 Directors

Mike Black
Ann Homer Cook
Lucian Hill
Hoopy Stringer
Evelyn Webb

2017 Directors

Margo Bowers
Ollie M. Johnson
Dale Sullivan
Curt Thompson

Ex Officio

George Dale
Randy McCoy

District Directors

See page 2 for district directors
and their contact information.

President's Message

MRPEA annual meeting scheduled for July 10

By Becky Cade

The Board of Directors of the Mississippi Retired Public Employees' Association (MRPEA) invites you to attend our Annual Meeting Monday, July 10, from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Hilton Jackson. Preregistration is not required, and there is no charge to attend. A reception will follow from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Join members, potential members, and representatives from partner organizations in learning more about our organization and how we function while connecting with other like-minded active and retired public employees from around the state. We will have knowledgeable speakers on topics that we hope will be of interest to you.

Additionally, your attendance will afford you the opportunity to:

- ✓ **Meet** the Board and find out what we are doing to advocate on your behalf;
- ✓ **Listen** to speakers as they discuss topics that may affect you and your future;
- ✓ **Learn** what you can do to help protect your retirement against change;
- ✓ **Engage** with vendors that offer benefits and services that might enhance your lifestyle; and
- ✓ **Network** with fellow members and exchange ideas.



Constitution and By-Laws | At the meeting, the Constitution and By-Laws Committee, chaired by Dr. Evelyn Webb, will present proposed technical amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws for a vote by members. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting will be required to amend the Constitution and By-Laws. The proposed changes are summarized on page 2 of this newsletter, and the amended Constitution and By-Laws is posted on our website on the Annual Meeting page for those who would like to review the actual proposed amendments in advance of the meeting.

Officers and Directors | Also at the meeting, the Nominating Committee, chaired by Dr. Howell Garner, will present the slate of 2017-2019 officers and 2020 directors for a vote by members. Officer nominees are: President – Ann Thames; Vice President – Ed LeGrand; Secretary – Bob Rhoads (current term expires July 31, 2017); and Treasurer – Mike Lightsey (current term expires July 31, 2017). Director nominees are: Ronnie Bell (new); Margo Bowers (current term expires July 31, 2017), Olin Lewis (new); and Dale Sullivan (current term expires July 31, 2017). Members will elect the new slate of officers and directors by majority vote of those present and voting.

Your active participation is vital; so, please make plans to attend the meeting July 10. Periodically check the Annual Meeting page on our website and our event page on Facebook for meeting updates. Also, please let others know about MRPEA by inviting them to the meeting.

I look forward to seeing you, and I look forward to handing the gavel over to your new president. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your president. I will be forever grateful for your encouragement and support as we worked together to help protect PERS!

MRPEA District Directors

District 1 – *Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Lamar, Pearl River, Perry, Stone*

Wynona Winfield

601-955-4525
wwlsubeach@yahoo.com

District 2 - *Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, Lincoln, Marion, Pike, Simpson, Walthall, Wilkinson*

Tony Byrne

601-431-2250
annetteb@cableone.net

District 3 - *Clarke, Covington, Jasper, Jones, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott, Smith, Wayne*

Vacant

District 4 - *Hinds, Madison, Rankin*

Joe Johnson

601-624-6642
joejohnson1946@gmail.com

District 5 - *Attala, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster, Winston*

Marty Wiseman

662-312-6166
wmw3@msstate.edu

District 6 - *Bolivar, Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, Warren, Washington, Yazoo*

Preston Ratliff

662-897-4333
p_ratliff2000@yahoo.com

District 7 - *Alcorn, Benton, Itawamba, Lee, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union*

Robert McNeil

662-680-9024
ramcneil@comcast.net

District 8 - *Coahoma, DeSoto, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, Yalobusha*

Thomas Toney

662-563-3744
thomasetoney@bellsouth.net

MRPEA News

Cade, Garner to assume new roles with MRPEA

After serving two years as MRPEA president following two years as vice president, Becky Cade will become immediate past president following the election of a new president July 10. Howell Garner, who has served the last two years as immediate past president, will become a life director.

When reflecting on Becky's tenure as president, Garner said, "We are so grateful to Becky for her tireless service to MRPEA. Under Becky's leadership, we have expanded our networking capacity; increased our legislative presence; increased communication with members; and ensured that the organization is well-positioned for continued growth."

New district director in District 4

At its April 10 meeting, the MRPEA Board of Directors approved the appointment of Joe Johnson as district director for District 4 (Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties). Joe replaces Hilda Westbrook who resigned from that post last year. Joe, who retired in 2013 after more than 40 years in education in Mississippi, was elected as a director in 2014 for a three-year term. Thank you, Joe, for your service and commitment to MRPEA!

Proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

At the July 10 annual meeting, the Constitution and By-Laws Committee, chaired by Dr. Evelyn Webb, will present the following proposed technical amendments to the MRPEA Constitution and By-Laws for a vote by members:

1. Amend Article I, Section 3, Type of Organization, to clarify that MRPEA is a non-profit organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(4);
2. Amend Article II, Purpose, to align with the purpose (Vision and Mission) of the organization today;
3. Amend Article III, Section 1, Membership eligibility, for clarity; and
4. Amend Article V, Section 2, Board of Directors, to formalize the election of multi-year directors beginning in 2018 in an effort to implement the 2016 change from 15 to 10 multi-year elected directors through attrition.

Members of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee are: Webb, Bob Rhoads, Margo Bowers, Mike Black, and Preston Ratliff.

It's time to renew your membership

Public employees and retirees have a vested interest in legislation and any decisions that could potentially affect their retirement benefits, organizational change to the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) or its Board of Trustees, as well as the type of pension plan offered. Therefore, MRPEA has and continues to promote beneficial legislation and discourage harmful legislation. We invite you to continue your support of MRPEA.

Your support is vital to:

- ✓ **Keeping** MRPEA at the Capitol when the Mississippi Legislature is in session;
- ✓ **Helping** MRPEA keep members informed;
- ✓ **Supporting** MRPEA as it plans and hosts meetings;
- ✓ **Allowing** MRPEA to be a liaison between our members and PERS; and
- ✓ **Fortifying** MRPEA's strength as a guardian for the retirement of thousands.

Renewing your membership is easy!

- Securely renew online at www.mrpea.org; **or**
- Complete and return the Membership Registration/Renewal form on the back of this newsletter.

If you have questions about the status of your membership or if you need assistance with your online registration, please call or email, 601-919-0670 or mrpea@bellsouth.net.



Contact MRPEA

Deirdre McGowan
Executive Director

601-919-0670
mrpea@bellsouth.net
www.mrpea.org

Meetings and Events

MRPEA Board Meeting
July 10, 2017
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Hilton Jackson

MRPEA Annual Meeting
July 10, 2017
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Hilton Jackson
1001 East County Line Road
Jackson, MS 39211
601-957-2800

Social Media



Partner Organizations

Mississippi Association of Personnel
Administrators (MAPA)

Mississippi Association of School
Administrators (MASA)

Mississippi Professional Educators
(MPE)

Mississippi Public Health Association
(MPHA)

Retired Education Personnel of
Mississippi (REPM)

PERS News

Pat Robertson announces her retirement

Pat Robertson, executive director of PERS, has announced her retirement for mid-to-late 2018. Robertson has worked at PERS since 1980 and has served as the agency's executive director since 2005, following the retirement of Frank Ready. Robertson's retirement is slated for 2018 following the selection of a new executive director by the PERS Board of Trustees, which has created a search committee to recruit and select the new executive director. The PERS Board has hired the executive search firm Korn Ferry to assist in the recruitment process.



George Dale elected to PERS Board of Trustees

George Dale, former Commissioner of Insurance, has been elected as the new retiree representative on the PERS Board. At its April 25 meeting, the PERS Board certified the results of the runoff election between Dale and Dr. Phil Pepper, former state economist. Dale's term will run from May 1, 2017, to April 30, 2023.



Dale replaces Dr. Richard C. Miller who served nearly 22 years as a trustee. Miller served from January 1993 to June 2008 as the Institutions of Higher Learning employee representative and from May 2011 to April 2017 as a retiree representative.

The 10-member PERS Board includes the state Treasurer, a gubernatorial appointee, two retirees, two state employees, and one representative each of public schools & community/junior colleges, Institutions of Higher Learning, counties, and municipalities.

PERS 2017 Legislative Update

House Bill 1301 (H.B. 1301), which was signed by Governor Bryant March 13, makes several minor technical amendments to PERS law effective July 1, 2017, as follows:

- Amends Miss. Code Ann. § 25-11-105(f) to remove specific statutory language related to a community hospital that is no longer covered under PERS;
- Amends Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-11-117(3) and 25-11-311(3) to clarify that for those who enter or reenter state service on or after July 1, 2007, eight years of membership service is required before creditable service related to repaid refunded years can be used in any benefit calculation;
- Amends Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-11-115(1) Option 4B and 25-13-16(1) Option 4B to clarify to whom the actuarial equivalent of any remaining payments shall be paid in the event of the death of the retired member and of the last designated beneficiary; and
- Amends Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-11-105(k), 25-11-109(10)(c), 25-11-117(3)(a) and (3)(b), 25-11-311(3)(a) and (3)(b), and 25-13-21 to simplify purchase of service statutory language by removing language that specifies the increments in which the payment for such service credit must be made so that the PERS Board may set those increments via regulation.

In addition to the above technical amendments, H.B. 1301 amends Miss. Code Ann. § 25-3-39(1)(a) from and after July 1, 2018, to exempt the salaries of the PERS Executive Director and the PERS Chief Investment Officer from the 150 percent of the Governor's salary cap, which will allow the PERS Board of Trustees to establish competitive salaries for those positions.

As a reminder to active employees, House Bill 899 (2016) amends retirement law effective July 1, 2017, to prospectively change the method of granting service credit from quarterly to monthly increments and to provide that, for members who retire on or after July 1, 2017, creditable service for unused leave will be awarded in monthly rather than quarterly increments, with every 21 days of unused leave counting as one month of service. Refer to the PERS website for a complete summary of PERS-related legislation or call PERS at 601-359-3589 or 800-444-7377.



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MRPEA Membership Registration/Renewal

☐ \$20 Annual Rate (August 1 – July 31) ☐ \$250 Life Rate ☐ I want to support MRPEA with the enclosed donation

Check One: ☐ Miss ☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Mr. ☐ Dr. Other: _____

Name _____ County _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Date of Birth _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mail this form with a check payable to: MRPEA, P.O. Box 5580, Brandon, MS 39047-5580

For other convenient payment options, register or renew online at www.mrpea.org.