

MINUTES

MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

Retirement Board Conference Room
One McInnis Parkway, 1st Floor
San Rafael, CA

June 29, 2010 - 9:00 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wofford called the meeting to order at 9:01A.M.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Brenk, Phillips, Smith, Webb, Wofford

ABSENT: Hufford

MINUTES

January 19, 2009 Member Services Committee meeting

It was M/S Webb/Phillips to approve the January 19, 2009, Member Services Committee meeting Minutes as submitted. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

A. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Assistant Retirement Administrator Helen Moody reported considerable progress in reducing the buyback backlog since the beginning of the year. Ms. Moody stated that complex calculations over several years are required in some cases. Ms. Moody also stated that staff has worked through another 100 retirement estimates.

B. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consider and make recommendations to Board regarding options for seeking member feedback regarding MCERA services. (Action)

Communications Associate Syd Fowler recommended deferring the use of feedback forms in favor of creating additional educational materials. Ms. Fowler stated that, as several other '37 Act systems found through focus groups and member surveys, members prefer more printed material. The Committee expressed an interest in enhancing the availability of information, recommending links to educational pamphlets on the website.

Trustee Smith acknowledged the staff's efforts on behalf of members.

Trustee Phillips emphasized the need to manage staffing to balance the growing need for communications, adding that other '37 Act systems are now developing and staffing this area, and that MCERA is to be commended for initiating the position of Communications Associate. Chair Wofford recommended continuing discussions on member education at the next Committee meeting.

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. MCERA Communications with Members/Beneficiaries. (Action)

Ms. Fowler reviewed recent improvements in member communications and presented the Committee with her research into communications plans. She stated that the purpose of a communications plan would be to establish and integrate all communications efforts into one comprehensive document, to set clear goals and measurable data-driven objectives, and to position MCERA to be proactive rather than reactive to membership demands.

Ms. Fowler provided an update on website enhancements and member handbooks. Ms. Moody noted that member handbooks would be restructured according to life events and would include more information for new employees than what is currently available. Trustee Phillips recommended combining the member and retiree handbooks. For the website, Committee Chair Wofford suggested providing text versions of pamphlets. In order to provide members with the latest information, Trustee Brenk emphasized the importance of directing members to the website and the importance of accurate information was emphasized by Chair Wofford. Committee members and staff agreed that providing information for family members upon a member's death is important. Other matters considered were provision of an inclusive list of related retiree organizations and additional resources for members and their beneficiaries.

It was M/S Smith/Phillips to recommend that staff create a Communications Plan. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Consider and make recommendation to Board regarding the creation of pre-retirement seminars dedicated to the specific needs of safety members. (Action)

After initial discussions relating to the needs of safety members, Committee members and Chair Wofford determined that additional information on the disability retirement process for all members would be appropriate. Ms. Moody recommended including information on non-service connected disability for clarity and Chair Wofford agreed that additional information will allow members to make more informed decisions.

It was M/S Webb/Phillips to recommend the inclusion of a disability presentation in the proposed Communications Plan.

3. Discuss agenda topics for next meeting

The Committee agreed to meet in the Fall on a date to be determined.

There being no further business, Chair Wofford adjourned the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

Karen Wofford, Chair

Attest: Jeff Wickman, for Tom Ford
Retirement Administrator