

ERS Quarterly Membership Meeting Minutes for March 3, 2022

ERS President Dave Baine called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. This was a virtual meeting via Zoom, with some attendees participating by telephone only. We had 23 attendees, including all five elected officers, during part of the meeting. There were no special announcements.

Guest Speaker: Jessica Bonebright introduced our guest speaker, Steve Bauck with Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA). Steve's topic was "What the Pandemic Reveals About Our Healthcare System."

Steve told us that our healthcare costs are 165% higher than the costs of other OECD (Organization of Economic and Community Development) countries. We are last in medical, medication, and lab errors among OECD countries. We have fewer hospital beds per capita than most other comparable countries. We have fewer physicians per capita than nearly all other comparable countries.

Steve said that our major problem is that we fund our hospitals on a fee-for-service basis, and that nowhere else has a healthcare system as geared to profit as ours does. He told us that people of color are more likely to die from COVID-19 because they get poor healthcare and that when COVID-19 strikes poor people and minorities are all more vulnerable to COVID-19. Steve emphasized that we need a coordinated, universal, and affordable healthcare system that can allocate resources where they are needed. Steve included many statistics to back up his conclusions.

Minutes: Jim Ewing's minutes of the December 2, 2021, quarterly membership meeting were printed in our March 2022 ERS newsletter and were approved without dissent.

President's Report: Dave Baine told us there is interest in ERS resuming in-person meetings in a SPEEA hall, but no specific plan has been approved for this. Dwight Rousu said a few words about hybrid ("mixed-mode") meetings that would include attendees in a SPEEA hall and virtual attendees who participated via Zoom. Dave added that ERS annual dues are now payable and that our checks should be made out to "ERS."

Vice President's Report: Steve Ellis told us that our reserves have been growing because we haven't had the costs of in-person meetings at SPEEA.

Treasurer's Report: Bob Ferguson asked us to be patient because our checks for ERS dues might not be cashed for about two months. Bob told us that he mailed a check for \$2298 to pay our NRLN dues. Bob said that we had \$5046.41 in checking, \$25,236.06 in savings, and \$20,237.54 in CDs.

Steering Board Chair's Report: Dwight Rousu told us that our newsletter had been sent out, and it was only four pages. Dwight added that he and several other ERS members had been attending SPEEA L&PA committee virtual meetings.

Committee Reports: Communications Cochair Dave Westman reported that he has been looking for an understudy because he may be moving to Hawaii. Steve Ellis told us that we are building our reserves. Dave Baine told us that we need a volunteer to serve as governing documents chair. Investments Cochair Dave Watt told us that the next investment meeting would be March 17 and that our speaker would be Kevin Hasslinger from Edward Jones. Kevin's topic would be "Outlook and

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Opportunities.” Dave added that the following investment meeting would be on May 19 but that he had not yet chosen a speaker.

Membership Chair John Neller reported that we had 937 members, of whom 646 had paid dues for 2021 and/or 2022, and that 118 had last paid dues for 2020. Our membership for the purpose of NRLN dues was 766. John added that our renewal notice for payment of dues had been mailed earlier in February. NRLN Liaison Steve Ellis told us that no fly-in was (yet) scheduled for 2022. Programs Chair Dave Watt told us the next quarterly membership meeting would be June 2 and asked us to let him know if we had a suggestion for a speaker at that meeting. Millard Battles, our former service chair, told us that Bluebills are volunteering in food banks and hospitals. Social Chair Steve Ellis suggested that Dave Baine lead us in a toast at the end of each virtual meeting. SPEEA/ERS Liaison Dave Baine said he would contact Ray Goforth to see if there are plans on how to open SPEEA for meetings again. L&PA Chair Dwight Rousu told us that he had attended a Zoom meeting of the IFPTE. This meeting was four hours of discussion about national issues such as the Jobs Act and the cost of prescription drugs.

Sunshine Committee Cochair Myrv Johansen told us that our SPEEA liaison, Kaitlin Plunkett, had tested positive for COVID-19. The sunshine committee sent Kaitlin a get-well e-card. Myrv added that he and Joan had sent a sympathy card to Bob Ferguson because of the death of his son. Travel Chair John Neller told us that, for the most part, restrictions for travel outside the United States are coming down. He did advise us to take our vaccination card when we traveled.

New Business: Bob Ferguson suggested that we send emails to advise our members of possible two-month delays before we can deposit their annual dues checks.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37 p.m. Our next steering board meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. Our next quarterly membership meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2022, at noon. These may both be virtual or hybrid meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Ewing, Secretary