

Minutes for ERS Membership meeting June 1, 2023

ERS President Dave Baine called the virtual Zoom meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

There were 27 attendees including Dave Baine, Dwight Rousu, Walt Ditlefsen, Steve Ellis, Bob Ferguson, Jessica Bonebright, John Neller, Dave Watt, Myrv and Joan Johansen, John Meeker, Ken Kuehnl, Roger Aisaka, Jeff Arnold, Phil Carey, Don Cook, Carolyn Brock, Randy Hillenbrand, Lee Kanning, Erich Koehler, Ron Nyborg, Patti Poulson, Ric Pierce, William Tsai, Stephen Wood.

Guest Speaker: **Steve Bauck** of Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, www.PSARA.org, presented Social Security's Future. Despite dire warnings, Social Security is not going broke and does not add to the national debt. It provides security to seniors, children of deceased workers and disabled workers. Two-thirds of workers have no other disability insurance. Payments are made entirely from its Trust Fund and FICA tax revenues. The projected shortfall should be solved by 'scrapping the cap' and requiring those with the highest earnings to pay their fair share – the same tax rate as everyone else. In 2023, those earning more than \$160,200 per year, stop paying FICA tax on earnings above that cap. Proposals in congress would tax earnings above \$400,000 per year, creating a donut hole until the annually adjusted cap reached \$400,000). With this change, benefits could be expanded and enhanced instead of cuts which have been proposed, like raising the retirement age. A three-year increase in full retirement age from 67 to 70 for future retirees is an effective cut of more than 20% .

Secretary's Report: Jessica Bonebright's minutes of our June 1, 2023 membership meeting were approved as published.

President's Report: Dave Baine reported on discussions about holding hybrid meetings at SPEEA. ERS is rolling over our CDs at BECU for a higher yield. We're still looking into renewal of our non-profit status. NRLN is considering a fly-in September 23-27 in WA DC. We're planning to send two ERS representatives. A memorial event for Joel Funfar will be held at SPEEA, Tukwila 3-5pm. Please contact Dave for more information about volunteering to serve as ERS Pension & Insurance Chair.

Vice President: Steve Ellis reported ERS cashed in CDs earning 0.2% incurring a penalty if 90-days' interest and bought CDs earning 3.55%. On the same visit to BECU we updated our officers and titles

Treasurer: Bob Ferguson reported ERS balances are: Checking \$2278.68; Savings \$25,057.54 and CD's \$20,247.96 for a total of \$60,413.26 (in March we reported a total of \$62,929.26) A few more dues checks are coming in.

Steering Board Chair: Dwight Rousu reported our ERS newsletter was emailed and it's on our website. The steering board met for 3 hours last week.

Committee and Rep Reports

Communications: Walt Ditlefsen reported we're still using MailChimp - our issues were resolved.

Finance: Steve Ellis reported our higher return, risk free CD investments are good for ERS..

Governing Documents: Walt Ditlefsen proposed 3 changes to our governing documents. The steering board has the authority and has approved two Policy changes: :

Policy manual section 4.4 Travel Expenses – changes reimbursement from 20 cents per mile to “the current standard IRS mileage rate”

Policy manual section 2.1 Badges Committee – simplify language to: “Each member will receive a badge after attending one general meeting.”

The steering board recommends to the membership changing By-Laws section 3.1 Badges – to simplify attendance records by eliminating language about keeping a two-year record of attendees and add “in-person” prior to “general meeting” regarding providing a sign-in sheet.

Motion and second to approve this By-Laws change was approved without objection.

Walt will be considering process options for dealing with proposed resolutions prior to bringing them up at ERS meetings.

Insurance chair: position is open, please contact Dave Baine if you may be interested.

Investments: Dave Watt investments meetings are 3rd Thursdays of odd months. Next meetings are July 20, Sept. 21 and Nov. 16. ERS member Emit Omar will speak about his system of reviewing and buying funds. He charts impressive returns.

Membership: John Neller reported we have 930 ERS members, 546 paid dues for 2023 and additional 135 paid for 2022 or 2023. 249 paid for 2021 or earlier. We need to coordinate with SPEEA to assure our invitation to join letter is getting out to new retirees.

National Retiree Legislative Network: Dwight Rousu reported NRLN is tracking Social Security and Medicare issues. They’re particularly concerned about proposals from Speaker McCarthy. They are gauging interest in a fly-in to WADC this fall. See email messages or the NRLN website for more information.

Program: Dave Watt reported we’re still looking for a speaker for our September 7 & Dec 7 meetings – get in touch with your ideas.

Nominations and Elections: Steve Ellis reported elections will be held at our Dec. 7 meeting.

Social & Refreshments: John Meeker and Steve Ellis will need an approximate number of participants for purchasing refreshments when we’re able to start meeting in person again.

SPEEA / ERS Liaison: Dave Baine coordinating with SPEEA on starting hybrid ERS meetings.

Legislative & Public Affairs: Dwight Rousu reported candidates in local elections are seeking endorsements. SPEEA doesn’t endorse candidates, but it’s good to consider labor endorsements.

Sunshine: Myrv and Joan Johansen reported SPEEA notified us of three members who have passed away. Condolence messages were posted on memorial websites for Lois Boyer and James L Beason. A sympathy card was mailed to Richard Etter’s wife Eloise.

Travel: John Neller reported airfares and hotel rates are way up since last year.












No reports this meeting for: Badges, Pensions or Service.

The meeting was adjourned by Dave Baine at 1:30 p.m.

Next ERS All member meeting is September 7, 2023

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jessica Bonebright, secretary

Zoom Meeting

 John Taylor	 Wanda Bonbright, PSM.org	 Dwight Adams, Richmond, VA	 Walter Ottavio	 Algeri, J. David, The Firm
 David L. Phil	 Margaret Herbert	 Carolin	 Steve Bask	 Marty Wasko, Wasko
 William Tye	Ric Pierce <small>Ric Pierce</small>	Phil Carey <small>Phil Carey</small>	Lee <small>Lee</small>	Patti Poulson <small>Patti Poulson</small>
J S <small>J S</small>	stephen's wood <small>stephen's wood</small>	John M & Ken K <small>John M & Ken K</small>	Steve Ellis <small>Steve Ellis</small>	Don Cook <small>Don Cook</small>
Ron Nyborg <small>Ron Nyborg</small>	mtman <small>mtman</small>	Randy Hillenbrand <small>Randy Hillenbrand</small>	Dave Baine <small>Dave Baine</small>	Jeff Arnold <small>Jeff Arnold</small>