

Official Publication of the Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco

NEWS & VIEWS

A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR ALL CITY RETIREES

Health Service Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski

The Health Service System has hired a new executive director. Abbie Yant comes with an impressive resume, available to read at myhss.org. She has spent the last 17 years at Saint Francis Memorial Hospital; and, prior to that, worked for the Department of Public Health. President Scott thanked all board members for their due diligence and participation in the extensive search process.

- President Scott commended Mitchell Griggs, Pamela Levin, Laini Scott and the entire HSS staff for their diligence, dedication and commitment to HSS and the members during the last ten challenging months—and especially during the open enrollment period.
- Mitchell Griggs gave his final Director's Report and emphasized the hard work that the EAP has been providing to departments and employees, especially since the untimely death of Mayor Ed Lee. The Well-being Division has been very successful, and is recognizing 19 city departments for Well-being@Work awards.
- FY2018-20 budget directions are out. HSS is required to find 2.5% savings in each of the next two years. Budget cycles are two years. This remains very challenging for HSS since the department is very small, with few staff vacancies. Budget director Levin predicts that HSS will end this fiscal year on budget.
- The trust fund seems to be stable, with appropriate reserves. It was noted that no performance guarantees have been received yet and no pharmacy rebates have been received. Future reports will reflect

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Retirement Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski and Herb Weiner

There was a special SFERS meeting on the issue of fossil fuel investments on Jan. 24, 2018—with results reported on Page 4 of this issue.

- The fund is \$24 billion according to CIO Bill Coaker, who reported that returns in global equities continue to be high, keeping the average returns for the fiscal year at 7.49%. He pointed out how returns in 2017 far exceeded almost all forecasts: Global economic conditions are currently in a sweet spot, with solid economic growth all around the world, low inflation, low interest rates, and either high, or improving, employment.
- Coaker also reported that, at the Nov. 8, 2017 meeting, the SFERS Board approved in closed session the investment guidelines for San Francisco Absolute Return Investors II, LP. (These are hedge funds; Makras voted no.) The amount approved for investment is up to 17% of SFERS' total plan (at the time: \$23.5 billion). Commissioner Driscoll pointed out that the board approved a maximum investment of 15%, so the report should be corrected to indicate 15%.
- Finally, Coaker reported that the Absolute Return program has returned 8.33% annualized (net of fees), outperforming the Hedge Fund Research Fund of Funds Composite Index, which was up 6.58%. Mr. Furlan—a meeting “gadfly”—again testified his strong recommendations to the board for hedge fund investing, and stated that he is applying to replace Commissioner Bridges, whose term is expiring in February. He reaffirmed

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February Calendar

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 14

**Business meeting & program:
10 a.m.**

Scottish Rite Masonic Temple
2850-19th Ave. at Sloat Blvd.

News & Views

Editorial Committee Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 9 a.m.

Taraval Police Station
All interested parties welcome.

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 20 10 a.m.

Taraval Police Station
All interested parties welcome.

Public Meetings:

Retired Firefighters &

Spouses Association

Thursday, March 15, 1 p.m.

Irish Cultural Center,
45th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

Veteran Police Officers

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 11 a.m.

San Francisco Scottish Rite
Masonic Center,
2850 19th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.

Retirement System

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 1 p.m.

1145 Market St., 6th Floor

Health Service System

Thursday, Feb. 8, 1 p.m.

City Hall, Room 416

UESF Retired Division

For time/location, contact
Diane Doe at 1 (415) 822-2099 or
Ddoe@mac.com.

SEIU 1021 West Bay

Retirees Chapter

Monday, Feb. 26, 12-2 p.m.

Union Hall, 350 Rhode Island St.,
100 South Bldg.

Contact: David Williams

1 (415) 939-5149 or
iamdhw@comcast.net.

New Logo!!! New T-shirts!!!

The RECCSF Membership Committee has created, and our executive board has approved, a new RECCSF logo featuring the San Francisco skyline.

Many organizations offer for sale an identifying article of clothing that many members wear to their gatherings. In this spirit, RECCSF is now ordering a production run of unisex t-shirts bearing our new logo, offered at \$15 for white, \$20 for colored, in sizes small, medium, large, and extra large.

If you're interested in purchasing a t-shirt, please fill in the attached order form. (If you're ordering a colored t-shirt, please be sure to write your preferred color on the form.)

To submit your form, or request further information, please email Membership Chair "Skee" Tostanoski at sfskee@sbcglobal.net.

Thank You!



Would you like to join us in purchasing a new logo T-shirt?

\$15 (white)

By request, larger sizes are \$5 more, and additional colors are \$5 more.

All sizes are unisex.

Sm _____ Med _____ Lg _____ XL _____

Additional \$5 XXX _____ XXXL _____

Colors=Special=Please contact Skee for colors available at sfskee@sbcglobal.net.

Your Name _____

Phone# _____

Email: _____

Retirement Committee Report

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- his frustration at the board not following his recommendations, despite his ongoing testimony at meetings.
- The board voted to invest \$200 million and create a direct relationship with Van Berkomp and Associates, Inc. (VBI), for active investment management services. Commissioner Bridges questioned if VBI had been part of fund-to-fund, and voted no.
- A major investment change in the Deferred Compensation plan was reported, with details to be reported in February. No comment was made as to whether this would impact existing accounts of retirees.
- Resolution 44 Delegation of Authority was updated with current and new employees who are authorized to perform specific actions on behalf of SFERS board members. It states that it is "reasonable and prudent" to do so.
- Deputy City Attorney Robert A. Bryan brought the next tutorial section on fiduciary responsibility, but was asked to delay to next month in the interest of time.
- Executive Director Jay Huish presented a very abbreviated report. I questioned the conditions under which Supervisor Peskin delivered his charter amendment that would change the configuration of the board. Mr. Huish responded that Supervisor Peskin indicated that the proposed amendment is being held pending the board's decision regarding fossil fuel divestment at the special Jan. 24 meeting.

Questions? Comments?

Contact Claire Zvanski at czvanski@hotmail.com or Herb Weiner h.weiner@sbcglobal.net.

Health Service Committee Report

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- those adjustments, if applicable. All Medicare benefits are now fully funded. HSS is carefully watching changes in Medicare/Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act. These will directly impact future Medicare rates.
 - The plan year 2019 Rates and Benefits Calendar was provided. The Medicare rates for all plans will be the last to be presented, with the exception of the 10-county amount presentation in March. The multi-region Kaiser rates will also be last. It remains an ambitious calendar, but the rates must be presented to the Board of Supervisors in time for the budget cycle.
 - Blue Shield reported that 14,500 members enrolled in the Trio option (eliminates Sutter) while 22,500 members currently use only Trio providers but remain in the Access option, which has a higher premium. This includes Medicare mixed families.
 - Best Doctors reported that over 730 members have utilized the benefit as of Sept. 30, 2017. None has used the medical records eSummary yet. They will return next month with more detailed utilization information.
- Questions? Comments? Contact Claire Zvanski at czvanski@hotmail.com.

President's Message

By Claire Zvanski

The beginning of a new year usually brings hope. The last couple of years have also brought most of us a supplemental COLA. We continue to fight for equity for pre-96 retirees. Everyone, including actives and employers, win when the investment returns keep our pension plan making high returns. Our fund remains one of the top two pension plans in the nation for investment returns.

Proposition C taught us that we can't take our pensions for granted. Now, we have another charter amendment threatening to change the configuration of our pension board and expose board members to political influence

over their investment decisions. The Kentucky pension board has been sued for making bad investment decisions and bankrupting that fund. We have been fighting hedge fund investing and we have been watching the battle against fossil fuel investments. The New York pension fund just voted to divest from fossil fuels. These decisions directly impact investment returns.

In my view, it's one thing for members of our fund to express opinions about investment decisions. It's another thing entirely for pressure to be on fiduciaries to make political decisions instead of fiduciary ones.

It's our pension fund. How will you get involved?



Questions? Comments? Please feel to contact me at 1 (415) 341-3085 or czvanski@hotmail.com.

Three Powerful Steps to Paying down Holiday Debt

From Our Friends at San Francisco Federal Credit Union

Did you go a little crazy with holiday shopping last year? You're not alone. Reportedly, retail sales were expected to top \$680 billion dollars during the 2017 holiday season.

It's hard to resist the temptation to overspend when buying gifts for your family and friends, especially when so many retailers offer their deepest discounts of the year. So, if you find yourself suddenly buried under a mound of credit card debt, the following will help you to resolve the issue.

Add up your seasonal costs. The first step is to simply calculate the exact amount of your holiday debt. This is helpful for several reasons. For starters, you need to know your target number so that you can make a plan for repayment. But, it also lets you establish a limit for 2018's seasonal spending. Provided that your budget is the same for this year's holidays, you can either make a plan to save more or spend less on gifts than you did in 2017.

Tackle higher-interest debt first. Not all debt is created equal. You'll pay more in the long run on credit cards with higher interest rates than on low-

er-rate cards. So, rather than splitting your repayments evenly across your accounts, make the more expensive cards your priority. Otherwise, your holiday purchases will weigh you down well into the new year.

Reorganize your budget. If you're struggling to get ahead of your seasonal debt, you may need to take a long, hard look at your budget (and if you've never made a budget, the beginning of the year is a great time to start)! Can you eat out less? Can you make coffee at home instead of buying it every day? Identify areas where you can save, and apply the extra money toward the costs of those holiday purchases.

Best Doctors is a best bet!

Many RECCSF members have remarked upon the excellent quality of the service provided by the Best Doctors service. This new free service for HSS members is provided by the Health Service System.

A hard plastic oversized card was mailed to members in the recent past. If you have questions, or did not receive this mailing, please contact the Health Service System at 1 (415) 554-1750 or myhss.org.

This article is courtesy of and provided by the credit union's financial partner, BALANCE. As a benefit of belonging to San Francisco Federal Credit Union, you have access to personal financial counseling at no charge through BALANCE. We are always here to help, please visit any of our branches, or call us at 1 (415) 775-5377.

Useful Phone Numbers

RECCSF Office

Email: reccsf@att.net

Web site: sfretirees.org

Phone Number:

1 (415) 681-5949

Health Service System

Web site: myhss.org

Phone Numbers:

1 (415) 554-1750

1 (800) 541-2266

S.F. Retirement System

Web site: sfgov.org/sfers

Phone Numbers:

1 (415) 487-7000

1 (888) 849-0777

It's a first—RECCSF San Mateo mid-county meeting held on Jan. 24, 2018!

By Claire Zvanski

The first meeting of RECCSF members outside of San Francisco was held on Wednesday, Jan. 24, in Belmont, in a private room at the iHop Restaurant on El Camino Real. About 15 local members joined six board members for breakfast. It was exciting to meet some members for the first time, and also to reunite with some members who haven't been able to attend San Francisco meetings for quite a while. They were very happy to meet, and expressed a desire to have future meetings. We hope these members will consider forming their own RECCSF chapter, and schedule meetings on at least a quarterly basis.

It's clear to your board members that we should continue to schedule meetings outside of San Francisco on alternate meeting months, since so many of our current members, as well as many current employees—and potential future RECCSF members—live all over the Bay Area.

If you live in Marin County and would like to schedule a meeting in March in the Novato area—preferably in a private area of a restaurant—please contact me at czvanski@hotmail.com or Membership Chair Skee Tostanoski at sfskee@sbcglobal.net.



South Bay members enjoying their first RECCSF meeting in their area.



Historic first RECCSF San Mateo mid-county meeting.

Special Retirement Board meeting held on Jan 24, 2018

By Claire Zvanski

There was only one item on the agenda for the special Retirement Board meeting: to divest from fossil fuel securities.

- It started with educational presentations about the values of engagement, instead of divestment, of fossil fuels. The main points are: Divestment means someone else buys the stock so SFERS can no longer impact the strategies of fossil fuel companies; and engagement means collaborating with other investors

to encourage companies to invest in alternate energy and vote stocks accordingly.

- Public comment featured more than 80 speakers, mostly organized by 350.org, with fewer than five retired members of the System who demanded immediate and complete divestment. Supervisor Peskin spoke first, and strongly urged the SFERS Board to divest immediately. RECCSF and POB representatives encouraged the trustees to exercise their fiduciary responsibility and make the best decisions to sustain

the fund and provide future COLAs and supplemental COLAs (cost of living adjustments).

- The first motion from Wendy Paskin-Jordan was to adopt the staff recommendation: Hire a director of socially responsible investing; develop a prudent, long-term divestment plan, etc.) and divest from the “dirtiest” companies first, to invest in clean and alternate energy assets, and to report back to the board by July 31. (The motion passed unanimously.)

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Membership Committee Report

By John "Skee" Tostanoski, chair

On January 11, we participated in the first AFT 2121 preretirement seminar for City College teachers, and hope it was the first of many to come.

As of this writing, on January 24 we will have had conducted our first out-of-San Francisco meeting in San Mateo County, and are anticipating a good turnout.

The RECCSF board has long been supportive of holding meetings outside of San Francisco, in order to engage our out-of-area members who can't come into the city very often. We would love to expand our meeting range: If you are interested in helping the Membership Committee plan an RECCSF meeting in your area, please contact me.

We are still getting additional orders for our new logo T-shirts. Because of requests from members, a revised pre-order form appears in this issue of the newsletter. (The price is \$15, and colors and sizes larger than extra-large will be available for an additional \$5.)

The Membership Committee is very interested in recruiting new members with innovative ideas and energy, to help with member communications and recruitment. Please let me know if you are interested in joining our team!

For more information on any of the above-mentioned items, please email me at sfskee@sbcglobal.net.

Special Retirement Board meeting

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- Supervisor Malia Cohen then made a motion to define and list the "riskiest and dirtiest" companies by April 30, with a target and watch list plus goals for divestment, to be presented by July 31. This generated significant discussion between the board and staff. CIO Bill Coaker stated that it takes time to recruit and hire staff, and that current staff is already assigned to fulltime projects. Coaker further asserted that asking staff to increase its workload with this kind of research was unreasonable, and that the specified timelines were unrealistic. Director Huish supported Coaker's statements defending staff. Ultimately, an extension of six months—from April to October—was suggested and accepted. This (complicated) motion passed 5:2 (Driscoll and Stansbury dissenting). Supervisor Cohen declared the decision "historical."

Questions? Comments? Contact Claire Zvanski at czvanski@hotmail.com.

Rest In Peace

Names are currently unavailable, and will be listed in the March *News & Views*.

2018/19 RECCSF New Executive Board Member Election!

RECCSF is currently soliciting members to run for the RECCSF Executive Board, either as board members or officers.

Terms are for two-year periods.

We encourage members to consider enriching their RECCSF experience by serving in one of these capacities.

If interested, please contact John "Skee" Tostanoski at 1 (415) 699-1050 or sfskee@sbcglobal.net.

For newcomers in particular, it's a great way to get to know your fellow members.

2018 RECCSF Board Nominations

In February, nominations will be open for the following positions:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- and five board members at large.

Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the Feb. 14 General Membership meeting.

Bequests

RECCSF is grateful to any members who remember our organization in their estate planning.



Protect Our Benefits

By Skip McKinney

Protect Our Benefits is an organization whose goals are to enhance the dignity and quality of life of all San Francisco city and county retirees, and preserve their health and retirement benefits. The opinions are those of the writer.

As of this writing, eight candidates have filed to run for mayor. In addition to Acting Mayor London Breed, former state Sen. Mark Leno, Supervisor Jane Kim and former Supervisor Angela Alioto are among those who have filed. The board of supervisors may decide to select an interim mayor prior to the June election. POB will endeavor to establish a working rapport with the new mayor that is beneficial to both the city and POB members.

SFERS v. CCSF (pre-1996)

There is nothing new to report. The POB amicus brief is due 14 days after the appellant SFERS reply brief is filled. The SFERS brief is due no later than Jan. 22, 2018. If the SFERS brief is filed earlier than Jan. 22, 2018, the POB amicus brief will be due 14 days after the SFERS brief is filed. We will update you as soon as possible, thereafter, when a court date is scheduled.

Health Service System

From all reports, HSS is having great

success with the Wellness Center as it continues to increase offerings and expanded programs. Check it out!

We understand that HSS has appointed a new executive director, Abbie Yant, who has over 30 years healthcare experience in San Francisco. POB extends congratulations to the new executive director, and looks forward to setting up a working rapport with her.

SFERS Retirement Board

In 2017, SFERS investments returned 16.55% for the first half of FY 2017-2018. The SFERS total portfolio has gained 7.49%. For that same period, the Absolute Fund (hedge fund) gained 3.12%.

At the SFERS meeting on Nov. 8, 2017, the retirement board approved in closed session the investment guidelines for the San Francisco Absolute Return Investors. The amount approved for investment is up to 17% of SFERS total plan (at the time \$23.5 billion), less the \$1 billion previously committed.

It looks like the fossil fuel debate is reaching a conclusion. As of this writing, SFERS is holding a special board meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2018, at 1 p.m., at which time the motion to divest of companies in the Carbon Underground 200 will be considered.

SFERS Trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to its beneficiaries to

manage the fund to minimize the risk and maximize the rate of return. Retirees and employees depend on these promised benefits, which must be protected. POB believes the trustees will make the right decision regarding divestment, free from political meddling and intimidation.

POB Reorganization

We're just about there. We're known as Protect Our Benefits, Inc. (POBI) and Protect Our Benefits Trust. (POBT). That is the only change that really affects you. POB is still comprised of the same people, and they are doing the same work to protect your benefits. The reason we did this is for tax purposes, to lighten the paperwork load and remain within the parameters of the law. Once we receive word from the Franchise Tax Board and IRS, you'll be able to make tax deductible contributions.

Final Thought

It looks like "they're" coming. Even Governor Brown has jumped onto the main stage. Brown, with nothing to lose since he will never face the voters again, has defied unions on pensions. His office has taken the unusual step of filing a brief with the supreme court in a case affecting public employee pensions; in effect, asking the justices to make it easier for state and local governments to reduce benefits.

We should always be leery of the trickledown effect. Take, for example, our own Proposition C, pre-1996, divestment of fossils fuels, and politicians getting involved in pension systems. More than ever, we must unite retirees, actives and unions. It is going to be a fight, and we'll all do better if everyone is "on the same page."

Please note that we have a new address; Protect Our Benefits Inc. P.O. Box 210250, San Francisco, Ca. 94121-025.0 Once again, your contributions are not yet tax deductible, but much appreciated. Please mail them to our new P.O. Box number and stay informed at protectorourbenefits.org or Facebook.

Remember:

"United we stand, divided we fall."

Abbreviated Financial Statement for RECCSF For the Quarter ended October 31, 2017

Revenue:	
Membership Dues	\$9,100.00
Contributions	1,261.94
Others	175.06
	<hr/>
	\$10,537.00
Expenditures:	
News and Views	\$2,437.48
Meeting & Office Expenses	5,558.98
Others	0.00
	<hr/>
	\$7,996.46
	<hr/>
Surplus for the quarter	\$2,540.54

Bylaws Change!

Active employees within five years of retirement are eligible to join RECCSF.

RECCSF Officers

Claire Zvanski, President
Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey, First Vice President
Linda Tabor-Beck, Second Vice President
Bonnie Bompert, Secretary
George Lau, Treasurer
Leo Martinez, Sergeant-at-Arms

Board Members

Bonnie Bompert
Carol Cochran
Thomas Dang
Adlai "A.J." Jew
Sharon Johnson
George K. Lau
Stephanie M. Lyons
John Madden
Leo Martinez

Raymond Mason
Jerry Maxwell
Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey
Sheila Mullen
Tim O'Brien
Beverly Pardini
Linda Tabor-Beck
John "Skee" Tostanoski
David Williams

January 16 Board Meeting Results

- Approved a \$100 invoice submitted by Michael Lyons.
- Voted to award a plaque to Marylou Allen of Star Travelers for her years of service to RECCSF.
- Approved RECCSF signing on to amicus brief for SFERS v. CCSF—an appeal for pre-1996 retirees.
- Voted to oppose Supervisor Aaron Peskin's charter amendment that would change the configuration of the SFERS Board.
- Conducted second meeting of the proposed bylaws change allowing past RECCSF presidents to remain as voting board members.

Membership and Subscriptions

for retired city employees as of July 31, 2015

Membership application: www.sfretirees.org; email: reccsf@att.net.

Active city employees within five years of retirement are eligible to join RECCSF.

- \$48, *annual*
- \$600, *lifetime* (payable over four months in four payments of \$150 per month, or annually over four years in increments of \$150 per year)
- Members without computer access should contact the RECCSF office at 1 (415) 681-5949.

News & Views is the publication of the Retired Employees of the City & County of San Francisco, Inc., a nonprofit organization. *News & Views* is published to express the policies, ideals and accomplishments of the organization. Nothing shall be published herein that is racist, sexist or ageist, or that is derogatory toward religious beliefs and other personal issues; nor shall be published anything in violation of Article VII, Section 1 of the RECCSF constitution. Editorial contributions from individuals, organizations and groups other than RECCSF and its members may be included in *News & Views* only upon the approval of the Editorial Committee.

Submissions to *News & Views* are solicited and encouraged.

Submit in Word document to: sheilamullen@mac.com, or

Sheila Mullen, editor, RECCSF office, 3915 Irving St., San Francisco, CA 94122-1294

Telephone: 1 (415) 681-5949, Fax: 1 (415) 681-5398



I want to know!

Join

RECCSF

Retired Employees of the City and County of
San Francisco



We need member photos and notes!

Since our general membership meetings are now scheduled bi-monthly, our editor will welcome notes from and personal photos of our members—at work or play—to be published in *News & Views* in non-meeting months.

For photos, include captions with member name and activity description, and email to sheilamullen@mac.com. For notes, we are especially interested in hearing from members located outside the Bay Area, California, or United States.

Items suitable for publication will be printed as space allows.

Editor's Note:

We urge more submissions from our members—both letters to the editor and articles—that reflect the varying opinions of *all* our members on issues of interest to all city retirees. Submissions are printed on a space-available basis and subject to being edited for grammar, length, and appropriate language; but *never* rejected for opinion.

News & Views

February 2018
Volume 119, Number 2
Sheila Mullen, Editor
Office: 1 (415) 681-5949
Office email: reccsf@att.net

Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 20
10 a.m.

Taraval Police Station, 2345-24th Ave.

All interested parties welcome.

Note to members:

Please keep RECCSF updated with changes in address, phone number and email.

News & Views

March Deadline:

☛ Friday, Feb. 16, 5:30 p.m.

Please email your submissions to:
sheilamullen@mac.com.

Letters to the editor and opinion pieces are welcome.
All submissions subject to further editing.

Visit our website:

sfretirees.org

RECCSF office
email:

reccsf@att.net

3915 Irving St.,
San Francisco, CA 94122

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, February 14, 10 a.m.

Mark your calendar now!

Nominations for officers and board members will be taken.

Program to be determined

New meeting location!

Scottish Rite Masonic Temple, 2850-19th Ave., at Sloat Blvd.

(Parking available in lower level garage.)