

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

NEWS & VIEWS

A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION WORKING FOR ALL CITY RETIREES

Retirement Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski

All work is being done remotely since the office remains closed until further notice. Employees are retiring but the disability retirements have been on hold. They will be resuming soon, according to Director Huish.

As of May 31, 2020, the fund is at \$25.7 billion. The FY return is 1.5% as of the meeting date. The calendar year return is -3.91 but the market is recovering. This still means no supplemental COLA this year. Our fund remains in the top 1% of its peers nationally.

The investments that worked well during the first quarter are treasuries, private equity, core plus fixed income and China A-shares. What didn't work well during this quarter were emerging market debt, high yield/bank loans, and the absolute return (hedge funds) with a -10.94% return.

It was pointed out that the switch from public equity to private equity made the difference in the performance of the fund. Public equity has not performed well at 3.12% while private equity brought a 7.33% return. The diversification of investments is serving the overall fund performance very well. Apparently, private equity investments are more illiquid so that the fund's pension obligation can be met during severe market downturns. Advisor NEPC provided an extensive risk analysis that supported the diversification.

Managing Director, Asset allocation, Risk Management and Innovative Solutions Anna Langs provided extensive reports on cashflow stress and

continued on page 2

Health Service Committee Report

By Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey
and Claire Zvanski

This last rates and benefits session addresses the rates that impact **Medicare retirees**. Most rates reflect the permanent elimination of the federal Affordable Care Act health insurer tax (ACA HIT tax). HSS has nearly 30,000 Medicare retirees participating in MA (Medicare Advantage) plans that were developed in the late 1990s to address the shortcomings of the original Medicare program.

- Rates for retirees hired on or before Jan. 9, 2009, disability retirees, retirees hired on or after Jan.10, 2009, and surviving spouses/domestic partners of active employees who died in the line of duty are **not** included in this report.
- The three **dental plans** offered to retirees will have reduced rates. These plans have no employer contributions, so the rates are based entirely on experience. The Delta PPO and the DeltaCare USA DHMO have a 1.75% premium reduction and the UHC Dental HMO has a 3% premium reduction. The Delta PPO plan includes a new provision for nitrous oxide and non-IV sedation at no additional premium cost.
- The **UHC MA PPO** (UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage) plan will have a 2.9% rate reduction with no benefit changes. In 2019, three benefits were added that remain at no additional premium costs. Those benefits are Silver Sneakers (fitness and gym memberships); transporta-

continued on page 2

All Regularly calendared July/August Meetings Cancelled!

The current COVID-19 virus is affecting all of us. Both Governor Gavin Newsom and San Francisco Mayor London Breed have issued directives for everyone—*particularly seniors*—to “shelter in place” as much as possible for the foreseeable future. In that spirit, the following regularly scheduled meetings have been cancelled for the months of July and August. As the situation develops, regular meeting updates will be communicated to our members through “email blasts” and future editions of *News & Views*. Stay safe!

RECCSF meetings:

**General Membership Meeting
Editorial and Executive Board
meetings**

Electronic Zoom meetings as scheduled.

Membership Committee Meeting

Electronic Zoom meetings as scheduled.

Public Meetings:

**Retired Fire Fighters and Spouses
Association**

Veteran Police Officers

Retirement System

Health Service System

Retirement and Health Service System meetings available at sfgov.org and SFGOVTV

UESF Retired Division

Contact: Rudi Faltus 1 (415) 956-8373 or uesfrd01@gmail.com

SEIU 1021 West Bay Retirees Chapter

Contact: David Williams to participate in Zoom meetings at: iamdhw@comcast.net or 1 (415) 939-5149.

Health Service Committee Report

continued from page 1

tion (24 one-way or 12 round trips to and from medical appointments); and post-hospital discharge meal delivery of up to 84 meals (annually). There is no premium cost for member-only. Members with dependents will see the rate reduction unless the dependent is non-Medicare.

- **The Kaiser MA plan** came in with a 5% increase and adds the post-hospital meal (84) delivery. The existing Silver and Fit fitness program continues, and transportation (24 one-way or 12 round trip) services will include wheelchair and gurney transportation. No cost to retiree only. Non-Medicare dependent rates will have a 3% rate increase.
- **Kaiser multi-state regional rates** for both early and Medicare retirees have reductions and increases. Rates for the Washington region are increased, while rates for the northwest (Oregon & southwest Washington) and Hawaii regions will have modest decreases. The benefits vary by region, as well.
- All plan rates include the **VSP (vision) Basic Plan**.
- There will be an **RFP** (request for proposals) issued for all active and early retiree health plans, only. Medicare plans are not included.

Retirement Committee Report

continued from page 1

liquidity management. The fund pays out about \$500 million annually, which is about 2% of trust assets and grows an average of 4% annually. The analysis projected out three years. There were many questions from board members and an extensive discussion regarding the different scenarios. The final conclusion was that SFERS has sufficient liquidity and the worst-case scenario would require the trust to sell \$1.8 billion risk assets to fund its liquidity needs over the next three years. Clearly, private equity has made the difference and is significant for the fund to meet its obligations.

Anna Langs also presented the recommendation to initiate a short-term cash release program for up to \$250 million from the securities lending cash collateral reinvestment account with BNY Mellon, subject to additional reporting requirements and outlined procedures. SFERS does not pay for the credit facility unless it is utilized. The estimated cost is below 1% annualized payable only for the duration and the amount of cash released. This credit facility is used solely for short-term liquidity management, and not for strategic long-term investment purposes. A securities lending cash release program is the most cost-efficient and operationally straightforward option currently available.

The new president is Leona Bridges and the vice president is Al Casciato.

Questions? Comments?

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

- The new telephone system has enhanced efficiencies at HSS while the office remains closed at this time. The mayor declared a hiring freeze and increased departmental budget cuts to 15% over two years. That means 10% for FY 2020-2021 and an additional 5% for 2021-2022. HSS functions on a very tight budget.
- There are leadership changes on the Health Service Board: Stephen Follansbee, MD, is the new president and Chris Canning is the new vice president.
- Executive Secretary Natalie Ekberg, who has been with the department since 2018, is resigning on Aug. 18, 2020, to return to the east coast. Chief Financial Officer Pamela Levin will be retiring, along with several other analyst staff. The commissioners thanked them all for their service.
- There is no July HSS meeting.

Questions? Comments? Please feel free to contact Mary Anne at mcguire.hickey831@gmail.com or Claire at czvanski@gmail.com.

June 16 Electronic Board Meeting Results.

- Treasurer's Report accepted without objection.
- President Tostanoski appointed A.J. Jew as parliamentarian and Rich Bridygham as head of visual communications for electronic meetings.
- President Tostanoski appointed a committee to update the RECCSF Constitution and Bylaws. Committee members are: Bonnie Bompert; Jerry Maxwell; Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey; David Williams; and A. J. Jew.

RECCSF Officers

John "Skee" Tostanoski, President
Jerry Maxwell, First Vice President
David Williams, Second Vice President
Bonnie Bompert, Secretary
George Lau, Treasurer
Leo Martinez, Sergeant at Arms

Board Members

Sue Blomberg	Ray Mason
Richard Bridygham	Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey
Carol Cochran	Sheila Mullen
Thomas Dang	Tim O'Brien
Ed "Rusty" Jepson	Linda Tabor-Beck
A.J. Jew	Jean S. Thomas
David Leeds	Claire Zvanski
Stephanie M. Lyons	

President's Message

By John "Skee" Tostanoski

As I initially "grasp the reins" of becoming your new RECCSF president, I particularly wish to thank Mary Anne McGuire-Hickey for her inspirational leadership and generosity during the transitional period that she led RECCSF as its president.



We are currently living through an unprecedented period of tremendous challenges! As seniors, we are advised repeatedly to shelter in place as much as possible. The coronavirus can still be an active killer, especially for our highest-risk members. I hope that we all are taking the most responsible actions to secure our health and personal safety. I wish a long, healthy life for all of us!

Also, social unrest dominates the news every day, and has motivated me to reflect on my own background, how I was raised, and whom I aspire to become.

How am I treating others? How am I helping? Although facing these questions can be difficult and uncomfortable, they have motivated me to pick up the phone to reach out and try to make a difference for someone else. If I can help at least one more person right now, then I feel that I am becoming the person that I strive to be.

At this time, due to current government restrictions, RECCSF is challenged by its inability to conduct in-person general membership meetings. Even when those restrictions are finally lifted, in-person meetings may still not be an option for many of our high-risk members. Until there is a viable vaccine, many of our members will continue to shelter in place—a reasonable decision that I fully support.

I certainly miss the camaraderie of our meeting together in person—particularly, the exchange of ideas and fellowship—but this current emergency will eventually pass, and I look forward to the time when we can again congregate together.

Thank you in advance for your support. It is my sincere hope that we will continue to work together assiduously to ensure that our retiree benefits remain secure and protected.

If you have any questions or comments, or can donate some time to help ensure RECCSF's continuing success, please feel free to contact me at sfskee1@gmail.com.

New Member

Paul Koski

PUC (WPC)

RECCSF is setting up a Facebook Page!

By Bonnie Bompert

RECCSF is setting up a Facebook page for the purpose of increasing our outreach to current members—as well to as other retired, and potentially retired, City and County of San Francisco employees—with regularly updated information on our financial and health benefits, as well as other issues that affect our wellbeing as retirees. An RECCSF member is initiating the site setup, and I have volunteered to help monitor the site once the setup is complete.

I will definitely need assistance in monitoring the site—for now, at least one volunteer. Responsibilities include regularly checking that new postings display only appropriate, accurate, and courteous content. Helping to maintain the site can be done from your home computer and should require a minimum amount of your time. In addition, initial training will be provided by RECCSF to any willing volunteer(s).

RECCSF also needs a volunteer to create a unique and inviting Facebook graphics design.

Thanks in advance for considering supporting RECCSF by volunteering your services and skills for this project. Your assistance will help make a difference for us all!

If you can consider volunteering, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at bbompert@mac.com.

No July Zoom Editorial or Board meetings will be held. August Editorial and Board meeting results will be printed in September *News & Views*.

Useful Phone Numbers

RECCSF Office

Email: reccsf@att.net Website: sfretirees.org

Phone Number: 1 (415) 681-5949

Health Service System

Website: myhss.org

Phone Numbers:

Member services: 1 (628) 652-4700

Employee Assistance: 1 (628) 652-4600 (24/7)

S.F. Retirement System

Website: sfgov.org/sfers

Phone Numbers:

1 (415) 487-7000 1 (888) 849-0777

RECCSF Board Member Profile: Claire Zvanski

As told to Stephanie Lyons and John "Skee" Tostanoski

My "claim to fame" is that I was born in historic Children's Hospital in San Francisco! (It's now being closed by Sutter!) I was a "cold war" baby; in those days, my family were considered to be "illegal aliens." We lived on Potrero Hill and I started school at Starr King. We moved away from San Francisco to "prove" to the immigration services that we were truly determined to become Americans.

We lived in Susanville where I began working at a young age by running the candy counter in my parents' grocery store. Then we moved to Turlock, where I attended Sacred Heart School. We finally managed to work our way back to San Francisco via Daly City.

I attended St. Cecilia elementary school, Mercy High School, and then the University of San Francisco.

Politics and history were continuous topics of discussion at home, so I became a civics/history teacher. El Camino High School in South San Francisco and Star of the Sea grammar school students benefited from my talents.

Friends encouraged me to get a job with the city because the benefits were great! So, I resigned from teaching and began working for the city. Where else can you work for one employer with great benefits and also experience many varied professional experiences? I learned all about retirement, social services, the tax collector, sewer treatment, our water system (including Hetch Hetchy), community college, the MUNI railway, and finally the parking authority (MTA).

I also successfully ran for political office for the San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee and served several terms.

Along the way, I became an officer in SEIU 790 and was encouraged to run for the Health Service Board, on which I served 26 years. (I've now been elected unopposed for another term after a five-year break.)

I also belonged to IFPTE 21. As a result of my labor work, I've been a trustee on the San Francisco Labor Council, representing both SEIU (790 and 1021), IFPTE 21 and FORUM (Federation of Retired Union Members). I'm also a member of the Bay Area Leadership Council-American Red Cross, and have been a volunteer since the late '70s in both medical and disaster services.

My goals for RECCSF have been to increase our membership, expand our advocacy with the city, and improve our retiree benefits. I invite you to join our board to help us reach these goals.



Five Ways to Avoid Getting Taken-in by An Auto Dealer

From Your Friends at San Francisco Federal Credit Union

Businesses are now reopening, including auto dealerships. Since 2021 autos are now being shipped to dealers in order to make room on their lots, dealers need to dispose of their 2020 inventory. In other words, this is a good time to score a car-shopping deal! Still, dealers are interested in getting the best deal for themselves—not you—so the following tips may be helpful:

- Do your research before visiting any auto dealer. Find out

which kind of vehicle you want, determine your budget, and read up on customers' reviews of your chosen auto. If you walk in uninformed, the dealer will quickly take advantage of your inexperience.

- Be ambiguous. Don't give the impression to any individual dealer that you're definitely buying: They won't try their hardest to give you the best deal. You can even drop hints that you've already found several vehicles that you are seriously considering.
- Don't agree to any "extras" for protection. Etching, rust-proofing and paint-and-fabric protection aren't worth much—and they definitely aren't worth the extra charges!
- Don't automatically agree to all damage waivers you're offered. Many are unnecessary and provide insufficient coverage. Do careful research on each service before signing up.
- If you have good credit, auto loans at the San Francisco Federal Credit Union can be as low as 0.99%, with no payment due for 90 days! Contact us to get pre-approved for a loan amount that works within your budget.

We need member photos!

Since our in-person general membership meetings are now temporarily postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, our editor will welcome personal photos of our members—at work or play—to be published in *News & Views* to help keep us in touch with each other.

Please include captions with member name and activity description, and email to sheilamullen@mac.com.

Items suitable for publication will be printed as space allows.

This article is courtesy of San Francisco Federal Credit Union, offering what large banks can't. For more information, visit sanfranciscofcu.com/vehicle-loans, call (415) 775-5377 or stop by one of our branches.

Our RECCSF members Our community



**Stay home!
Stay safe!**



The RECCSF Watchbird



An important message to our members

By John Skee Tostanoski, RECCSF president

There has been a *potential* data breach involving SFERS. Here is a link to a news story published on Wednesday, June 3, 2020: <https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/san-francisco-retirement-program-sfers-suffers-data-breach/>.

Only those persons on the database that was being used at the time of the possible breach will receive a letter from the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System.

It is not known whether or not any data was actually compromised.

If you have received this letter—as did I—you will find that the retirement system is being very proactive in their response. SFERS is offering all exposed members a complimentary one-year membership of Experian's Identity Works monitoring service. Page two of the letter contains detailed instructions on how to obtain this service, as well as the required activation code and engagement number. *Your information was not contained in the file in question if you have not received a letter from the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System.*

SFERS Retirement Board Commissioner Al Casciato wants to remind all system members that:

- Retirement system personnel will never call you to ask for personal information.
- If you receive an email—*allegedly* from the retirement system—do not open any file. If you do, do not enter any personal information. *This could be a scam.*
- The system is also requiring that all members reset their password prior to accessing their SFERS account.

RECCSF once again is reminding members that it is important to check your credit reports, bank statements, and online accounts for accuracy. Be aware that banks have a time limit for reporting fraudulent charges.

Once, each 12 months, you are entitled to receive free credit reports from each of the three credit reporting agencies—Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. Pro-

tect yourself if you are not planning to make purchases that require a credit check.

A smart action that you may want to consider is freezing your credit reporting accounts. This means that *no one*—not even you—can access your accounts unless you unfreeze the account, which is a lengthy and complicated process.

RECCSF cares about your welfare and—since this is a possible breach—we hope that this will not affect any of our members.

We must all be diligent with monitoring our credit: otherwise it could cost us dearly!

Update on POB Charter Amendment Issue

By Claire Zvanski

Our colleagues on the Protect Our Benefits (POB) Board have been working on a charter amendment for the November ballot that would restore the supplemental COLA to those city retirees who retired on or before Nov. 6, 2006. We call them “pre-96ers.” POB conducted a poll at the end of 2019 and discovered great support for this legislation.

Then, the COVID 19 pandemic hit! Sad to say, that changed everything! The POB board—which includes several RECCSF board members—discovered that support for such a ballot proposition would likely fail at this time and that no member of the board of supervisors would agree to put this on the ballot for us. So, the POB board **cancelled the campaign** and has **withdrawn** the proposed charter amendment for the November 2020 election.

The issue remains that the “pre-96ers” deserve to have the supplemental COLA restored to them. So, POB and RECCSF are not giving up! We will all wait until the next election and review our options. The object is to **restore** this benefit. We will **not** give up. We must just postpone action for now.



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

Upcoming General Membership Meetings

Due to the current COVID-19 (corona) virus emergency, all upcoming RECCSF meetings have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. Please be assured that your RECCSF Board will keep members updated on future developments through our RECCSF *News & Views* newsletter, periodic "email blasts," and RECCSF website at sfretirees.org. Our age group is particularly vulnerable for contracting this infection, and we urge all of our members to stay safe by self-quarantining at home as much as possible.

News & Views

July/August 2020
Volume 121, Number 7
Sheila Mullen, Editor
Office: 1 (415) 681-5949
Office email: reccsf@att.net

Executive Board Meeting

All in-person board meetings cancelled until further notice. Your RECCSF Executive Board is meeting by Zoom for the foreseeable future.

Note to members:

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

News & Views

September Deadline:

Friday, Aug. 14, 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

Membership and Subscriptions

for retired city employees

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

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

- \$68, 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.



I want to know!

Join

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Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco

