

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 good news for actives and **non-Medicare retirees** (under age 65) is that the RFP (request for proposal) response deadline has passed and the evaluation process is beginning for **medical plans**. A panel of subject matter experts will join the actuarial team (AON Hewitt) in reviewing, evaluating, and interviewing representatives of the qualified medical plans. Recommendations will be made to the HSS board at its Feb. 11, 2021 meeting. The HSS board scheduled a second meeting for Feb. 25, 2021, wherein the final decision will be made as to which plan(s) will be contracted to **provide services on Jan. 1, 2022**.

Because HSS will be in negotiations with medical, dental, and vision plans for Plan Year 2022, the vendor blackout period that began on Feb. 13, 2020 will continue through June 2021.

Remember, SFHSS is operating in a virtual environment and is closed to the public.

In the meantime, the board will be involved in two annual evaluations. One is the board self-evaluation and the other is the performance evaluation of the executive director.

Executive Director Abbie Yant reported that this year's **Open Enrollment** was the most efficient ever conducted. Webinars, virtual health fairs, and updated web pages—plus telephonic services—brought the process forward a full week ahead of schedule. We will know more details in December.

While six additional flu vaccination clinics remained for November,

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Retirement Committee Report

By Claire Zvanski

The fund remains solid at **\$28 billion** despite small loses in October and the quarter. The fiscal year holds a 6.21% rate of return. Private equity has surged 13.42% and public equity is up 8.78% over the last four months. Manager selection plus outsized gains in technology and China are the reasons cited by CFO Bill Coaker for the overall good returns. Real assets and natural resources are not doing well during the pandemic

Changes to some of the annual updates have been recommended by President Leona Bridges and Investment Committee Chair Scott Heldfond. From this point forward, various categories of investments will be updated in the **Investment Committee**. These are “discussion only” items, so public equity, fixed income and absolute return annual updates will be heard in April 2021. Private credit, real assets, private credit and liquidity management will be updated in July 2021, and ESG, risk review and strategic plan annual updates will be heard in October 2021. Action items will still be referred to the full SFERS board.

Fixed Income and Public Equity Portfolio Manager Vicki Owens will be leaving SFERS at the end of November. She was an exceptional member of the investment team and will be greatly missed. (This is an exceptionally difficult period within which to replace high level staff.)

The primary focus of this meeting was to approve a **new strategic asset allocation (SAA) plan**. Every three

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All Regularly calendared December/January 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 December/January. 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.

Retirement Committee Report

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years the system, working with its general consultant NEPC, conducts an asset-liability study and reviews its strategic asset allocation (investing strategy). This includes the results of its risk tolerance study, as well. This has been a multi-month effort involving the Investment Committee and the full board. Public equity has declined from 47% to 31% to this date. Public fixed income was reduced from 25% to 9%, whilst private equity has increased from 16% to 18% and real assets from 12% to 17%. In 2014, absolute return (hedge funds) was added at 5% and is now targeted for 15%. Also, real assets were expanded from real estate to include natural resources. In 2017, private credit was added at 10%, and in 2011 private markets were 28%—which are now at 45%. Basically, this looks to be an investment strategy for the future, factoring in a number of considerations, including risk, loss tolerance, the rate of return objective, and liquidity and flexibility to manage as outflows for pension benefits and capital calls. The commissioners engaged in significant discussion with Managing Director of Asset Allocation Bill Coaker, Managing Director of Asset Allocation, Risk Management & Innovative Solutions Anna Langs, and Allan Martin from NEPC. A staff recommendation was proposed, along with two alternatives. The original staff recommendation prevailed. This will succeed if the “resources” will be approved as depicted in the budget (in-house investment managers).

In keeping with recent investment strategies and goals, the board was presented with guideline changes for Parametric Portfolio Associates’ Cash Securitization and Rebalancing Overlay Services. Parametric’s cash securitization service is designed to efficiently “equitize” SFERS’ cash balance while their rebalancing service allows SFERS to maintain target allocations to public equity and fixed income. This recommendation would allow centrally cleared or bilateral over the counter (OTC) contracts, including—but not limited to—swaps, options, and forwards to be added to the list of eligible investments that Parametric can trade.

The deferred compensation program (SFDCP) stable

value fund currently holds over \$1 billion in participant assets. Callan is the current contracted investment consulting service. Its contract terminates on June 30, 2021. An RFP was posted in October with a December 14 submission deadline and the intent of presenting a recommended finalist at the March 2021 board meeting. Additional webinars and a Spanish language website and webinars by Voya have improved the DCP.

A little humor ensued as Executive Director Jay Huish announced the \$400 in travel expenses for July 1 through Sept. 30, 2020. The travel budget is \$1,030,000 so there is little worry that the pandemic curtailed travel will result in an over expenditure.

Executive Director Jay Huish provided a copy of an article from *Pensions & Investments* about the Department of Labor’s latest ruling prohibiting investments in “non-pecuniary” vehicles that sacrifice returns or take on additional risk. In lay terms, this rule requires ERISA plan fiduciaries to select investments based on pecuniary factors (described as any factor that a fiduciary prudently determines is expected to have a material effect on the risk and return based on appropriate investment guidelines). Acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Employee Benefits Security Administration Jeanne Klinefelter Wilson stated: “Retirement plan fiduciaries may never sacrifice investment, take on additional risk or increase cost in order to promote goals unrelated to the financial interests of their plan participants.” This rule was also a concern about “ESG” investments (environmental, social and governance). While ESG is not mentioned anywhere in the rule text, it is mentioned extensively in the preamble, pointed out another official. ESG investments are increasing in the U.S. It is anticipated that this ruling will have a “chilling effect” on ESG investing, pointed out Steven Rothstein, managing director of the Ceres Accelerator for sustainable capital markets. He further stated: “This is a very harmful action by the Trump Administration at a time when global climate crisis looms large and is affecting everyone’s lives.” The Labor Department indicated that the rule will be effective 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, but plans will have until April 30, 2022 to make any changes to certain questions and issues where necessary to comply with the final rule.

The Retirement Board and staff wish happy holidays to all system members.

Questions? Comments?

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



San Francisco Firefighters
Annual Toy Program
needs your donations this holiday season!
(Especially needed are dolls and sports items.)
Please mail checks payable to
San Francisco Firefighters
Local 798 Toy Program
1139 Mission St.,
San Francisco, CA 94103.
Please mail gift cards for older children—
such as Amazon or Target—
to 2225 Jerrold Ave., San Francisco, CA 94124.
Other donations and toys can be dropped off at any San Francisco firehouse.
The children thank you!
Sally Casazza, chairperson 1 (415) 777-0440

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.

President's Message

By John "Skee" Tostanoski

The holiday season is upon us, and I am so grateful to be still present to celebrate in our new, social distancing way. I had a choice—saying “bah, humbug” or embracing the new reality!

I hope that by now that all of our members have taken advantage of our free senior high dose flu vaccine. Also, there is emerging hope for a timely release of the Covid-19 vaccine now in clinical trials. (Wouldn't it be great if the Covid-19 vaccine could be available to all of us soon?)

At this time, we are all aware about how organizations are struggling to survive in this straitened economy. RECCSF is in the same position. We are failing to match current expenditures while constantly exploring ways to increase our membership and raise enough funds to keep RECCSF viable. (I'm not afraid to admit that I'm worried!)

I'd like to remind our members to actively invite past coworkers and other city retirees of your acquaintance to join RECCSF. Now that we have introduced the introductory \$25 new member discounted rate, new members will soon realize that—among other bonuses—the RECCSF *News and Views* newsletter keeps them continuously informed as to the status of their critical financial and medical benefits.

I am requesting our members to consider making additional financial donations to RECCSF. Besides donating my time and energy, I am writing a donation check myself.

Also, in the past, it had been the custom for many members to include a bequeath to RECCSF in their estate planning, but unfortunately this practice has severely declined over the past several years.

Many issues that we may have been able to avoid when we were living our busier, more social lives have tended to emerge more prominently as we strive to navigate our current more limited options. Over the years, I have observed how some mental health challenges—along with some others' addictions that have affected me personally—can trigger an incredibly negative situation that has tugged at my heartstrings.

As many of us struggle through this pandemic, I encourage members to not only be aware of stresses in our own relationships, but also of the increased danger of loneliness for some of our seniors living alone. Reaching out with a phone call, email, or card can make a huge difference in someone's life.

If you happen to become ill or depressed yourself, remember that our excellent medical plans are available to help restore your physical and emotional well-being.

Stay well, and I wish you and yours a safe and happy holiday season!

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at sfskee1@gmail.com.



Health Service Committee Report

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there were 21 clinics that facilitated approximately 1,970 flu vaccinations. The EAP (Employee Assistance Program) is experiencing an increase in call volume and some critical incident outreach during this time—also, because of the untimely death of a firefighter. The EAP counselors are also receiving mediation training and will be partnering with DHR to enhance the mediation program to include peer mediation. The Well Being Program is working on healthy weight and diabetes prevention programs.

Through the Office of Racial Equity (ORE), a division of the Human Rights Commission, HSS put together a racial equity action plan. More information will be presented at the December meeting. This framework should focus on how HSS serves our membership in supporting health equity and our key core value of inclusivity.

Kaiser addressed a concern about the potential shortage of the senior flu vaccination. High-dose Fluzone will be used for those over 65 as long as it is available. The northern California fires temporarily impacted the ability of the manufacturer to deliver sufficient supplies. Kaiser now recommends that you consult your physician since **all flu shots provide protection** and should not be skipped due to any shortage. Additionally, Kaiser partners with Albertsons, COSTCO, CVS, Kroger, Rite Aid, Safeway, Save-On and Walgreens to provide flu vaccinations until Dec. 31 with your photo ID and your member Kaiser card. President Stephen Follensbee MD strongly recommends that **all retirees get flu vaccinations as soon as possible** and Blue Shield and UHC members should consult with their physicians and plan to

determine locations to get flu vaccinations. Kaiser offers drive-through, in facility, and walk-up vaccination tents as well as the other retailers for vaccinations. **Do not delay or refuse as all vaccinations provide protection.**

RFPs are very labor intensive and complicated. The HSS board must provide the best benefits for the funds available plus keep coverage affordable for all members, including retirees. To that end, AON Hewitt presented a **Medicare Plan Market** update that includes traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans. TV, personal mail, and media ads inform us that the marketplace is changing and expanding. Going “out to bid” will be a major decision that the board will have to make next year for Medicare members for plan year 2023.

Blue Shield updated its **fertility benefit** to eliminate prior authorization and the diagnosis of infertility and has reprocessed all denied claims since 1/1/2018. The benefit will now be covered under the pharmacy—instead of medical—benefit. This should eliminate major discrimination barriers and help make the benefit more affordable and accessible.

In addition to telephone **public comment** required during board meetings, **written** public comments are also accepted and will become part of the official public record as long as they are received at health.service.board@sfgov.org by 5 p.m. the Wednesday before the HSS board meeting. Members can also direct any questions to 1 (628) 652-4646.

Happy Thanksgiving from the board to all members, and another reminder to get your **flu vaccination ASAP!**

Questions? Comments? Please feel free to contact Claire Zvanski at czvanski@gmail.com.

RECCSF Board Member Profile: Jean S. Thomas (past president)

As told to Stephanie Lyons and John “Skee” Tostanoski

I retired from the City and County of San Francisco in February 1992 and joined RECCSF shortly thereafter.

Wow, much has happened since then!

Some members may remember that I was honored to serve as your president in the late '90s, as well as editor of *The Monthly Bulletin*, predecessor to our current *News & Views*.

Also, some members may recall that—for more years than I care to remember—I coauthored *The Bulletin's* Retirement Committee Report with past Retirement Board Commissioner Herb Meiberger. To date, that same report continues to be published in *News*

& Views, ably coauthored by Claire Zvanski and Herb Weiner.

Although I retired in the '90s, the active participation of members on the RECCSF Executive Board is even more critical than it was then.

In order for our organization to thrive in the current stressful Coronavirus climate, we need to gain a solid input of new talents and ideas. For example, one of our goals is to be able to reach more of our members through an extended Zoom program. This will be another platform to enable us to continue to inform our members of any city government rule changes, particularly in relation to protecting our retired city employee health and retirement benefits.



Most of all, we must continue to actively reinforce the principle that *all* city retirees share a common bond, no matter where we worked in the system. If you join us as an executive board member, you will be richly gratified by helping to keep these common goals alive.

Also—pandemic or not—you will know that the danger of falling into isolation from other members is no longer a threat.

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.

Useful Contact Information

RECCSF Office

Email: reccsf@att.net

Website: sfretirees.org

Phone Number:

1 (415) 681-5949

S.F. Retirement System

Website: sfgov.org/sfers

Phone Numbers:

1 (415) 487-7000

1 (888) 849-0777

Health Service System

Website: sfhss.org

Phone Numbers:

Member services:

1 (628) 652-4700

Employee Assistance:

1 (628) 652-4600 (24/7)

Toll-free: 1 (800) 541-2266

Fax: 1 (628) 652-4701

Benefits: sfhss.org/benefits/retirees

Health Service Quick Links

Blue Shield HMO Plans

<https://sfhss.org/access-hmo-blue-shield-california>

Kaiser Permanente HMO

<https://sfhss.org/kaiser-permanente-hmo>

City Plan & City Plan 20 PPO

<https://sfhss.org/unitedhealthcare-ppo-city-plan>

UHC Medicare Advantage PPO

<https://sfhss.org/uhc-medicare-advantage-ppo>

Dental and Vision:

Delta Dental

<https://sfhss.org/delta-dental-ppo>

UnitedHealthcare Dental

<https://sfhss.org/unitedhealthcare-dental-dhmo>

DeltaCare USA

<https://sfhss.org/deltacare-usa-dhmo>

VSP Vision

<https://sfhss.org/vsp-vision-plans>

MEMBERS CONNECT



Charles Hastings and his caregiver

See's Candy Gift Cards

As a holiday season service to our members, RECCSF is taking orders for See's Candy gift cards at the discounted price of \$23.50 each. Please check the box below, and make sure to write your address on the order form.

We do not order actual boxes of candy—only gift cards.

All orders must be received by Friday, Dec. 4, 2020 and accompanied by a check payable to RECCSF. No exceptions!

(If you order more than five gift cards, please include \$1 for postage in your check.)

Do not send an envelope—we can't use them to mail the cards.

Questions? Contact Sue Blomberg at 1 (415) 221-9731 or suesue22@pacbell.net.

See's Candy Gift Card Order Form (Please print!)

Mail order form and check to: Sue Blomberg: 4819 Anza St., San Francisco CA 94121

Name: _____ Phone _____

Number of gift cards _____ @ \$23.50 per certificate = \$ _____

Attached is my check payable to RECCSF, in the amount of \$ _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Harry Paretchan

March 25, 1932 – September 15, 2020

Harry Paretchan was born on March 25, 1932, in Fresno, California. Harry's family moved to San Francisco in 1939. Prior to his many years of public service in San Francisco, Harry served his country during the Korean Conflict. Harry was discharged as a decorated veteran. Harry is listed as being employed by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company prior to joining the San Francisco Police Department.

Harry entered the San Francisco Police Department on April 16, 1956. Harry graduated from the Police Academy and was assigned to Star #115. Harry worked the following assignments during his 7 years career in the S.F.P.D.: Taraval Police Station (July 9, 1956), Central Police Station (January 2, 1957), Richmond Police Station (October 16, 1957), and back to Central Police Station as his final S.F.P.D. stop (June 20, 1960).

Harry transferred to the San Francisco Fire Department on November 1, 1962. Harry had a distinguished career in the S.F. Fire Department. Harry was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 1977, and was voted Fire Fighter of the Year in 1984 before retiring in 1991.

In 1981, Harry enhanced his public service by establishing the San Francisco Fire Fighters Chili Cook-Off competition, which benefitted the St. Francis Burn Cen-

ter, Fort Mason Foundation, Kevin Collins Foundation for missing children, SF Suicide Prevention, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. He realized his greater duty to all active and retired City and County of San Francisco Employees when he ran for and was elected to the City Health Service System Board in 1971. Harry served the Board as Vice President, President, and eventually as the Commissioner.

In 1991 on the date of his retirement from the S.F.F.D., he was awarded the honorary designation of Commissioner Emeritus to the Health Service Board. In Harry's later years he enjoyed being a member of the Marin County Barbershop Chorus, working hard to raise funds for their annual concert.

Harry was predeceased by his father Bob, mother Queenie, and brother Charles. He is survived by his ex-wife Carol Paretchan Meyer, daughter Lynn, son Mark, grandchildren Steven, Charlie and Mia; and his beloved Labrador Retriever, Sadie. Harry will be missed dearly by all his friends and family with whom he enjoyed playing golf, tennis, hiking, singing Barbershop and meeting at McDonald's in Novato for a cup of coffee.

Reprinted from November 2020, POA Journal, Widows' & Orphans' column.

Holiday Hoaxsters

From Your Friends at San Francisco Federal Credit Union

The holidays are in full swing—which means that we need to watch out for seasonal scams. Unfortunately, fraudsters don't take time off. In fact, some of them specifically set their sights on us during this time of year. So, keep your holidays "merry and bright" by avoiding these scams.

Shady shopping:

Anticipating a flurry of online shopping for the holidays, scammers have been known to create fake retail sites designed to harm you. It works like this: You type in a popular search term, such as "discount toys," and the fraudulent website shows up in your search results disguised as a legitimate retailer. This kind of fake website is toxic. You may

download a virus by clicking links, or unwittingly hand the scammers your credit card information when you make a purchase. If the site looks suspicious in any way, or advertises deals significantly lower than other retailers, don't use it.

Special delivery:

If you're like most people, you'll probably do at least a little online shopping this holiday season, which means you'll be receiving packages via USPS or another courier. Scammers take advantage of this opportunity to phish for your personal information. Most carriers don't ask for your email address, so, if you've never provided it but received a message from FedEx, UPS, or DHL, delete it. The link inside the email is most likely designed to download malware onto your computer.

Charity scam:

Charity scams are particularly devious, as they prey upon your good will. Unfortunately, they tend to flourish during the holidays when people are in a "giving" kind of mood. Scammers send emails from fake charities supporting disabled veterans, needy children, and other emotionally charged causes. If you've never heard of the organization in question, Google the company and visit its website.

This article is courtesy of San Francisco Federal Credit Union, with branches in San Francisco and San Mateo counties. For other financial tips, visit SanFranciscoFCU.com/financial-tips, and for more information on our products and services, visit SanFranciscoFCU.com, call (415) 775-5377, or stop by one of our branches.

Our RECCS&F members Our community



Stay home! Stay safe!

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

December 2020/January 2021
Volume 121, Number 11
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

February Deadline:

• Friday, Jan. 15, 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

RECCSF

Retired Employees of the City and County of San Francisco

