



Update

Dear Friends,

February 14, 2018

Since my election to the KPERS Board of Trustees I have a new disclaimer that I must include in these updates from now on: "The views expressed in this update represent my views and/or the views of the Coalition. They do not in any way represent the views of KPERS Board of Trustees nor do I speak for them." (Ernie Claudel)

TODAY'S MEETING

The February 14, 2018, KPCR meeting led to a variety of discussions. The report will be briefer than most, but we wanted to let you know what was discussed.

1. We certainly want to thank the all who attended the Rally and endured the unfortunate break down of the sound system near the end of the presentations!
2. The cold weather and the flu reduced the number of Rally attendees. (It should be noted that on the day of the Rally the overall traffic in the Capitol was way down.) Those who did attend were very active and sincere in getting to visit with the representatives. Even with the relatively smaller turnout, it was very evident that those in attendance did visit with their elected representatives.
3. Because of the activities of recent days: The KPERS Rally and the related reception plus other events, we have been able to learn that the legislature really hasn't achieved a whole lot positive or negative (from the KCPR point of view), for two main reasons.
 - a. Indecision over where to go with education funding,
 - b. Not knowing exactly what positions on several matters the new Governor will take.
4. It should be noted that there is a higher level of understanding than ever before regarding the serious nature of the importance of fully funding of KPERS. How this understanding will be noted in the final budget, will remain to be seen of course, but there seems to be a more sincere understanding of the funding importance than ever before.
5. Regarding activities at the KCPR Meeting.
 - a. It was noted, as stated above, that there is a decided lack of knowledge as to what direction the legislature, under the leadership of the new Governor will take.
 - b. KCPR was happy with the turnout, flu and weather considered, but frustrated by the lack of the Local Topeka area attendance, as well as the lack of attendance of a variety of those under the umbrella. The overwhelming numbers of those in attendance were from KARSP, KNEA- Retired, and folks from the KCPR Steering Committee or closely associated with our leadership.
 - c. Two KPERS/KP&F Bills have made it out of committee. These bills relate to moving state and local corrections officers from KPERS to KP&F. These bills have a lot of support because of the difficulty in recruiting folks to fill vacancies and relatively financial neutral status. In some ways the legislature is beginning to understand the necessity of focusing on recruitment and retention.
 - d. The latest pension studies indicate that in the 'public employee' arena, retirement benefits have become extremely important. Public Administrators (County executives, Police and Fire administrators and superintendents) have no problem crossing county or state lines for better retirement benefits. (Please note that we are hearing more and more of this happening with teachers, firefighters, and police officers as well.)
 - e. A number of us attended a hearing on SB395 which was a proposal to limit the KPERS and KP&F salary which could be used in computing final average salary. The main, but not only, targets of this were apparently Judges and School Superintendents. The only proponent was the author Senator Suellentrop. His stated concern was the 'taxpayer' and how much more it was costing for higher salaries. There were over 10 opponents and all of them noted that their concern was recruitment and retention of public employees. It was

also pointed out that if there was not a history of underfunding there would NOT be a problem. Even a COLA would likely be possible if it weren't for underfunding over the last 24 years.

- f. The two KPERS COLA Bills are still alive because of their status. While many bills will die at the end of next week at the so called "Turn Around", the KCPR Bills will not. (HB2323 & SB227) Because of the status of these bills, a letter will be sent to the appropriate committee chairs to ask that they be given a hearing before the end of the session.
- g. It should be noted that the latest KCPR report to the Legislature is available on the KCPR Website. It was pointed out that an extremely interesting portion of the report (Pages 10-12) is the section which details the KPERS benefits paid to each county on an annual basis.

Stay WARM!

- Remember to send us your updated email address...also if for any reason you should no longer wish to receive this update, let us know at the address(es) listed at the end of this "update," and we will contact you and remove you from the official mailing lists.
- Just a reminder, that this email is an official report of the Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees. If I editorialize, I will indicate that fact.
- Remember that we want you to forward this to other retirees and the "working" who will benefit from this information.
- The KCPR website is www.ksretirees.org

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