



Update

Dear Friends,

January 11, 2017

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)

The monthly meeting of KCPR was held on January 11, 2017. Most of our meeting was spent in discussion and the planning of our upcoming Rally. The Rally is officially scheduled for 10:00 AM, Monday, February 6th, in the first floor rotunda of the Capitol in Topeka.

We are sorry to announce that one of our Steering Committee members has passed away. Jerry Marlett, who was a lobbyist for the Kansas Counsel of Firefighters and a significant contributor to our KCPR work, will be sorely missed!

The agenda was significant on this day. It is really too early to be able to have much of an idea of what absolute direction the legislature will go this year. We are aware that there is sentiment to repeal the LLC tax exemption. There will be at least 3 bills relating to KPERS introduced and KCPR will once again have a modest COLA Bill introduced. We have just learned that the Governor has recommended 'short-funding' KPERS contributions once again...more on this subject in coming days and at the Rally.

There are 4 candidates running for the elected positions on the KPERS Board of Trustees, two for the 'KPERS School' position and two for the KPERS position. As in past elections, KCPR will survey those candidates and have their responses available on our website well before the April election.

You will find on the website (www.ksretirees.org) two items of interest: 1) A poster you can print to publicize the upcoming Rally and, 2) a listing of the names and addresses of the House Financial Institutions and Pensions Committee members for 2017.

Following our KCPR meeting and lunch, we returned to the capitol to distribute the "KCPR Annual Report to the Legislature," throughout the Capitol.

This is the first Rally Update!! There will be at least two more RALLY Updates to be released!

1. The "KPERS RETIREES UNITED RALLY," sponsored by KCPR is scheduled for Wednesday, February 6, 2017, at 10:00 AM on the First Floor of the Capitol (but you will be entering on the ground floor). Arrivals for the Rally will be met once they pass through security by our hosts who will be wearing the black KCPR T-Shirts. They will have information sheets and direct you to the Rally site in the Capitol.
2. **In the past our goal has been to make every attempt possible to contact your legislator while you are in Topeka on that day. If you are uncomfortable about coming to The Rally because of this expectation, please come anyway, i.e., do not miss The Rally on this account. This year we believe our additional emphasis should be on putting as many folks in the Capitol as possible!!**
3. Put January 31st or February 1st on your calendar so that you will remember to contact your Legislator and make an appointment to meet with him/her on the morning of the 6th if you plan to try to talk to your legislator. We anticipate that many of them will tend to be more welcoming than they were in the past.
4. The primary purpose of a Rally is to make a show of concern regarding KPERS. Our desire is to put as many of our supporters in the Capitol on that day as possible!! This is a visual show of support! Many of you know that the acoustics in the Capitol aren't the best and hearing the speakers is sometimes a challenge. Please don't let that keep you from attending. Again, what we are saying is that if you are

reluctant to come because you are feeling pressured to talk to your legislator, don't worry about doing that, just plan to be in attendance!

5. KCPR will be submitting a bill calling for a graduated 3% COLA. The excuse repeatedly (year after year) offered by the legislature is that they can't afford such a raise, but it seems unwise of us not to make the request. **Obviously, if the retirees don't make the request, no one else will!** It is the position of KCPR that "If KPERS is financially healthy enough that the State does not have to make full employer contribution, then it is surely healthy enough to give retirees a COLA." To this date, 87% of the KPERS retired have NOT received a COLA or a Bonus.
6. There is now a circle drive into the Capitol off of SW 8th Street, with the only entrance to the building on the north side of the building at ground level. This, of course, means there are no more stairs to enter the building! ☺
7. Ample parking is available at the Topeka Expo Center at 19th & Topeka Avenue. A shuttle will run from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm from this location. (This shuttle is provided courtesy of the Topeka Fire Fighters.) Typically the vehicle is a minivan which will have a sign on the door indicating that is provided by the fire fighters union. When you enter the huge parking lot, go to the deserted south/east lot away from the hotel parking area.
8. We suggest the above as the parking in the immediate area of the Capitol is limited to the Capitol underground parking, which is free, **BUT**, will fill up very early on the 6th. Very limited handicap parking may be available in the Capitol parking garage. Past these two options, metered parking on the streets is about the only other option available, but it is also very limited. We cannot over emphasize the challenge you will face if you aren't bussed or car pooled to the Capitol, and then the drivers "shuttled" to the Capitol from the Expo Center!
9. We have secured a map for parking around the Capitol. Please find it on our website at www.ksretirees.org.
10. We suggest that for those arriving by bus and those carpooling, have your driver deliver you to the north entrance off the circle drive, then take the carpool vehicle to the shuttle area (see above) and have the shuttle return you to the Capitol. Buses may park or wait here also.
11. If you are lucky enough to park on the street, choose the parking meters with the yellow post. They allow for longer parking at a cheaper price.
12. The entry, which we have described above, is truly beautiful. You enter the building, and past the security check point is a Visitors Center, and then there are some 30 yards of exhibits as you move toward the elevators. This path will lead you to an office referred to as "The Document Room." To gain access to the elevators, you move straight ahead until you come to a T (The Document Room). Turn right a few steps for the elevator. This elevator will take you to all five floors! You will also find an elevator to your left. There are steps in this area leading to the first floor. You may want to take those if you are able bodied. The Rally is on the first floor, south of the Rotunda.
13. **We suggest you plan to wear black.** While it would be nice to give everyone a free t-shirt, our budget does not allow for this type of expenditure. (If your organization has matching t-shirts which identify you as a group, by all means wear them!!)
14. Our friends at security have once again emphasized, no signs or banners are allowed in the Capitol!

15. We are not aware of any simple way for you to get a meal in the Capitol itself. The "Capitol Snack Bar," is again open on the third floor of the Capitol. This establishment has a limited menu and basically serves one person at a time. There are also vending machines on the entry level.
16. **The matter of security:** As you may be aware, "conceal and carry" is now allowed in the Capitol. This makes most other previous restrictions, such as pocket knives, null and void. Just a reminder that signs are NOT allowed in the Capitol!!
17. **There will be a bus coming from the Johnson County, Shawnee Mission and Olathe area.** Johnson County KARSP has arranged for a bus (A Crossroads Cruiser) for the trip to Topeka that they will share with anyone in the area who wishes to come to the Rally.
1. The first stop will be at 7:40 AM, in the parking lot of Asbury United Methodist Church, located at 75th and Nall. The Bus will leave at 7:55 AM.
 2. The second stop will be the Grace United Methodist Church parking lot at 8:15 AM, in Olathe. The church is located about a half mile south of the Ridgeview Exit off K-10. It is located just south of College and Ridgeview. (The steeple is hard to miss) The bus will leave Grace at 8:30 AM.
 3. These pick up times should allow us to arrive in Topeka at approximately 9:30 AM.
 4. The Rally is scheduled to begin at 10:00 AM.
 5. Cost is \$10.00. You should bring a snack since we will leave from the Capitol at 12:30 P.M., and we will not stop for lunch. Susie Schram and John Kieffer will be the "bus captains."
 6. No need to pre-pay, just reserve a seat with Ernie Claudel (email address and phone below) or with Susan Schram at 913-244-6001 or susanwschram@gmail.com. Susie and John will have the reservation list and cheerfully collect your \$10.00. If you plan to drive yourself, we will provide additional parking information in another memo.
18. **Yet to Come: We will provide you additional and any updated information as it becomes available. We would anticipate at least two more updates. "Talking Points" and more info on procedures will be provided in the near future.**

Have another Glorious Weekend, stay warm and GO CHIEFS!!!

- 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 Ron and I editorialize, we 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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