



Update

Dear Friends,

August 8, 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 August 8, 2018, KPCR meeting was held at the KNEA location. The next meeting will be September 12, 2018 (the second Wednesday as usual).

During this morning's meeting the following discussions/announcements took place:

- A. Election outcome for Governor still up in the air. Could be days or even weeks before the final outcome is determined. It would seem that a recount is likely. We understand, contrary to press report that a recount when requested by one of the candidates is done at State expense if the outcome is within 1%.
- B. As soon as the final election outcomes are known, the updated information will be posted to the website. Hopefully by mid next week!!
- C. Ernie and Donna continue on a mailing list for the fall fundraiser.
- D. Some late info from KPERS Funded rate is now 68.4% up from 66.8%. State and school contributions have reached actuarial required contribution rate. UAL down from \$9.1 Billion to \$8.9 Billion. (Dec. 31,2017)
- E. Here are some pension facts that can be easily "spun"! Pensions changes since 2008 - 78% of the states have made changes, 50% of the locals have made changes. ESTABLISHED plans have had minimal changes. Most of the changes have been regarding new hires and COLA adjustments, NOT plans in general. Don't be fooled...Public employee pensions in general are not being done away with or drastically changed like many would have you believe. At a recently attended national conference Ernie attended, these were reasons given as to why the movement to retain pensions has been effective:
 1. Active and vocal member groups.
 2. Press tends to follow pension stories.
 3. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining public sector employees has become general knowledge.
 4. Litigation is prevalent on both sides of the debate.
- F. We must keep up the fight to protect and improve our pension. It was noted that the "attempts to change pensions" in Washington and Topeka are not about pension policy, 'It's just about the money!!
- G. Because of the general trend in the advance of technology and other employment changing situations, legislative leaders should be attempting to expand and protect pensions and Social Security, rather than taking pot shots at these retirement considerations.

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF TODAY'S MEETING

You have undoubtedly noticed that the recent 'Updates' have been rather brief. Obviously the summaries do not reflect some of the in-depth discussions that have taken place. I will briefly try to summarize some of our reflections, thoughts and plans. This is done for two reasons: 1) To keep you informed of our thoughts, and 2) ask a favor of you...besides in the general election voting.

1. We seem to be in a better place than we have been for a while. With the change of administration, increased tax revenue, and an at least partially favorable Kansas Supreme

Court ruling on school finance, there is at least more funds available than in the past. We hinted, but never actually stated in this newsletter, what turned out to be an obvious fact. Because of the concern over school funding, any bill, no matter how legitimate which had a 'price tag' just didn't pass.

2. KCPR will continue publishing the "Annual Report to the Legislature." We will release this as a printed document, and it is also available on our website.
3. We also tried a new strategy. Once the session began, we released a weekly "EMAIL Blast" to all legislators. This consisted of highlighting certain pages of the Annual Report to the Legislature, as well as some specific editorial material. This strategy obviously focused on facts. The "head" if you will. We want to address the personal side, "the heart" this year as well. The one way we can do this is use your antidotal reports on retirement. Our discussions have led us to the thought that the areas of most concern will be "eats, heat and meds"!!!
4. Would you each please compose a letter (email) which highlights the challenges you face living on Social Security and your KPERS Benefit without a COLA? Please send it to me at eclaudel1@comcast.net. (That's eclaudel 1 (the number one).)
5. We would ask that you once again consider contributing written comments to KCPR regarding your need for a COLA. Recent calculations indicate that between 1973 and 1998, there have been 19 COLAs offered as well as 3 bonuses. Additionally, a 13th check benefit increase was offered to those who retired prior to 1987. KCPR believes it is indeed time for a benefit increase!

September KCPR Meeting

Further discussions will be held regarding email blasts, the annual KCPR Report to the Legislature and the upcoming general election.

Dates to Remember

The KCPR Rally in support of KPERS will be held, Monday, February 3, 2019, at 9:30 AM at the State Capitol in Topeka. (This date is Tentative but likely.)

Have a wonderful Weekend! Let me know if you have questions!!

- 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 listed at the end of this "update," and I 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

Ernie Claudel
eclaudel1@comcast.net
913-481-6923