



Update

Dear Friends,

January 9, 2019

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)

MEETING

The January 9, 2019, KCPR meeting was held at the KNEA location. The next meeting will be February 13, 2019 (the second Wednesday as usual).

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

- A. KCPR would like to thank all those involved in contributing to our fundraiser. We were pleased at the result. Thanks one and all for your continued support.
- B. The KCPR 2019 Report to the Legislature was approved. To help sort some of this out and make it easy to find, we have placed the following on the KCPR Website:
 - a. A copy of the KCPR 2019 Report to the Legislature. This contains a number of graphs explaining why you and I feel we need a COLA. We have also independently pulled from this report the following:
 - b. KPERS Annual Benefit Payments by County.
 - c. History of Benefit Increases & Tabulated Benefit Increases.
 - d. Additionally provided are "Consolidated Parameters & Monthly KPERS Retiree Benefits by County.
 1. It has been noted that b & d above are of particular interest to legislators.
 2. The information in c above will give you good information as to how long exactly it has been since a COLA.
- C. A KCPR Committee is STILL working on a proposed COLA Bill. We must first find a plan that is acceptable to our friends and then work to convince enough of the opposition to support the plan (bill) as well. We will do all in our power to have a COLA Bill number for you on the day of the Rally!
- D. In addition to the Rally, we will release, on each Tuesday of the 2019 Legislative Session, an email directed at each elected representative an email directly encouraging the passage of a COLA for KPERS Retirees.
- E. Soon to be Governor Kelly is on record acknowledging the need for a COLA, but is concerned about the availability of funds. As has been repeatedly stated in the newsletter, ample funds are needed to provide a COLA. You may recall some of her comments relate to "evaluating the revenue in April". I asked some question about why April? Revenue estimates in Kansas are released in November. They are actually reported in April.
- F. Dennis Phillips, my Co-Chair of KCPR, and I were able to visit with Governor Kelly regarding a COLA. We provided the information listed in item B above as well as other pertinent information regarding the need for a benefit increase of some type. She made no promises but found the information regarding our concern over women's pension benefits, the average benefit per month per county, and information regarding the "double underfunding" of KPERS School most interesting. It should also be noted that we were able to visit with her about this subject in the first place, and secondly our presentation was met with courtesy and interest.
- G. Additionally, and I won't attempt to explain in detail, you have likely heard about a 'wind fall' of tax revenue because of the Federal Tax cuts of last year. Because this amount will not come in a lump sum (for the lack of a better term), it will take some time to see what

the benefit to Kansas will be. It would obviously be premature to make any sound judgements at this point.

REGARDING THE FEBRUARY RALLY

Since numerous organizations that annually attend the KCPR Rally in Support of KPERS do not meet in December because of holiday activities, we wanted to give you some information early so you can make plans to attend in advance. The rally is scheduled for 10:00 – 11:30 AM, Monday, February 4, 2019. It will take place in the 1st Floor Rotunda in the Capitol in Topeka. (More Specific directions will be forth coming in January.)

We cannot control who accepts our invitations to speak at the Rally, but here is the list of who we annually invite. (I don't think it would be stretching the truth to say that those who accept the invitation to speak are very strong supporters of KPERS, and those that didn't probably weren't.) We invite the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the minority leaders of the House and Senate, the Chairpersons of the Senate and House Committees which are assigned pension issues, plus the ranking minority member of these committees. We will also invite Stephen Johnson, who will likely be the Chair of the Joint Committee on Pensions, Benefits, and Investments,

We have indicated earlier that this is the most promising year for a COLA in many years, and we need you to attend if at all possible because we need boots on the floor and bottoms in the seats. We ask each of you to visit your State Senator and Representative and deliver a card (which we provide) asking for a COLA. We also ask you to drop a card off at the Governor's office. We had lower attendance than usual last year, [because of weather and the flu] but all in attendance apparently delivered their cards and numerous attendees had made previous appointments to visit their legislator. This will be especially important if you have a new representative. We received feedback from KPERS that this action apparently spurred some questions regarding a COLA from legislators. We can only imagine the response if we filled the place!! Please begin making your arrangements now!! We will make every attempt to have a bill number for you to champion!

February KCPR Meeting

Some of the topics to be discussed are as follows:

- A. Continued work on a COLA Bill.
- B. Report on the delivery of the KCPR 2019 Recommendation to the Legislature to each legislator.
- C. Report on the weekly "Email Blasts" delivered to the legislature and assembling them for the remainder of the session.
- D. Evaluation of the KCPR Rally in support of KPERS.

Date to Remember

The **KCPR Rally** in support of KPERS will be held Monday, **February 4, 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 me your updated email address...also if for any reason you should no longer wish to receive this update, let me 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

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