

President's Message

John Schnittgrund

I hope your holidays were full of family, food, and fun, whatever you celebrated.

Looking back at 2019, one of our goals was to make sure that the City should not forget about retirees. To that end, it has been a very successful year. We continue to attend Pension Board meetings and our input is always received in a positive manner. If you read the minutes that are published on the DPRA web site you can see that there have been changes in the way the board conducts itself. The City Attorney reported that all the wrongfully paid money has either been recovered or an agreeable settlement has been reached with all affected retirees. The appointment of Ken Harris as the old hire member of the board has been invaluable in the favorable outcome to the audit fiasco. The historical perspective and Ken's knowledge of the entire pension system has put the board in a good position. Pension Board business is important, and we will continue to stay involved.

The hiring of Laura Hall as the pension administrator has also been very positive. Laura has stepped into a very disorganized situation and made changes that now give the administration of the funds some organization. You can now get answers to your questions and know that you are getting correct information. We are proud to have had some input into her hiring.

You have all received the yearly census sheet by now. Hopefully you have sent it back to Laura Hall. The yearly census is used by the City and the FPPA to ensure that all benefits are being paid correctly. This is the second year we have completed the census information. This census has been conducted since the beginning of the FPPA but until these last 2 years the City filled it out for you. This might have contributed to some of the problems in past years. It is important that you complete the census and get it back to keep your benefits correct.

In 2019, we sponsored some additional events outside of the usual dinners. The Law Day murder mystery event at the Dinner Playhouse was enjoyable and well attended. Plans for 2020 include dance lessons and a mob tour. We are continuing to look for other events to sponsor in the year ahead. Staying socially involved is as important to your wellbeing as anything else. If you have any suggestions, please share with members of the Board.

Wellbeing has been part of our agenda this past year. Marco Vasquez and Joe Black have been instrumental in getting a Peer Support Program started, and we have already had members in training classes. We are working with the City to make sure that the program will be supported and retirees in need of services can receive them. Lynne Mullen is our liaison with the program and she is available to any retiree or widow.

This past Christmas Party was very successful and we have received many compliments. Thanks to Sheryl Ventura, Janice Queen, Lynne Mullen, Charlotte Chaffin, Paulette Schnittgrund, and all of the board for their hard work.

This next year we welcome a new board member. Chris Hoag was elected to the board. Chris is involved with the Museum and we look forward to working with him and the museum.

We look forward to the new year, and whatever comes up, your board will be there, and keep your eyes on the web site.

We wish you all the happiest of New Years.