

President's Message

John Schnittgrund

2018 has arrived with a flare. I am sorry for the delay in getting this message to you. We have been requesting and collecting information from the City about our pension and the Audit that caused all of the problems, and I wanted to include that information in my message.

To date, we have received minutes dating back to 1997 and all of the audit documents and the spread sheets containing the audit results. After looking through the minutes, it became clear that all of the discussion regarding the audit was conducted in executive session and apparently all of the votes were taken in executive session also, so much for transparency.

The audit results show that some of our members were due money because their benefits had been miscalculated from the very start of their retirement. It's impossible to know if mistakes were made at any time after retirement. It's still best to calculate your benefit by using the percentage gained by your seniority and the salary schedule provided by the Dept.

As for the reason for the audit in the first place, the Board continues to state that a sampling of benefits indicated a need for the audit. They offer no information about why a sampling was conducted or who performed the sampling.

We have been complaining about the use of executive session and the fact that votes are not recorded. The Old Hire Board seems to want to throw the minutes taker under the bus by stating that votes are taken but not recorded. I have reminded them that the first thing in every meeting is approval, of the minutes of the previous meeting, but I have never seen any of the members of the Board question why the minutes they are approving are incomplete.

We complained to the City Attorney about the use of executive sessions and the recording of votes taken by the Board. The good news is,,, someone was listening. The city attorney at the December meeting went over the Colorado open Meeting Law as it applies to executive session and the recording of votes taken in meetings. The minutes of that meeting are vastly different from the minutes of meetings prior to December 2017. We can only hope this will be a new beginning for the Board and they will properly conduct business.

At this last meeting we asked that the board request that the FPPA include the cost, if any, to raise the widow benefit to 100% rather than the current 66%. As far as we could tell they approved that request. It was apparent that the New Hires on the Board don't know a lot about old hire benefits. Ken Harris has been invaluable in making our requests easier for the New hires to understand. The FPPA actuarial study has not started but they will answer the cost question when it is complete.

We are still asking questions and seeking additional documents but after a couple of years it appears as though we are finally making some headway. At least the City knows we will not hesitate to question their actions as it regards our pension benefits.

The roster book has gone to press and we anticipate that it will be mailed shortly. The membership continues to grow and we are committed to improving communication and making sure our retirement remains secure.

The DPRA is looking at some additional functions for the members and there will be more to report after the next meeting. See you at White Fence Farm February 15.