

PRO Board Meeting, August 10, 2005
PFT Conference Room

Present: Jerry Herman, President, Bruce Jacobs, Vice-President, Shirley Timm, Treasurer,
Juanita Peterson, Secretary
Board: Patricia England, Shirley Nedham, Sondra Neiman, George Herring, Phyllis Jones
Absent: Remo Arancio, Alex Pappas
Guest: Michael Mills

Treasurer's Report: S. Timm reported the current balance is \$3792.22.
A donation of \$200 was received from R. Vietti.
Received for memberships: \$30.
Stamps to mail Newsletter, Vol. 1 No. 4 cost \$282.82.

MSU (Juanita, Shirley N.) that the Treasurer's report be accepted.

Secretary's Report: Juanita distributed the July 6, 2005 Board meeting minutes. Corrections were made to the first paragraph of the President's Report, lines 3 & 4 to read: "1) that currently 45% of the PCCD health benefits budget is spent on healthcare for retirees," and to the last line of paragraph 5 to read: "...the bond is exclusively for health benefits." Also, the spelling of the name of Michael Mills was corrected.

Juanita distributed a list of health care costs for the District for the last seven years (1999 – 2005) showing the cost in 2005 to be 2.56 times the cost in 1999. The listing was obtained from Thomas Smith, District CFO,

MSU (Shirley T., Pat) that the Secretary's report with corrections be accepted.

Newsletter Report: Bruce is investigating another source for printing the Newsletter, a source that currently prints for the League of Women Voter and other non-profits.

The member directory has been updated on the Website. Bruce distributed a list of email addresses that were undeliverable when the announcement about the Membership Directory being online was sent. Each Board member is to try to identify the corresponding retiree member.

Jerry shared a new article in the Contra Costa Times about Ed Minasian and the book he has authored.
Bruce will try to put a link to the article on the Peralta Retirees website.

Benefits Committee: Jerry reported that Remo Arancio has agreed to chair the Benefits Committee in Alex's absence. He also noted that he has not been getting any emails or phone calls concerning CoreSource (CS) problems. Sondra and Pat related some experiences with payment problems to providers.

Bruce will write an article for the Newsletter about his emergency experience with (CS) in New York. His experiences with CS Customer Service have been positive, but he has had to be careful when reviewing the Explanation of Benefits (eob) forms, since the error rate is very high.

Michael Mills said that under the health benefits contract, CS and Blue Cross (BC) must accept a reasonable price from providers. BC covers 90% of InterPlan (IP) providers; CS covers 75% of IP providers. The "usual and customary" price differs according to zip code. Michael said that 100% of

“usual and customary” reimbursement is for emergency procedures. He also thinks that the CS network is charging the District less than did BC.

Sondra noted that CS won't do a cross-over between Medicare and the District as BC did. She has information about Medicare Part D and the coming prescription program. She suggested that the information be put in the Newsletter.

Michael is working with Jennifer Seibert on a letter to Kaiser from the District concerning Kaiser Permanente's Senior Advantage Program. He provided data that indicate that of Kaiser's 330 retirees over 65, ninety-eight are not in the Sr. Advantage Program; of these Ninety-eight, 34 are not in Medicare, and there are 64 in Medicare that is not assigned to Kaiser. These numbers have an effect on the District's budget, because there is a Medicare surcharge of \$19 for ALL active employees and retirees over or under the age of 65.

Michael requested that PRO be a co-signer of the letter. Before agreeing to co-sign, members of the Board want to see the letter and, perhaps to help write it. During the discussion that followed, questions arose, such as: Are Kaiser retiree members required to sign up for Senior Advantage? If a retiree signs up for Medicare Part B and not for Senior Advantage, can he/she go outside of Kaiser for health care? Under the contract, do retirees have a choice?

Michael: Under the contract, retirees must sign up for Medicare Part B; however, Senior Advantage is not in the contract.

MSU(Bruce, George H.) that PRO will cosign with the District a letter to PCCD employees and retirees who are Kaiser members not on Medicare requesting them to sign up for Medicare Part B.

Bruce will suggest to the District that they mail a notice to all retirees who are about to turn 65 (three months prior to their birthday) with complete information about how to apply for Medicare Parts A and B, information about how to obtain reimbursements, and what the advantages to both the individual and the District are.

President's Report: Jerry reported on the meeting that he and Bruce had with Bob Bezemek. He referred all to the article he had in the most recent Newsletter. There was no charge to PRO for the meeting with Mr. Bezemek. Mr. Bezemek and the PFT have been working on documentation for retirees' benefit. Mr. Bezemek was optimistic that any legal challenge to our retiree health benefits could be defeated by legal action. Mr. Bezemek won the Contra Costa College case after 9 years. That judgment was unpublished, however, and cannot be used as precedent. Most cases brought by retirees are won. So that there is no conflict of interest if he represents both PRO and PFT, he will draw up a letter for doing so. Bruce cautioned that judgments are becoming more conservative, and that any documents that preceded collective bargaining should be given to Mr. Bezemek. PFT has gone back as far as 1972 in PFT records. Any promises, especially those that precede 1972 must be documented. Mr. Bezemek is charging PFT between 5 and 6 thousand dollars for the research he is doing. The PFT has applied for grants and the net cost to PFT may be about \$1200.

MSU (Bruce, George H.) that PRO pay up to \$500 of the cost to PFT for legal advice and research pertaining to retirees.

Bruce and Jerry will attend the District Benefits Committee meeting. The meeting is advisory and exploratory.

The medical obligation bond has passed the PCCD Board. Now it must go for court approval.

Social Committee Report: Jerry has asked Ralph Marinaro to plan something else soon.

Membership Committee Report: George has been working on a telephone tree to try to add another 50 members to PRO. He now has 10 people to serve on the tree. Bruce would like George to write an article for the Newsletter to advise what to do if a retiree dies.

Service Committee Report: Sondra reported that there has been no response to a request for tutors for the fall semester. Bruce suggested that the Committee recruit using email addresses. The Committee is also working on book donations, particularly reference books and contemporary fiction. Bruce said there has been a good response from retirees to be on tenure evaluation committees.

Committee Chairs: Jerry asked each Committee Chair to give Juanita the names of their members. Sondra will email the names of the Service Committee members.

Bruce offers each committee a web page on which they can list members, meeting times, etc.

Jerry will contact Helen Bersie to confirm that she is the Chair of the Events/Program Committee. He will also contact Ida Pound as Chair of the Sunshine Committee.

Other Business: Shirley Nedham said that it is not clear whether prescription numbers are needed on the District's new prescription form. Retirees should check to see that their Kaiser Prescription receipts have numbers on them. If not, the retiree can request Kaiser to provide a print-out that satisfies the need for prescription numbers. Shirley also reminded the Board that a notice should be put in the next Newsletter about dues for next year. **[Not known at the time of this meeting, Shirley later learned from Jennifer Seibert that prescription numbers are no longer needed.]**

Non-Profit Status Report: Shirley Timm has two of the 11 signatures required to send the application to the State. She is not sure how long it will take for approval. The cost is about \$150 for the federal application and \$30 for the State.

Shirley T. reminded us that a nominating committee is needed for the one-year positions on the Board. Nominations are to be announced in the next Newsletter and at the November Board meeting.

It was agreed that the nominating committee members will be the Executive Officers.

MSU (Bruce, Pat) that the meeting adjourn.

The Next PRO Board meeting: September 7th, 12:30 pm, PFT Conference Room.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Juanita Peterson, Secretary,