

Compass

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
OF RHODE ISLAND
40 FOUNTAIN STREET, 1ST FLOOR
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903-1854
PHONE: (401) 457-3900
FAX: (401) 222-2430
WEBSITE: WWW.ERSRI.ORG

Special points of interest:

- No 2008 board election
- Spotlight on new board member Roger Boudreau
- 2007 Legislative changes to ERSRI
- Group Counseling Sessions
- **NEW ERSRI Main Phone Number**
(401) 457-3900

Re-elected to the Retirement Board:

Teacher

Representatives

William B. Finelli

John P. Maguire

State Employee Representatives

John J. Meehan

Linda C. Riendeau

Municipal

Representative

Louis M. Prata

Retiree

Representative

Michael R. Boyce

New Retiree

Representative

Roger P. Boudreau

TREASURY UPDATE

Since taking office on January 2, 2007 General Treasurer Frank T. Caprio has engaged Rhode Island in several important ventures. Some highlights of his accomplishments include:

- *Sidestepped Subprime Credit Crisis*

In 2007, the subprime crisis hit some states especially hard. In states such as Florida and Montana, public funds have been tied up in defaulted subprime debt. Early on, Treasurer Caprio took a proactive role in assuring that subprime risk is

being minimized for Rhode Island. In March 2007, Treasurer Caprio and his financial team moved over \$1 billion into Quality A institutional money market funds, which are only invested in government-backed bonds. This move, along with other reinvestments, was completed before the decline of the market.

- *Supported novel bond insurance from Berkshire Hathaway*

In December 2007, Treasurer Caprio requested that Warren Buffett's new bond insurance venture make its way to Rhode Island and Buffett accepted stating,



"Rhode Island, here we come." Companies providing insurance to risky mortgage-related bonds eroded a number of triple-A credit ratings during the subprime mortgage crisis. Buffett's new venture is committed to maintaining a strong capital ratio, while also incorporating the avoidance of unnecessary risk.

NO RETIREMENT BOARD ELECTIONS IN 2008

In 2008 there was no election necessary for the two active teacher and state employee representatives, the two retiree representatives, or the one municipal representative to the ERSRI Board.

Regulations governing the election provide that if only two active teacher

and state employee representatives qualify for the election they shall be deemed elected and no election shall be necessary. The same holds true for the one active municipal member and the two retiree representatives. To qualify for candidacy in the election, a candidate must

return 100 valid signatures from their respective group.

A total of 10 candidates filed candidacy papers. However, only the 6 incumbent members returned the 100 required valid signatures

Continued on page 3

TREASURY UPDATE, CONTINUED

Continued on page 2

- *Enacted/Spurred Sudanese Divestment*

In 2007, General Treasurer Caprio helped introduce divestment legislation pertaining to the genocide in Sudan. In April 2007, both the Rhode Island House and Senate unanimously passed legislation to divest \$2 million from companies that indirectly support the genocide in Sudan. Governor Carcieri signed this bill into law in June 2007. In October, Treasurer Caprio spoke in front of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee regarding Rhode Island’s success in legislating Sudanese divestment. In February 2008, the Treasurer was also asked to speak at a special U.S. House of Representatives hearing regarding the Sudan Accountability and Divestment Act of 2007.

**2007
Legislative
Session
Retirement
Bills**



S672/H5215 SUBSTITUTE A

This act amended Rhode Island General Law (RIGL) §45-21.2-9 relating to police and fire retirement on accidental disability. The act made two amendments: the first reduced the amount of time from the date of the accident that an application for accidental disability benefits can be made from either an alleged accident or a reinjury or aggravation of the accident. Prior to its passage, members were required to file an application for disability within 5 years of the alleged accident. The change now reduces the time to 18 months. The second change made by S 672/H5215 was to provide a definition of the words “reinjury” and “aggravation”. The act affects members filing for accidental disability after July 6, 2007

S43/H5062 SUBSTITUTE A

This bill amends multiple laws for Judges’ contributions making them consistent with state employees, teachers and municipal employees. This act provides that whenever any Judge dies before retirement with no surviving spouse or minor child(ren), the accumulated contribution would be credited to a judicial retirement benefits account to be distributed to a designated beneficiary or to the estate.

S405/H5519 SUBSTITUTE A

This bill also amends multiple laws for Judges’ retirement. This act provides that whenever a Judge, Justice or Magistrate would be granted a leave of absence without pay, such absence would not be credited towards active service time for the purposes of retirement.

S963SUBSTITUTE A

S963 amends RIGL §45-21.2-5 and creates §45-21.2-6.3. Both acts make changes to the number of years of service required for a retirement allowance to police officers in the town of Richmond.

RETIREMENT BOARD ELECTIONS, CONTINUED

(continued from page 1)

from their respective groups. The 6 incumbents were therefore automatically re-elected to serve another term and were sworn in at the March 2008 meeting of the Retirement Board.

This year the Board has a new position. During the 2006 legis-

lative session, H7016 Substitute A enacted changes to the composition of the Retirement Board. As a result of Separation of Powers legislation, this law removed legislators from the Board and replaced them with appointments by both the General Treasurer and Governor and created a new elected

position on the Retirement Board. The new position is a second retired representative elected by retirees of the system. Mr. Roger P. Boudreau will become the new retiree representative on the Board. The ERSRI Board will now regain its 15 member total.

ERSRI'S NEW BOARD MEMBER ROGER BOUDREAU

Mr. Boudreau retired from a career as a public school teacher for the town of Lincoln, after more than 30 years in the classroom, in December of 2000. During his teaching career, he also served as president of the Lincoln Teachers Association. He was first

elected to the position in 1976, and he retired from the position in June 2004 after serving continuously for more than two decades. Roger has also served as a member of the RIFT/HP Executive Council, the AFL-CIO Executive Council, the United Way Community Ser-

vices Advisory Board, and the RI Public Telecommunications Authority. He is currently completing his first term as president of the Rhode Island retiree chapter of the American Federation of Teachers (RIAFT/R – Local 8037).

GROUP COUNSELING SESSIONS

With the number of retirements continuing to grow, we have instituted a new and unique method of counseling employees. Effective as of May 2008 Group Counseling sessions were offered to those members who are planning to retire by September 30, 2008. These sessions are designed to accommodate a larger number of potential retirees than that of the individual meetings. Usually 10-15 members can be accommodated in each session, while still effectively educating them on retirement benefits.

All information and forms for each individual member are provided in advance of the meeting. Members complete the forms prior to the meeting to allow our counselors to concentrate on other issues that may arise as part of the enrollment process.

The group counseling sessions are being held biweekly at 10:00a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the following days:

- July 10th and 24th
- August 6th and 20th
- September 11th and 24th

- October 15th and 29th
- November 11th and 26th
- December 11th and 17th

Should you wish to enroll in any of these Group Counseling sessions please call the ERSRI office at (401) 457-3900. Enroll today!

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THAT YOU VISITED THE RETIREMENT SYSTEM'S WEBSITE WWW.ERSRI.ORG?

A lot has probably changed since your last visit, and a lot will be changing as we move forward to design a new and exciting website that can be easily accessed by both our active and retired membership. Some of the changes that you can expect to see in the near future are:

- Timely messages from Treasurer/Chairman Caprio on items that affect you today
- Easier online enrollment
- Promotion of our in-house services
- Enhanced online services
- Telephone numbers for essential resources
- A new log-in page with links to the areas you need the most
- Forms and benefit statements
- Benefit booklets
- Q & A section
- Benefit news
- Office directions

Stay tuned!

ERSRI'S NEW NUMBER (401) 457-3900

As you can see in this issue of "Compass" we have a new telephone number. Effective immediately we can be reached at **401-457-3900**. This number will replace the current 401-222-2203. Please make this change wherever you keep those important telephone numbers for future reference. Remember **401-457-3900** is the number to call for retirement benefit service.

You'll hear a new menu with options to direct your call to one of our call center staff. There are no extra menus to listen to, just press the number that relates to your question and you'll get right to a staff person. Here is our menu:



→ #1 To make an appointment or speak to an operator

→ #2 To get office directions

→ #4 To get pension payroll updates

→ #5 To request a refund, report a death, or get information on a 1099R

→ #6 To get information on purchase of service credits

→ #8 To get information on wage and contribution processing (for employers)

→ #9 To speak to a Retirement Counselor

Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island—Active
 40 Fountain Street, 1st Fl., Providence, RI 02903-1854
 (401) 457-3900 Fax (401) 222-2430

Visit our website at www.ersri.org or email us at ersri@ersri.org