



Tuesday, September 12, 2023 - Called to Order @ 10:00 AM

ATTENDANCE: P=present, A=absent

BOARD: Anna Cicero-P, Ken Freed-P, Maria Leyva-P, Steve Linder-P, Julie Horwin-A, Luci Messing-P, Danny Barlow-P, Peter Coston-P, Cynthia Couture-P, Janice Dwosh-P, Jeanne Erickson-P, Cynthia Hale-P, Marilyn Freed-A, Norma Jimenez-P, Deb Larned-P, Sharin Manes-P, Barbara Matteson-A, Gary Mehok-P, Lizzie Menefee-P, Marshall Militano-P, Nancy Putman-P, Nancy Riley-P, Michele Smith-P, Susie Sommer-P

CHAPTER CHAIRS: Suzan Austin-A, Janie Hydrick-A, Sally Rosen-A, Ellen Shamah-P

OTHER LEADERS & GUESTS: Aurora Aber-A, Shirley Boswell-P, Marilyn Calhoun-A, Kristine Ehlis-A, Ellie Feldner-A, Bart James-P, Marilyn Kinnie-A, Jan Nichols-A, Debbie Odle-A, Carmen Peters-P, Steve Ramos-P, Judy Robbins-A, Linda Somo-P, Sandra Warns-P, Ellie Perez-Pawloski-P, Jackie Van Eeps- P

GUEST SPEAKER: President Marisol Garcia welcomed the board and discussed current AEA celebrations in the Legislature, Membership growth, activism and primary races.

Land Acknowledgement - Racial and Social Justice - Janice recited the Acknowledgement and reminded the board of our community agreements.

Approval of Agenda - with flexibility. Moved by Ken. Seconded by Steve L. Motion passed.

Approval of April 11, 2023 Minutes - Moved by Ken. Seconded by Steve L. Motion passed.

Approval of Committees & Calendar (with flexibility) - Moved by Ken. Seconded by Danny. Motion passed.

Financial Report - Steve L./Treasurer presented, and report moved to file for audit.

Approval of Financial Report (Current & Previous) - Moved by Ken (x2). Seconded by Janice (x2). Motion passed.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President- Anna: Refer to documents submitted to the Board located in the appendix.

Vice President- Ken: Refer to documents submitted to the Board located in the appendix.

Secretary- Maria: Refer to documents submitted to the Board located in the appendix.

AEA Director- Luci: Refer to documents submitted to the Board located in the appendix.

NEA Director/Past President- Julie: No report.

AEA Liaison- Ellie Perez-Pawloski:

NEW BUSINESS ITEM: Commitment to increase request from ARSC Lobbyist-Daniella Smith. Linda gave rationale for the increase and is in favor of the request. Cindy C. moved for AEA-R to increase its support for ARSC to \$500, which will go from \$5,500 to \$6,000. Seconded by Nancy P. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS:

Membership Nancy P/Shirley/Michele - Nancy reported 30 new members, which included 16 new members that were recruited this summer. Last year, board members pledged to recruit 2 new members, and 6 board members did. In the summer, 13 board members assisted 19 locals with their new hire actions which helped the AEA recruit 3,123 new members for the coming year.

Political Action- Luci Messing- Refer to documents submitted to the Board, located in the appendix. . Luci presented DRAFT of PAC plan for 2023-2024.

Racial & Social Justice- Janice Dwosh- Passed out/collected a Board survey. Refer to documents submitted to the Board.

Communications - Website/Instagram- Maria- Requested for everyone to share on social media what they are doing today and tomorrow and to keep referring people to the website. She also asked for more pictures

for the website.

Facebook- Steve R- Steve asked for more people to share the Facebook posts.

ZOOM Link Support- Susie S/Maria

MailChimp/Survey Monkey- Julie H - absent

The Conduit Newsletter- Jan, Bart - no report

AEA Liaison- Ellie P - Provided clarification on current AEA positions. Board requested for Secretary, Maria to forward all Yellow Sheet Reports to the Board.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES/AD HOC:

ASRS- Steve R - Met with Governor's staff, Jennifer Loreda, to discuss how Gov. can help. Gov. was very supportive! All active members can have a 403-B through the ASRS.

M.O.R.E.- Cindy C. - Date will be April 19, 2024. More info. to come.

Fundraising- Marilyn F- absent

Annual Meeting- Norma J - Requested for more volunteers.

Elections- Steve L - No report.

Annual Award- Nancy P., Has nomination forms for the award. Steve L. was previous year's recipient.

Documents- Julie H- absent

Budget- Steve L - Has confidence in Carmen's committee.

Audit- Carmen - Is ready.

CHAPTER CHAIR - Susie Sommer

West Valley- Marshall - Reported on many guest speakers including Dr. Laura Metcalf.

East Valley- Janie Hydrick - no report.

Scottsdale/PV- Nancy R - Will also host Dr. Laura Metcalf.

Greater Tucson- Peter C - See document submitted to the Board.

Kyrene- Ellen S - August meeting had to be canceled.

Southern/Sierra Vista- Sally R - Lost 2 regular attendees. Will meet on Sept.5 at the same location.

Interstate Report- Danny - Requested for ZIP codes for Julie H. to send a larger invitation. Refer to document submitted to the Board.

Marana/Northwest Tucson- Deb L - No report.

Southwest Phoenix- Marilyn K - No report.

ALLIANCES AND COALITION UPDATES

ARSC- Steve R

AIN- Ken

AARA- AZ Alliance for Retired Americans- Linda, Julie

Kinnaman Raffle- Ken - Winner was Danny.

Closure and Adjournment at 3:15pm.

APPENDIX

President's Report – Sept. 12-13 by Anna Cicero

Celebrations, Summer Awards & Highlights to Brag About!

Congratulations AEA Retired Board Members, you have gone above and beyond your AEA Retired roles to engage this summer during New Educator Action to help our locals recruit new members. Remember everyone, MEMBERSHIP is our Lifeblood! Many of you achieved awards, were elected to positions, collaborated with our alliance boards and have been re-elected to positions at the national level. I am proud of our Arizona leaders who are loyal and tireless in their work to advocate for education and a sound retirement system. Together in solidarity, we will continue to stay focused on the AEA Retired Mission during this coming 2023-2024 year of ACTION!

Dear Board members: We will need “All Hands on Deck”! Join me as we tackle the “waves” together.

Always remember our MISSION ~

Arizona Education Association, AEA RETIRED is dedicated to:

- PROMOTING, PROTECTING, and IMPROVING the pension system and health benefits
- WORKING to improve public education
- ENGAGING in political action for public education
- ADVOCATING for HUMAN, CIVIL and ECONOMIC RIGHTS

E-newsletter Award: This summer in Florida, I was excited to accept the award on behalf of Jan Nichols and Bart James, AEA Retired Co-Editors of The Conduit and E-newsletter. Their talents along with the many writers who contribute the content and layout of our award winning newsletter, once again received a Runner UP award for the E-Newsletter. NEA extends their congratulations for their extraordinary support of NEA Retired and public education.

Linda Somo, AEA- Retired President Emeritus, has been elected President of the Arizona Alliance of Retired Americans. Our own Janie Hydrick was also re-elected Treasurer as she continues to be our East Valley Chapter Chair. Linda states, “Even though I retired 23 years ago, I have not lost my passion to work for all retirees and build strong Unions.” Congratulations Linda & Janie, our collaboration can only make us stronger.

NEA Retired President Anita Gibson! Arizona welcomes a new national President,

September 1, Anita will be at the helm. Our Past President, Sarah Borgman said her farewell and asked all of us to welcome our new president warmly and give her our full cooperation as she moves into this leadership position and directs the future of NEA Retired. Best wishes to her!

Barb Matteson- Honored for her years of service, NEA Retired 40th Anniversary committee presented our AEA-R legend with acknowledgement of her loyalty and non-wavering work since she was NEA Retired President. You all know who she is, I can only wish to be a bit of her.

Julie Horwin, AEA Retired Past President, has been re-elected to the NEA Board of Directors. Julie works tirelessly at the national level and brings it all home to AEA Retired. Her ability to mentor me, balance state and national task and family truly amazes me. I witnessed the respect that so many other states have for Julie as she shares strategies and ideas to help all our states work.

In Atlanta, GA, I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Martin Luther King’s daughter at the Annual American School Counselor Conference. Her message was powerful and so in touch with the times. It was an amazing conference filled with professional development and helping school counselors define their ROLE in advocating for our students and the profession. Sessions were replete with Racial and Social Justice Themes and strategies as well as national best practices in preparing our youth for the needs of the future.

I close by letting all of you know that I welcome new and returning officers to our board. It’s been a big year of accomplishments as we get ready to go full speed ahead with our AEA Retired 5-Year Strategic Plan, Re-Branding and with a better understanding of our Roles and Responsibilities for the coming years. In solidarity I urge you to join in this excitement and action this election year will bring.

Thank you for reading, Anna J

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Vice-President's Report by Ken Freed for 9/12/23

I shall be brief; Since our last Board Meeting, I:

- *conferenced with members about ongoing issues,
- *attended 2 Tucson chapter meetings,
- *attended AEA-R Annual Meeting,
- *attended a Zoom meeting for membership,
- *attended AEA Delegate Assembly,
- *emailed, texted, met, or spoke with members,
- *chatted with actives and retired at social events,
- *attended AARA Convention,
- *attended AEA-R Board Retreat.

That is all. See you Tuesday. ken freed

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Secretary's Report by Maria Leyva

I had a very restful and busy summer. I spent a lot of time at my parents' cabin in Forest Lakes, AZ, and went to at least one movie a week with my "movie crew."

Some of the actions and events that I assisted and attended during the summer:

- Various tech-related issues with personal and professional
- Attended or facilitated ZOOM's (website Chapter info., Board, Membership)
- Attended the Deer Valley New Hire Action where almost half of new hires joined!
- Updated the website (the Chapter information, new video on home page)
- Provided feedback with the NEA Grant presentation.

That is all that I can remember. The time really does fly over the summer.

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PAC REPORT - LUCI MESSING

On July 31st, the 1st General session of the 56th Legislature adjourned for the year. This was the longest legislative session in state history. This session was 204 days. That includes the the six weeks that the legislature was in recess and did not conduct any business. However, legislators still received their per diem as if they were at the Capitol. Taxpayers footed the bill for this decision by the majority leadership to remain in session. The expected length of a regular session is 100 days and normally, the budget is one of the last orders of business. The budget was passed in May.

There were 1675 bills introduced this session. 348 were submitted to the Governor with 205 signed into law and 143 were vetoed. Governor Hobbs surpassed Governor Napolitano's record of 58 vetoes. The bills passed this session will take effect October 30th, 2023. The 2nd session of the 56th Legislature will begin January 8th, 2024.

We can hope that when the 2024 legislature returns, they will work on legislation that will benefit all Arizona citizens. Too much time was wasted during the last session on bills that attempted to ban books, attacks on our students and teachers, and blatant disregard for input by legislators from the minority party.

A bit of good news, lawmakers did waive the school spending cap (AEL) for this year and next. They also increased one-time funding for school facilities by \$368 million and capital expenses by \$300 million. Governor Hobbs pushed for the redirection of former Gov. Ducey's inequitable results-based funding program toward helping all students. In addition there was an increase from 2% to 2.9% of the mandatory annual increase for inflation and invested \$36 million in miscellaneous one-time programs.

Unfortunately, lawmakers allowed the out of control ESA voucher program to continue unchecked without any oversight or accountability. The majority party ignored overwhelming data that vouchers will bankrupt the State budget. Current cost is \$950 million, \$320 million more than was budgeted. This compounds the problem of a huge decrease in state revenue due to Ducey's enacted "flat tax". The ESA program is a complete failure at the expense of a million students and families who choose to attend public schools. This issue must be addressed by the upcoming Legislature.

Another concern regarding the voucher program is the current investigation by Homeland Security into the data breach that revealed personally identifiable information on voucher recipients and disability categories for participants. ESA Voucher Program Director, Christine Accurso unexpectedly resigned and will have to answer questions regarding the breach.

In addition, Attorney General Kris Mayes has warned parents that ESA vouchers come with the loss of many rights and protections. For example, students no longer have a federal right to privacy or a "free and appropriate education." There are also risks of potential scams from voucher schools and vendors that receive no vetting.

Members, get ready to once again become engaged in our activities. We will be preparing to assist in the 2024 election. We must elect candidates that will just let teachers teach. It is unacceptable the interference that the legislature has imposed upon our public schools.

The Political Action Committee will be meeting on September 13 to work on a final plan for the upcoming legislative session and the 2024 election. AEA-Retired will be monitoring these issues and will update information as needed.

Education Matters!
Luci

"Choose to be optimistic, it feels better." – Dali Lama