

Classified Personnel Council Meeting  
Thursday May 14, 2020 1:00pm-2:30pm  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Microsoft Teams



CLASSIFIED  
PERSONNEL COUNCIL  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

## Agenda

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|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Abraham, Environmental Health Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amber Lobato, Housing and Dining Services     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stacey Baumgarn, Facilities Management     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anselma Lopez, VP for Enrollment Acc.         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leah Bosch, CVMBS                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adrian Macdonald, Statistics                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Cowley, Lory Student Center          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rachel McKinney, VP for Diversity             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emily Farrenkopf, College of Liberal Arts  | <input type="checkbox"/> Dustin Pothour, Facilities Management                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joseph Gallegos, Facilities Management                | <input type="checkbox"/> Chuck Richards, CSU Police Department                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Gilbert, ACNS                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meg Skeeahan, Dept of Accounting              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Magdeline Hall, College of Liberal Arts    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura Snowwhite, Business and Financial Serv. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wayne Hall, ACNS                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristin Stephens, Statistics                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kelly Hixson, Housing and Dining Serv.     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kate Sherman, Political Science               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Randy Lamb, Housing and Dining Serv.                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lourdes Zavala, The Access Center             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valerie Lewis, Health Network              | <input type="checkbox"/> Alisha Zmuda, Student Disability Services                |

### Ex-Officio Members & CPC Volunteers:

- Steven Dove, APC Representative
- Paige Flores, Department of Biology
- Eric Gardner, Housing and Dining Serv.
- Robyn Fergus, Human Resources
- Robert Schur, Policy and Compliance

### Call-to-Order 1:00PM

- Approval of CPC 4.9.2020 Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve by Leah. Second by Kelly.  
*Motion Carried.*

### Guest Speakers

- **Jeff Sprole and Michael Steppat – Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA)**
  - We are one month away from releasing 2019 data.
  - Why PERA really matters. We have well over 600,000 members and 45.1 B under management. Over 500 employers contribute to PERA. Our Investment income over 30 years is ~ \$60B.
  - PERA pays out \$4.5B to retirees every year to 100,000 retirees. PERA's payouts are based on contributions and investments. Our 10 year average return rate is ~ 8.8%. Average monthly benefit for all retirees is ~\$3,208 with 23 average years of employment.
  - You can find more information at [copera.org/snapshot](http://copera.org/snapshot)
  - Contributions + Investments = Benefits to our retirees

- SB200 in Colorado had major changes PERA that included Increased contributions by employees and employers, modification of benefits, and the Automatic Adjustment Provision (AAP).
- The AAP allows us to keep on track to be fully funded and pay out all of our obligations by 2047.
- The 2019 return was very high for PERA, but has not been released yet. It is likely there will be another automatic adjustment in 2021. The 2018 return was -3.5% and will result in the automatic adjustment provision in 2020.
- Automatic Adjustment Provision from the 2018 return kicked in starting July 2019.
- Automatic adjustment will be in July. There is an adjustment upward this year, but one is not expected for next year from the 2019 return. There is probably going to be one due to 2020, but that would take effect in 2022.
- Employees are currently making 8.75% contribution per month. That will increase in July by 1.25% to 10% of your take home pay. Employer increases Will increase 0.5% to 20.9%. Every dollar you put in will be returned to you in retirement.
- Retirees will see an increase of 1.25% in benefits. Restored from previous years.
- We expect another 0.5% increase in July 2021 (10.5%). Unlikely anything triggered in 2021.

**Michael Stepat – State Legislative session update.**

- Michael will provide an overview of where the legislature is thus far and dive a bit deeper into how COVID-19 has impacted their work and how that may affect PERA in the future.
- General assembly sets contribution rates, benefit levels, and other plan requirements.
- General assembly convenes in January every year and meets for no more than 120 days. COVID-19 has upended the schedule. The legislature temporarily adjourned on March 14<sup>th</sup> due to emergency declaration from Governor.
- Special Rule 44 invoked for the very first time that allow the Legislature to suspend the session and keep the full 120 days of legislative session. The Colorado Supreme Court agreed and allowed for non-consecutive legislative days. There are ~ 50 days remaining in the legislative session.
- The legislature passes ~ 600 bills a year. Only one is required. A balanced state budget is required by the constitution, so a balanced budget must be passed.
- The state cannot operate under a deficit such as the Federal Government. They will not be able to spend what they do not take in with revenues.
- We will have an unprecedented shortfall this year.
- Joint Budget Committee (JBC) is working now on the budget. COVID-19 has negatively impacted revenue not thought possible.
- Federal Stimulus was \$2T. The stimulus does not allow for states to backfill their budgets.
- The JBC is 6 legislators. Recommendations for PERA for the next year only are:
  - Suspend PERA Direct Distribution Payment from the State
  - Postpone Employer Automatic Increase Adjustments of 0.5%
  - Postpone Employee Automatic Increase Adjustments of 0.5%
  - Postpone Employee Contribution Structural Increase of 0.75%
  - Shift 2.5% of Employer Contribution to Employees. This was done after the Great Recession. This would save state employers from having to pay into PERA.
- None of these are final and have not been introduced to the legislature.

- Tentative schedule for General Assembly and JBC is looking to finalize the budget by May 22<sup>nd</sup>, and all lawmakers returning on May 26<sup>th</sup>.
- We are expecting another federal stimulus package with direct and flexible relief to state and local governments.
- We are also expecting recommendations on Safety Protocols for the General Assembly during COVID-19 health epidemic.
- There is a push for a CARES 2 Act in Congress.

**Jeff Sprole**

- PERA is somewhat insulated from the budget process at the state. Retirees are still going to receive checks.
- You have an individual account where your money is always yours and earns interest. Secure monthly benefits you can't outlive.
- Jeff suggested to follow their blog. [Peraontheissues.com](http://Peraontheissues.com).

Meg – If the JBC decides to move the employer contributions onto PERA employees, and suspend Employer contributions, that would negatively impact the PERA fund?

Michael – Yes, that would be correct.

Jim – At CSU, most state classified have been able to continue working. I'm curious if you all have seen state employee layoffs with 600 or so PERA employers around the state. Are we seeing layoffs from employers? Decreased contributions due to COVID ?

Michael – Are we seeing layoffs or furloughs is a great question. At this point, we don't know. To tie in to the national conversations on bailing out state pension funds, we have advocated for Federal dollars to be directed to our employers to keep their employees working.

Jeff – I've heard from employees on furloughs and what the impact would be, but I have not heard anything about layoffs.

Meg – There was an article in the *Colorado Sun* about the State shifting 2.5% of their PERA contribution to employees and that would be calculated to a furlough equivalent to 6.5 days. Would that be considered technically furloughing employees?

Michael – The JBC staff refers to that as furlough equivalent options *in lieu of* an actual furlough.

Jim – If I could follow up, what would be the scenario if you did have members that had to take furloughs. Has PERA gamed that scenario such as 5 furlough days for all employees and what that does to PERA?

Michael – I would have to check to see if PERA has looked at that, but there are so many options at this point that I don't think we've looked at that.

Jeff – From the employee's perspective, furloughs would not affect your service credit or your retirement benefits long-term. It may affect employees who are getting ready to retire in the final calculation of their salary if it is reduced.

Meg – Retirement incentives are on the table for the University. Would that be equivalent to buying service credits? Would service credit be applied here if someone takes early retirement.

Jeff – It would help if the employer pays the service credit. It would not be PERA sanctioned effort. It would impact the long-term health of the fund if Service credit was not paid from the employer.

Leah – How are PERA investments doing in 2020?

Jeff – I'll estimate that, but it's too early to give you a solid number. As of last week, public markets have caused PERA's public investment to fall by 8% to this point. It doesn't take into account all of PERA's investments. Much can change in the next 6 months and PERA approaches changes in the market with most of its focus on the long term.

Meg – We will be looking to touch back with our legislative liasions in the beginning of June to see where we are with PERA and other issues.

- **Aaron Buckley, Aaron Fodge – CSU Telework Policy Update Telework Program Development. Elham Shriazi, ePlanning Consultant**

**Aaron Fodge**

- CSU has a Telework Guideline through Human Resources for close to 20 years. It was replicated from the State of Colorado.
- We have established a steering committee to update the guidelines and we were doing this pre COVID, so this issue for us has been fortuitus.
- Our goal is to get feedback from the CPC on how you all may use teleworking and take your recommendations.
- Telework is part of the Sustainability Assessment and Ratings. AASHE. CSU is a Platinum member. Telework is a tool to help attract and retain employees and an option to reducing traveling costs.
- Existing guidelines are very general. It doesn't provide a process in how we would request that benefit. We're looking to add specifics to encourage people to Telework and to create a formal agreement between CSU and employees. Sponsored Programs has already set this up and we're looking to their example to launch the University's updated policy.
- Want to have web-based trainings.
- **Question – What were your perceptions of teleworking before you teleworked? How has teleworking during COVID matched your perceptions?**

Jim – Teleworking for me has been something that was few and far between activity. Only used when something that had to be done at my house or dealing with my kids. We've had employees ask for that option and we've granted that on an as needed basis. It was never part of a steady schedule. With COVID, we've all been working from home and I feel now that I'm working harder than I ever have. Now, your accessibility is constant and we're trying to show that we're working while on top of managing new forms of communications and keeping things going from afar. That's been my experience.

Emily – I thought my job would be impossible to do from home, but I have found that most of what I do can be done from home.

Kelly – I agree with Jim, I feel like I'm working more now than ever.

Meg – Telework was never an option for me. Now that I'm seeing I can do a lot of my job afar, I'm seeing it is more possible. I do miss going into an office and seeing people.

Leah – My department has been more than helpful but we've done this before in the past. Teleworking has been great for me.

Nancy – CSU has a great initiative, a big selling point is environmental impact. For me, Teleworking 2 days a week would save me 50 miles a week in travel, and lower my my carbon footprint. I can get more done at home than I can in the office those days, but it would be a hard sell to my supervisor.

Aaron – We will explore that hard sell to your supervisors moving forward. I specifically wanted to come to the CPC because I've heard that State Classified were not permitted to work from home and we'll look to change that where appropriate.

Elham – Part time teleworking should also be an option where you can set up a schedule to come in the office regularly.

Eric – Teleworking has been great for me, I can work from anywhere in the country on some of the issues that need to get done.,

- Aaron – CSU is looking to do this to reduce trips and reduce the stress of travel while being environmentally conscious.
- Kristin – More forms could be processed electronically where that would allow more teleworking. Our current models require actual signatures where that causes people to have to be in the office for that purpose alone. We could be much more efficient if we addressed those issues.
- Rachel – The positive impact has been the conversations that have come from working from home. We've recognized that working from home is more intense than being in the office, so for us, we've looked at calling it a day after 5-6 hours if the work for you has been nonstop for that time.
- Elham – Teleworking is moving from managing presence to managing productivity.
- **Question – What are the common reasons employees claim they can't telework at CSU?**
- Meg – For me it is office presence. Having someone there to be able to greet people that may need something in the department.
- Kristin – I think there has been this stigma with State Classified employees would not do their work from home. There has been a lack of trust between supervisors and employees. This situation has been interesting as it has shown we can do our work from home and do it effectively. The other aspect of this is in-person signatures or paperwork that needs to be completed can be daunting. Some flexibility around those signature times and necessary planning to get those signatures would be needed.
- Aaron – CSU will be expanding Quali forms to include digital signatures, so that may be some help moving forward.
- Jim – It took years for our department to accept the purchase of laptop computers as our main computers in the office. The only other way to telework would be to remote in with your home computer to your main computer. Teleworking consistently would require a laptop and for this policy to move forward, that should be part of the discussion. A barrier we had to get over was the culture and group thing that a laptop would walk out the door and be stolen. It took a lot of convincing for us to say that we needed them to be able to access information in different areas to do our jobs. You will need to encourage departments to purchase laptops to encourage teleworking at the University.
- **Question – What should be included in training for supervisors managing employees that are teleworking?**
- Meg – Computer classes and training is key. How to access the network. Also recognizing that working 8 hours at home is different than working for 8 hours in the office. Realistically, with all the interruptions and times to travel to meetings, you may only be working 6 hours at the office, but now you're working more due to the fact you must be at the computer to get your work done.
- Jim – You will have to have this supported from the top. Supervisors will not move forward with Teleworking goals unless they are told this is a priority from upper administration.
- Kristin – As for supervisors managing, you will need to provide guidelines for the supervisors to follow. What are the best practices? It is important to check in with employees on not just work, but also how they are doing. We need to remind supervisors to check in on a human level to make sure employees are doing OK. I would like to see training on that aspect of supervising a teleworker.
- Aaron – Sponsored programs has a virtual water cooler where they have a check in with everyone. That is a great idea and we'll look to add that. We'll be looking to have this

guideline by July, so we would love to have the CPC review those guidelines and get a letter of support so we can move forward.

### **CPC Announcements and Updates**

- Adrian Financial Update – We spent \$266 on employee award trophies in April. Meg’s reimbursement for our trip to Denver back in March. We have spent \$5500 of our \$11k budget.

Meg - Our budget has changed quite a bit. We do have some money left over, but I’ll get with Lynn on what we can spend for the remainder of the year. I will ask if we can use the money for resources you may need to work from home. Please see the google form and let me know if there are resources you need to work from home.

- Health Insurance enrollment by May 18<sup>th</sup>

Meg – Make sure you enroll for your health benefits. Please pass on the need to enroll by the 18<sup>th</sup>. You can call in or use a mobile app to enroll.

- CPC Committees – Meg - it is time for us to work on writing our end of year report. Please start working on your EOY summaries so that I can compile and we can review/vote on approving in June meeting. I need these summaries by June 1. Please start writing your end of year summaries. See the website for CPC.colostate.edu. Look up a report and use that as a template. Use the format as a way to complete the report.
- COVID-19 information and other questions or concerns – Meg

Meg – I have insight, not answers. A few points of the email from Joyce. I am part of a working group that is examining the impact of our reduced budget.

- I’m pushing equity over equality. Lessening impacts to our more vulnerable employees as well as lower paid employees.
- I’m strongly advocating on behalf of State Classified employees. Our employees will see a decrease in take home pay due to PERA increases.
- Planning CSU to be open for in-person operations in August.
- The Pandemic Team is working on a comprehensive plan. Looking to spread out classes to reduce class size.
- Mandatory training for everyone on hygiene.
- The state is facing a \$3B shortfall. Please see my chair report on specific information on the budget. Currently, \$46 – \$61M deficit is what CSU is planning for. Please see page 13 in the meeting packet.
- Board of Governor’s meeting in early June is where we expect to see our budget questions answered.
- May 27<sup>th</sup> is the date slated for the Safer at Home order is slated to be lifted, but still in place for Higher Education.
- Childcare has been a really big issue with respect to kids being out of school.
- Still no more than 10 people gathering at a time.
- June and July events should be cancelled at this time.
- There will be a phased in approach with people returning to campus. Everyone is trying to be mindful of employees considered high risk and/or who may live with family members who are high risk.
- Work groups will be publishing who has been involved in planning for reopening.
- There is much we don’t know, but the administration is making a great effort to bring people back safely.

- We will be sending out a Qualtrics survey to all employees and we'll be sharing that with Joyce tomorrow. Thanks to Rachel McKinney on helping putting this together. The survey is intended to get a pulse from our employees on how they are doing. Please look at the draft survey on the chat and we'll let you know when the survey is approved to be sent out.

Jim – CSU is looking to do verification of employees being symptom free before coming on to campus. Have you heard of anything about it?

Meg – I had not heard of that.

Leah – We've been told we will have the option of returning to work, but will have to wear a mask.

Meg – I've heard we'll be looking at staffing to be half of what is normally permitted.

Eric – Someone has been making masks for housing and dining. Some organization is providing those masks, one for each day so they can wash one each day.

#### **CPC Committee Reports:**

- Communications – Leah Bosch – *No Report at this time, but the communicator was sent out in early May.*
- Employee Recognition – Nancy Cowley - *No Report at this time. Employee education assistance award applications are due on June 1<sup>st</sup>.*
- Legislative – Brian Gilbert - *No Report at this time.*
- Employee Engagement & Experience – Kelly Hixson - *No Report at this time.*
- Executive – Meg Skeehan - *No Report at this time.*

Meeting adjourned – **3:03 PM - Thank you!**

#### **Dates to remember:**

- May 18 – Deadline for mandatory enrollment for SC employees for Health Care (if employees do not enroll they will not have health insurance)