



STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

SEA View

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From the President

At the February 18, 2006 SEA Board of Director's meeting I stepped into the office of President. I hope to conclude contract negotiations during the rest of my term, and I am determined to get a fair contract for our members. I want to thank Mark Klipstein for his service and wish him the best in his new role on the North-South Freeway team.

The first order of business as President was to have the 1st Vice President office filled with a current member and approved by the Board of Directors. At the board meeting, Nichole Lysne (DOT - Wisconsin Rapids) was approved by the Board of Directors as the new 1st Vice President. One of her new roles is to

assume the head grievance representative duties for SEA. I welcome her to the board, and I am confident she will be able to take over this office and quickly adapt. I would like to thank Bill Niemi, Khader Abu Al-Eis, Tom Mugan, and Larry Legro for their interest in the office. 2007-2009 officer elections will be in October 2006, I hope to see this much interest in the future.

Bargaining is going slow. We continue to not have a contract for 2003-2005 and 2005-2007 time frames. We currently do not have any dates set for future bargaining and will be exchanging acceptable dates with the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) to continue bargaining. The state has offered its final 2003-2005 economic package but states that we can continue exchanging proposals and that they just have no authority to offer any changes. The offer of -\$226,000 (yes, that's negative) is on the table. The total lift is less than half of what other units were given. The 2005-2007 economic package is more encouraging, but still gives some members a negative lift when health insurance costs are factored in. The bargaining team continues to strategize how to move forward.

I want to thank Cara Carper for all her work with SEA as our communications consultant. She helped our cause by producing newsletters, media releases, legislative correspondence, and research activities. We wish her the best in her new job. We will be interviewing candidates to replace her at the March 18 SEA Board Meeting.

If you know of a person who might be interested in interviewing, please have them contact the SEA office or myself for details. The Communication Consultant position is part time, 40 hours per month. We are looking for someone who is familiar with advanced writing skills and word processing computer skills. Knowledge of state agency activities and the legislative process is also a plus. The communication consultant attends ten monthly board meetings and reports on communication activities.

The next board meeting is on March 18, 2006 at the Best Western – East Towne Suites. Members are welcome to attend. Thank you for your patience and support for the last year, and I hope we meet a fair and equitable conclusion to bargaining soon!

Sharon L. Bremser, P.E.
SEA President



Legislative Update

By Dave Bohnsack, Second Vice President
[dbbohnsack.sea@charter.net](mailto:dabbohnsack.sea@charter.net)

SEA Day is Wednesday, April 26. It will begin with a short assembly at 9:00 a.m. on the second floor in the North Hearing Room - North Wing of the Capitol Building. Following the assembly, we will depart to meet with our legislators. You will have a better chance of meeting your legislator in person if you make arrangements in advance. However, this is not necessary. Most offices have aides available to meet with constituents. Many SEA Sections will make contacts and appointments that you can attend. Please contact your section president for more information.

A special SEA Day newsletter will be printed and mailed to members at the end of March. The newsletter will contain articles, facts, and talking points. We encourage you to leave a copy with your legislator. If you are interested in writing an article or providing information for the special newsletter, please contact me or send your article to me before March 18.

Other legislative information:

A new bill making its way through the capitol is SB 588. This bill makes it a crime for state employees to retaliate against someone requesting permits or government services. On the surface, this bill may sound like a good idea, but it could provide an avenue for upset citizens to make accusations of misconduct. Because this bill creates a criminal offense, state employees would not be eligible for agency legal services and would have to pay for their own attorney.

SEA Day is Wednesday, April 26

To suggest or write an article for the special SEA Day newsletter, please contact Dave Bohnsack before March 18.

SB 524 creates a building inspector review board to review complaints of incompetence, negligence, or unethical conduct by building inspectors. The bill authorizes the review board to revoke the certification of a building inspector that it determines has engaged in such conduct. It also authorizes the board to reverse or modify decisions made by building inspectors that the board determines are in error. The review board is made up of 2 legislators, 2 political appointees, and the Secretary of Commerce. Complaints can be made anonymously.

AB 996/SB 553 (a.k.a. the barbeque bill) prohibits anyone who holds an executive branch appointed position such as secretary, deputy, executive assistant, division administrator, or commissioner from soliciting political contributions on behalf of a state or national political candidate. A public hearing was held on Feb. 22 at the Capitol. George Mickelson testified in favor of the bill on behalf of SEA.

The criminal trial of Rep. Scott Jensen, former Assembly Speaker, began on February 21. Jensen is accused of three felony and one misdemeanor counts of misconduct by a public official for ordering legislative aides and other state employees to conduct campaign activities on state time. Representative Jensen is the only one of the five legislators accused of misconduct in 2002 who has remained in office. The trial is expected to last three weeks.



February 18, 2006 Board Meeting Summary
Meeting held at Best Western East Towne Suites, Madison
By John Bolka, Secretary

Attendance:

Executive Board: Mark Klipstein - President, Sharon Bremser – 1st Vice President, David Bohnsack – 2nd Vice President, John Bolka – Secretary, Nicholas Martin - Treasurer

Board Members:

Julie Millard, Wisconsin Rapids President

Dawn Marshall, Southeast Vice President

Bob Schaefer, DNR Vice President

Michael Wendt, Rhinelander Vice President

Sandy Anderson, Central Office President

Reiny Yahnke, La Crosse President

Mohamad Hayek, Eau Claire President

Duane Hubeler, State Agencies President

Brian Mattson, Superior President

Bill Niemi, Madison

Anthony Allard, Green Bay Trustee

Specialists:

Mel Sensenbrenner, Health and Retirement

Sandy Henke, SEA Office

Committee Leader:

George Mickelson, Compensation Committee

Guests:

Nichole Lysne, Wisconsin Rapids

Larry Legro, State Agencies

Meeting Begins:

Mark Klipstein called meeting to order at 8:38 am. Introductions were made. There were no changes made to the Agenda.

Approvals:

The January 21, 2006 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed. There was a motion by Dave Bohnsack to approve. Sandy Anderson seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

The Correspondence Report was reviewed. Mark reviewed item #8 as it related to his situation (Health insurance and back pay after accepting a non-rep position). Julie Millard asked if about items #5 and #11, specifically if any meetings were arranged. Sharon said arrangements would be discussed later in today's meeting. Mark Klipstein accepted the Correspondence Report.

Grievance Report: *By Sharon Bremser*

Note: P-xxx indicates personal grievance

A-xxx indicates an Association grievance

A-307 (filed 5/3/99) —Denied time to take PE exam – Arbitration pending with Bellman. (Date selection)

A-351 (filed 7/19/01) – DOT D4 – RLS exam reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.

A-352 (filed 6/25/01) – DOT D3 – Initial PE licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.

A-361 (filed 10/30/01) and A-362 (filed 10/31/01) – DOT D1 and D2 – Assignment of scheduled overtime. Arbitration pending (Date selection).

A-369 (filed 1/2/02) – DNR Water – Add-on as part of year-end leave cash out option. Arbitration pending.

A-373 (filed 5/21/02) – DOT D3 – Rescind disciplinary action. Arbitrator granted grievance (win).

A-378 (filed 8/14/02) – DOT 1 - Not being paid appropriate mileage rate. Filed at Step 4.

A-389 (filed 5/30/03) – DOT D3 – PE Licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.

A-394 (filed 8/1/03) – DOT D1 – Discipline Reassignment. Filed at Step 4.

A-395 (filed 5/3/03) – DNR NER – PE Exam Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.

A-402 (filed 3/25/04) – DOT-DTID – Discipline without just cause. Filed at Step 4.

A-405 (filed 4/5/04) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.

A-409 (filed 7/14/04) – DOCOM D5 – Unhealthy and Un-Safe Workplace. Settled with Management.

A-410 (filed 6/29/04) – DNR Water – Granting of Restoration Rights. Filed at Step 4.

A-412 (filed 7/7/04) – DOT D2 – Stalking Incident. Filed at Step 4.

P-414 (filed 11/9/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.

**Board Meeting Summary (continued)**

- P-415 (filed 11/17/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
A-419 (filed 12/23/04) – DNR Water – Add-on is part of year end cash out option. Filed at Step 4. Consolidate with A-369.
A-420 (filed 1/27/05) – DOT – Turndown Mileage Rate. Filed at Step 4.
P-421 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Moved to Step 4.
P-422 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
P-424 (filed 3/18/05) – DOT D2– Demotion without cause. Moved to Step 4.
P-425 (filed 4/05) – DOT D2– Mental Torture/Investigation Meeting. Filed at Step 4. (Meeting 5/4/05).
P-426 (filed 5-16-05) – DOT D2 – Suspension w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 4.
P-427 (filed 7-27-05) – DOT D2 – Termination w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 3.
A-428 (filed 6-23-05) – DOT D5 – Travel Policy/Cards/Hotels. Filed at Step 4.
A-429 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Filed at Step 2. Consolidated with A-307.
A-430 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam Reimbursement. Filed at Step 2. Consolidated with A-307.
A-431 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Filed at Step 2. Consolidated with A-307.
A-432 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Filed at Step 2. Consolidated with A-307.
A-434 (filed 6-10-05) – UW Stout – Termination w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 3.
A-435 (filed 11-30-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Filed at Step 3 – Consolidated with A-307.
A-436 (filed 11-18-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Filed at Step 1.
A-437 (filed 11-15-05) – Letter of Reprimand. Filed at Step 3.
A-438 (filed 1-5-06) – Poor Review. Filed at Step 2.
A-439 (filed 11-29-05) – Extra Mileage. Filed at Step 3.
A-440 (filed 11-09-05) – Lunch Money. Denied at Step 3.
A-441 (filed 1-19-06) – Reinstatement. Filed at Step 1.

The following grievances were discussed at the Board Meeting:

A-440: Sharon motioned to move to step 4, Dave Bohnsack seconded. Bill Niemi led a discussion of the circumstances involved. Motion carried without opposition.

A-439: Sharon motioned to move to Step 4, Sandy Anderson seconded. Julie Millard led a discussion of the circumstances involved and read a letter from the grievant discussing this issue. Julie also reviewed the history regarding the contract language involved and read applicable bargaining notes (located by Sandy Henke) from 1975 that dealt with the issue. Motion carried without opposition.

A-438: There was no information on the Step 2 hearing.

A-441: A Step 1 hearing was held and work is being done on a potential settlement.

There was no action on the PE Grievances but more similar grievances continue to come in.

There were several new or potential grievances discussed and there was extensive discussion regarding OSER's use of HAM. Mark discussed correspondence received indicating management, as a result of the survey, is recommending CADD Specialist Senior and below be classified as FLSA Non Exempt.

Grievance Training is scheduled for February 25th in Madison at the Best Western East Towne Suites, 10 AM – 3 PM. Approximately 30 members are expected to attend.

Legislative Report: *By David Bohnsack*

Sharon Bremser and George Mickelson will be meeting on February 28, 9:00 AM, with Karen Timberlake (OSER), Bob Kraemer (DOF), and Gina Reese (DOA Deputy Secretary) to discuss ACT 89 (Cost/Benefit Analysis). Sharon tried to set a similar meeting with DOT Secretary Busalacchi but he delegated the meeting to Randy Knoche. A meeting has not yet been arranged with Randy.

SEA Day will be held on April 26. Dave indicated we need to find a legislative sponsor for a meeting room in order to waive the \$300 room charge. Wisconsin Rapids Section is meeting with a Senator Julie Lassa next week and will attempt to convince her to sponsor us. Bob Schafer will also try to get a sponsor. A Special SEA Day Newsletter will be put together for this event. Anyone wishing to contribute an article should send a printed or email a copy to Dave Bohnsack before 3/18.

Dave discussed the following legislation:

AB 341 (Health Insurance Savings Accounts) passed through committee and will soon go to the full Assembly.

AB 588 (Retaliation Bill) was introduced. This bill will impact every State or Local government employee. (criminal acts punishable with fines or imprisonment).

AB 996, SB 553 Modeled after the Federal Hatch Act, dealing with solicitation of political contributions (in response to Barbeque-Gate). There will be a hearing on 2/22 @ 10:30 AM and SEA should have an attendee. George Mickelson will try to attend.



Board Meeting Summary (continued)

Health and Retirement Report: *By Mel Sensenbrenner*

Mel reviewed recent news articles including the letter from CASH criticizing DOT Deputy Secretary Ruben Anthony for the Barbeque. Mel also discussed a DRS workload status sheet. He noted we are moving into a period where there will be a lot of retirements and the number of annuitants is expected to double in the next 10 years. The third draft of WRS Talking Points was distributed to the Board. The WRS is a complex system and this is an attempt to educate and dispel myths that exist about the retirement system. SWIB performance at the end of January: Fixed +3.2%, Variable +4.0%. Total funds are \$76 Billion; Total funds invested are \$82.5 Billion.

Stay involved a make sure to read Mel's report in the SEA View for more detailed info on this and other Health and Retirement Issues!

Transition of the Presidency:

Mark met with Sharon Bremser before the meeting to transfer records, keys, and surrender calling and credit cards. Mark also handed out a list of suggested tasks for 2006 and reviewed each task listed. Sharon presented Mark with a plaque in appreciation of his work for SEA. Mark then left the meeting and Sharon presided over the Board Meeting.

Filling Vacancy of 1st Vice President:

Five individuals had come forward expressing interest in filling the vacancy created when Sharon assumed the role of SEA President. The candidates are Khader Abu Al-Eis, Bill Niemi, Tom Mugan, Nichole Lysne, and Larry Legro. Bob Schaefer motioned to conduct two separate ballots, the first to narrow the field to two candidates and the second to select the new 1st VP. Duane Hubeler seconded. The motion carried with one abstention. Each candidate present was allowed to present their qualifications to the Board. The two candidates not present (Khader and Tom) had prepared a short letter which was read to the Board by John Bolka and Bob Schaefer. Nichole Lysne was elected to the position of 1st Vice President. Sharon thanked all the candidates for their interest.

Communication Specialist:

Sharon informed the Board that placing an ad in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel would cost about \$300, which was more than the amount previously approved by the Board so she has not pursued it any further.

Two individuals with significant qualifications have expressed interest and submitted resumes to the Board. After discussion it was decided to ask these individuals to appear in front of the Board in March. Also Dale Mitchell, State Agencies, will pursue placing an ad at the UW School of Journalism and other individuals may be asked to appear at the March Board Meeting. Cara has been helping with the Newsletter while we are in transition. John Bolka volunteered to put together the April Newsletter if a replacement is not selected by then. Sharon said she would like to invite Cara to the October Annual Meeting to be recognized and the Board was in agreement of this.

Compensation Committee: *By George Mickelson*

The Employment Cost Index for total compensation (including benefits) for all occupations increased by 3.0 percent over the 12 months from December 2004 to December 2005. It increased for white-collar occupations, by 3.2 percent and for professional specialty technical occupations (including engineers) by 3.0 percent. The increase in wages and salaries (excluding benefits) for all occupations increased by 2.5 percent, for white-collar occupations by 2.5 percent and for professional specialty technical occupations by 2.2 percent for the same period. George said that there were a lot of news media stories when this data came out at the end of January that said that pay increases were starting to accelerate upwards. But those news stories were primarily based on the increase from the 3rd quarter to the 4th quarter. And George felt that the 3rd quarter data was a bit off due to Katrina, so George does not think that wages are starting to accelerate upwards as much as some of the news media.

The Madison Teaching Assistants bargaining unit ratified their contract in December (approximately two months ago), but JO CER has not held a hearing on it yet. So, it appears that even if a bargaining unit negotiates and ratifies a contract, the legislature might block it by inaction.

As of December, 57 percent of the prescriptions filled by Navitus for state employees were level one, 37 percent were level two and 6 percent were level three. There have been scattered reports of SEA employees having their prescriptions pushed up to higher levels in January, but we do not have January data yet from OSER on Navitus.

George also briefed the board on a meeting he attended with representatives of some other bargaining units, and George had a few handouts for the board.



Board Meeting Summary (continued)

2003-2005 Bargaining:

The Bargaining Team met with OSER on January 26th. OSER cancelled a scheduled date for February 1st because they were not ready to present a counterproposal to SEA's last economic proposal. The SEA Bargaining Team crafted and sent a letter to Doyle expressing our concerns on bargaining. No response has been received from the governor. The next scheduled bargaining day was February 27th.

Section Reports:

Madison — The Annual Section Meeting was held February 9th at the Prime Quarter. PDS is reorganizing again. The Madison Annex will be having an annual meeting with La Crosse in May in the Dells.

Southeast — The SE Region Annual meeting will be held on 3/22. Busalacchi, Chesnik and Rhinesmith are expected to attend. Buttons stating "We Want a Fair Contract" were made and distributed to members. This seemed to generate some excitement among the membership. MTP (Consultant Group) has 30 people working in the State Office Building alongside members. Contract reveals they are classified between Engineers 0 – 5, and earning between \$18.80/hr - \$62.66/hr. Elections will be held for local section officers in March. Currently there is one candidate per office, and basically a shuffling of the existing officers. Gary Metzger is the Chair for the SE Section as we host this year's Annual Meeting. If you have any questions or ideas call Gary and let him know.

Green Bay — The region held a voluntary current issues meeting with the regional director and the operations manager. This was a prelude to the regional annual meeting which is to be held on March 9. It will be a two part meeting with the AM break out sessions held in the office and the PM speakers session held at Howard Johnson's. Chesnik and Rhinesmith will be at one of the morning breakout sessions, and the Secretary will speak in the afternoon.

Wisconsin Rapids — Tim Hanley has confirmed arrangements with Senator Julie Lassa and OSER representative Karen Timberlake for Tuesday, February 28th, 3:00 – 3:30 PM. SEA members are welcome to join Tim at this meeting to discuss the bargaining process. The Section plans to complete a concerns letter for members to sign to present at the meeting.

The Wisconsin Rapids office is concerned about temporary assignments and the lack of open communication about assignments. A local Section Meeting is scheduled for 2/21 to collect member's signatures on Tim's letter, alert members to HAM issues, and begin preparations for SEA Day plans for 4/26.

WISDOT North Central Region is holding two separate Annual Meetings, one in Wisconsin Rapids, and one in Rhinelander. Both meetings are mandatory for staff. This is the first year it is mandatory.

La Crosse – DOT Annual Meeting to be held. Attendance is mandatory unless excuse is approved by a supervisor.

Eau Claire — No Report.

Rhineland – No Report.

Superior — A Section meeting was held on 2/11. Members are concerned about the contract situation and don't want a negative contract.

Central Office — The Section Annual Meeting was held and Sandy Anderson was elected President. John (Artie) Noll was elected Trustee to replace Sandy. The DOT Annual Meeting will be held on 4/12. Staff organizing the event has asked that neither consultants nor Chesnik and Rhinesmith attend.

DNR — Section Annual Meeting will be held on 4/25 and include election of President, Secretary, and Trustees. Members waiting on a few grievances. May be only Agency in state that was granted new positions.

State Agencies — Duane met with a Construction Rep at UW that was reclassified to Journey level in 1992 and has not yet made it to Senior. Position Description indicated 30% of time spent performing supervisory duties. Member indicted he hadn't performed those duties since 1992.

SEA Office Website:

Check out the website at www.wisea.org or contact SEA at wisea@wisea.org



Board Meeting Summary (continued)

Financial & Membership Reports:

Nick passed out the October & November Membership Reports for review. He noted that the state has changed the method and nomenclature used to identify members regions. This has caused problems with record keeping and may not be completely straightened out for two months.

Nick motioned to accept the October Membership Report. Mohamad Hayek seconded. After some discussion the motion carried without opposition.

Nick motioned to accept the November Membership Report. Sandy Anderson seconded. Julie Millard had a question about a member that was dropped but not shown on the report. After some discussion the motion carried with one abstention.

Nick passed out the November, December, and January Treasurer' Reports for review.

Nick motioned to accept the November Treasurer's Report. Dave Bohnsack seconded. The motion carried without opposition.

Nick motioned to accept the December Treasurer's Report. Dave Bohnsack seconded. The motion carried without opposition.

Nick motioned to accept the January Treasurer's Report. Dave Bohnsack seconded. There was some discussion about timing of dues returns. Nick noted there may be some adjustments coming due to the state's change in nomenclature. The motion carried without opposition.

Nick passed out the Proposed 2006 Budget for review. There was discussion concerning the budgeted amounts for Newsletter, P/R Legislative, Election, Computer, and Pension Suit Items. Nick will review and make changes where appropriate.

John Bolka motioned to delay approval of the Proposed 2006 budget until the March Board Meeting. Anthony Allard seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Nick submitted the Board Meeting Vouchers for approval:

05-178 => 05-196	\$1627.00
M-57 => M-68	<u>\$1680.00</u>
	\$3307.00

Nick motioned to pay the Board Meeting Vouchers. Mohamad Hayek seconded. The motion carried without opposition.

John Bolka motioned to pay a \$50 stipend for the Section that brings the most members (signed in) to SEA Day. Seconded by Sharon Bremser. Motion carried without opposition.

Annual Meeting:

The 2006 SEA Annual will be hosted by the Southeast Section. The meeting will be October 20 – 21, at the Olympia Resort in Oconomowoc. Check out the Olympia Resort at www.olympiaresort.com.

New Business:

Section Officer Information on the SEA Website has not been kept current. Sharon asked that each Section update the information. The info can be sent to Webmaster Bob Spoerl.

There was a suggestion from a member (email) brought forward dealing with obtaining salary information and history of DOT management. After some discussion Mohamad Hayek motioned that SEA spend up to \$500 for an open records request for salary information, over the past 5 years, on agency management. Sandy Anderson seconded. The motion carried without opposition.

A follow up letter was sent to gubernatorial candidates Doyle, Green and Walker regarding their position on several issues important to SEA. There still has been no response from any of the candidates.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Upcoming Board Meeting dates are: March 18; April 22; May 20; June 24; August 19; September 23.

Puzzling Puzzler

A confused bank teller transposed the dollars and cents when he cashed a check for Mr. Smith, giving him dollars instead of cents and cents instead of dollars. After buying a newspaper for 50 cents, Mr. Smith noticed that he had left exactly three times as much as the original check. What was the amount of the check? (Note: 1 dollar = 100 cents.)

Submit your answer to carperfarm@mhtc.net. The answer and name of the person who came up with the correct answer first will be published in next month's SEA View.

**Important Retirement and Health Insurance Information**

Melvin B. Sensenbrenner, SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Representative

SWIB Meeting – February 8, 2006

	Nov. 30, 2005	Dec. 31, 2005 YTD Final Figures	Jan. 31, 2006 Month YTD
Fixed Core:	+6.6%	+8.6% (+8.0 B.M.)	+3.2% (2.8% B.M.)
Variable:	+7.2%	+8.3% (+8.0 B.M.)	+4.0% (4.0% B.M.)
Core:	66.719B	67.581B	69.679B
Variable:	6.408B	6.400B	6.520B
TOTAL:	73.127B	73.981B	76.199B

Year-end real estate equity at 28.2%. Private equity invested 44.2%.

Total funds invested by SWIB January 31, 2006: 82.5B. The increased total funds are all local taxes paid in January and December, which are deposited and invested by SWIB.

The Investment Board was provided an educational presentation by UBS Global Asset Management on the topic of “Defining Portable Alpha”.

The formula is a comparison of SWIB’s portfolio return and risk to the market’s return and risk. Alpha is what we see above when SWIB staff beat the market benchmarks.

I also received the SWIB Fiscal Year Annual Report for 2005 in one book and the 2005 Fiscal Year Schedule of Investments listing company names and investment amounts. These two reports can be reviewed on the SWIB website: www.swib.state.wi.us.

The next SWIB meeting is set for March 8, 2006.

ETF Annuitant Round Table – February 14, 2006

The meeting started with Dave Stella’s report of the status of the federal pension benefit issues. The following list is everything on the platter of Congress:

- . National Employee Savings and Trust Equity Guarantee Act of 2005 (NESTG) (S219)
- . Pension Security and Transparency Act of 2005 (PSTA) (S1783)
- . Pension Protection Act of 2005 (HR 2830)
- . Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005 (Signed into Law as P.L. 109-73)
- . Cardin Pension Bill (HR 1961)
- . Portman Pension Bill (HR 1960)
- . Employer Retirement Savings Accounts (ERSAs) (HR 1161)
- . Lifetime Savings Accounts (LSAs) (HR 1163)
- . Public Safety Workers (HR448)
- . Military Reservists and National Guard Member (HR 621)
- . HR 2830 Pension Protection Act passed in the House on December 15, 2005.
- . Conference Committee of Senate and House to work out differences between pension security and Transparency Act of 2005 (S1783 and HR 2830).
- . HR 2830 Makes permanent the IRA and pension provisions enacted in EGTRRA of 2001, which included increased limits for IRAs and qualified pension plans; created additional catch-up contributions for persons over 50 years.
- . HR 2830 Creates incentives for small employers to offer pension plans.
- . Also waives 10% early distribution penalty for public safety employees in Government plans with a drop feature.



Important Retirement and Health Insurance Information (continued)

Wisconsin Coalition of Annuitants (WCOA) Meeting – February 15, 2006

The guest speaker was Jane Hamblin, the new Chief Legal Counsel for the Investment Board, who came from the AG staff. She reviewed questions on Review and Release of Public Records and updated us on the lawsuits that SWIB has pending.

We also discussed Ms. Hamblin's experience on the Joint Survey Committee on Retirement System and the Retirement Research Committee of the Legislature. She remembered our challenge of Act 11; however, we had to remind her of the last meeting of the Retirement Research Committee of the Legislature, which was conducted on September 26, 1996. That date is permanently recorded in my mind, and we may never have another Legislature that will conduct intelligent research on retirement systems.

We also reminded Ms. Hamblin that the actuaries' analysis of Act 11, before it was passed and signed by the Governor, was restricted by Senator Chvala and Speaker Jensen to a two year period instead of a 30-year period, as should have been done.

Sandy Drew of SWIB provided updated investment information as I have reported in the SWIB article in this SEA View issue.

Bill Ford of the Legislative Council could not attend but provided copies of his updated Legislative Report on Retirement. The following bills were added to his report for remedial legislation proposed by ETF: SB 487, SB 488, SB 489, SB 490 and SB 491.

There have been no JSCORS meetings scheduled for hearings on retirement bills.

All SEA Board members have a copy of the Third Draft of "Talking Points on WRS," which were provided by Jim Skiles at this WCOA meeting.

The current officers of WCOA were re-elected for another term. The next WCOA meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2006.

ETF Group Insurance Board Meeting – February 21, 2006

The meeting was started with approval of the November '05 meeting minutes and the election of officers. The current officers were re-elected with a voice vote.

The next topic was the report by Broadspire, who was hired to improve the handling of ICI (Income Continuation Insurance) and LTDI (Long Term Disability Insurance) claims.

They have improved over 2004 by reducing the third quarter contacts by ETF from 40 to only 6 in 2005. The disability "complaints" have been removed from the GIB quarterly report.

The ombudsman issues have been reduced in number and time to resolve. They average about five calls per month and are resolved within one week rather than months as in the past.

Bill Kox presented the proposed schedule for recommended changes to the Uniform Health Insurance Guidelines for 2007. The three major changes are as follows:

- . They propose rebidding the standard plan contract.
- . Propose elimination of the 105% rule.
- . Propose adding coverage for gambling addiction.

The above changes will be reviewed by the GIB at the next meeting on April 18, 2006.



Important Retirement and Health Insurance Information (continued)

ETF's new Legislative Director, Bob Conlin, reviewed the update of legislative bills for the Board. The following two bills are the only ones that possibly could be passed:

AB 907: Has passed committees and could be scheduled for floor action. This bill requires a contract with a data organization for collection, analysis and dissemination of health care claims.

SB 131/AB 341: Has been referred to Joint Committee on Finance. These bills offer health savings accounts under the state employee health care coverage program.

Bob Conlin also noted that there are only six more days of floor sessions left in this legislative session.

Sonya Sidky, Division of Insurance Services, presented the 2006 Dual-Choice enrollment results for the GIB on the following items:

- . Changes in health plans for 2006.
- . Family type changes and health insurance cancellations.
- . HMO contracts gained and lost.
- . Contract shifts between health plans.
- . Contract shifts by region of state.

Acronyms Used in Mel Sensenbrenner's Articles	
WRS	Wisconsin Retirement System (State & local public employee system except for City of Milwaukee & Milwaukee County)
MRA	Market Recognition Account
ETF	Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds
GIB	Group Insurance Board
SWIB	State of Wisconsin Investment Board
WCOA	Wisconsin Coalition of Annuitants (WRS retirement organization)
WREA	Wisconsin Retired Educators Association
WRC	Wisconsin Retirement Consortium
UMPERSA	Uniform Management of Public Employee Retirement System Act
ORP	UW Optional Retirement Plan (Privatization of WRS)
GPR	General Purpose Revenue
DOA	Department of Administration
WEAC	Wisconsin Education Association Council
WHIO	Wisconsin Health Initiative Organization

The next Group Insurance Board meeting is set for April 18, 2006.

Last Month's Puzzling Puzzler

Suppose you want to send in the mail a valuable object to a friend. You have a box which is big enough to hold the object. The box has a locking ring which is large enough to have a lock attached and you have several locks with keys. However, your friend does not have the key to any lock that you have. You cannot send the key in an unlocked box since it may be stolen or copied. How do you send the valuable object, locked, to your friend - so it may be opened by your friend?

Answer: Send the box with a lock attached and locked. Your friend attaches his or her own lock and sends the box back to you. You remove your lock and send it back to your friend. Your friend may then remove the lock she or he put on and open the box.

No one got the answer above, but please congratulate the following members who came up with workable solutions:

Eric Donaldson (with help from his daughter) and Thomas Peronto suggested using a combination lock and then calling (or email) the friend to give them the combination over the phone.

Terry A. Treutel suggested sending the key first and then send the locked box after the key is received.

Moving?

Since we no longer send many copies of SEA View through the mail, it is difficult to track if members have moved. If you have a new address, please contact the SEA office so we can continue to send your ratification, election, and other mailings.

Thank your for your assistance!