

STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION



SEA View

4510 Regent St.
Madison, WI 53705

VOLUME XXXVII ISSUE 8
August-September 2007

(608) 233-4696
FAX (608) 233-6766
wisea@wisea.org

► **Register by Sept. 21 for SEA's annual meeting, Oct. 12-13 at the La Crosse Center Ballroom with lodging at the downtown Holiday Inn. For details, turn to page 14** ◀

SEA VIEW SCHEMATIC

From the President	1
<i>Many government workers have been spending time at the Capitol to demonstrate their views on the budget discussions. Tom Muga says he's joining them, and urges members to do likewise. Until the budget gets resolved, SEA is not likely to make much progress in contract negotiations.</i>	
Legislative Update	2
<i>Here's an update on the state budget, still being hashed out in conference committee between the two houses controlled by different parties. Despite progress, it's still possible that bad Assembly measures would hurt SEA members and other public workers, local and state, union and non-union.</i>	
Retirement FAQs: Act 11	5
Register for SEA annual meeting	6
WCOA meeting	6
SWIB meeting	7
Annuitant Roundtable	7
SEA Board Report	8
? Puzzling Puzzler: PICTURE THIS!	12
ACTION ALERT: State budget	13

From the President

Bargaining in budget morass

As I reported last month, bargaining won't really progress very far until the state biennial budget is finalized. Currently, the bipartisan Joint Finance Committee is trying to agree on budget provisions that it can send to Governor Doyle. The Democratic-controlled Senate and the Republican-controlled Assembly are far apart on their points of view in many areas of the budget. So, it appears that we may be waiting awhile.



Many government workers have been spending time at the Capitol to demonstrate their views on the budget discussions. In particular, the Assembly budget is very unfavorable to workers in all levels of government and education. Even if much of this is political posturing, the concepts are damaging to the morale and livelihoods of those of us who earn a living working in the public sector.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) continues to organize its members to participate in a Capitol "vigil" to show their concern by their presence and to keep watch on the process. They have invited other workers to participate, specifically asking that other labor organizations contact members.

I intend to spend some time at the Capitol to show my displeasure with what I consider to be punitive tactics, and also to attend budget discussion meetings. I invite others to do the same. Whether you have attended SEA's past legislative days, this would be a good way to send a message to political leaders that we'll not sit idly by while they use us as political pawns. If you can't [Page 2]



spend time at the Capitol due to distance or other conflicts, consider writing or calling your legislator or writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper drawing attention to this dysfunctional political process.

Educating the Public Some of you may have seen a recent opinion piece under my name in the August 11 issue of the Capital Times (it also appears on numerous web sites; just run a search on my name and “bridges”). SEA was sending the message that the disturbing trend in which government outsources engineering functions of public works projects is asking for trouble. I believe it's critically important that we get out the message on many of our issues to voting citizens. That is how we will raise our voices with political leaders. When I speak to my legislator with my own voice, he or she can dismiss me as a single vote. But, if I can influence others toward my view, that same legislator will be more likely to support my positions.

I strongly believe in the need to elevate our image in the public arena. Certain political leaders seem to feel that it behooves them to bash public employees in the media and to push a political agenda that is detrimental to us. I urge you to do what you can, even if it means just talking to your neighbors and family members. And don't forget the value of setting a good example as a dedicated worker.

Annual Meeting The La Crosse Section is planning our annual meeting, to be held October 12 and 13 at the La Crosse Center Ballroom with rooms at the adjoining Holiday Inn in downtown La Crosse. There's lots for us to be talking about and planning for. I hope many of you will attend. See article in this newsletter and more information on our web site. Register by Sept. 21.

Respectfully,

Tom Mugan

Legislative Update

By Gretchen Wheat
Second Vice President

State budget update: Still time to act

Although a number of items in the 2007-'09 state budget have been agreed upon by the Senate and Assembly (and are therefore likely to be approved), many items are still under debate and so there is still time to influence your legislators. Below is a list of items that are of particular concern to SEA. As of this newsletter's deadline, these were still in debate, although some of them may have since been resolved.

Politics: The Republican-led Assembly filled its version of the budget with lots of policy issues. Most of the policies are unlikely to be adopted, but they serve as bargaining chips now, and later as fodder for the upcoming elections. As final budget negotiations proceed, it's impossible to predict the outcome. Do your part to influence what happens. See Page 13 of this newsletter for ways to do that.

Budget Comparisons: The Democratic-led Senate passed a budget version containing about \$10 billion more in spending than the Assembly authorized. The Senate proposes a new statewide universal health care program – one not endorsed by the Assembly. The Assembly also proposes much lower funding for local government aid and public education, including the University of Wisconsin System. Other differences lie in the impact to the state debt. All versions of the budget include deficit spending, meaning future state debt will be increased. On August 12, the Wisconsin State Journal compared budget versions in terms of deficit spending and reserve funds. Just two years ago, the newspaper reported, the state shortfall was \$1.5 billion. Thank goodness efforts are being made to reverse that trend. While neither of the budget versions are truly balanced, here is what the Assembly budget would do:

- Provide the greatest deficit, \$877 million. This is \$160 million more in uncovered deficit spending than proposed by the Senate and a \$250 million greater shortfall than proposed by the governor.



- Reduce the state's reserve fund to \$9 million (0.03% of the budget) and entirely eliminate the legal requirement for the state to have any reserve funding. The Senate and governor's budgets provide \$130 million in reserves, intended to even out future dips in revenue and prevent last-minute fiscal crises.

Bridges / infrastructure: The recent collapse of the 35W bridge in Minnesota underscores the need to address infrastructure resources. Pretty much everybody agrees on this. The debate lies in which transportation projects will be funded and how; and, who has oversight and who will do the actual work. An opinion piece on behalf of SEA appeared in the August 11-12 Madison Capital Times, highlighting the low public staffing being provided to Wisconsin bridges. See the SEA website for a link to the article.

A very contrasting opinion piece appeared in the Sunday, August 12, Wisconsin State Journal implying that bridge safety suffers because "the public sector has no liability" (meaning, perhaps, that governments are legally shielded from lawsuits), and also because government has "no incentive to do maintenance since there is no profit to be made." The opinion offers infrastructure outsourcing as the solution, because – the author asserts -- the private sector has "profit incentive to maintain valuable assets."

I presume the author would approve selling public infrastructure to private operators, at a profit (can you say E-N-R-O-N?). The author didn't say money would be saved, and I'm sure it would not. However, I'm also sure that, for the right price, you can find service from the private sector. Yet, if the objective is to minimize costs while ensuring public safety, you must ensure that the people making decisions are doing so without impact to their personal advantage. That is why the bulk of public services are best directed and delivered by public employees.



Meanwhile, views on bridge safety from the "people on the street" were reported August 8 in the Wausau Daily Herald. Understandably, people said they didn't want to pay higher taxes to improve the inspection and maintenance system. More telling was the opinion that lack of inspection is the problem, versus resources for maintenance.

Local to the 35W bridge, the August 8, Minneapolis Star Tribune reported a different picture: More than a decade of annual bridge inspection reports cited "urgent maintenance" needs. Inspection reports cited severe and extensive corrosion of beams and trusses, widespread cracking in spans, bolt replacement needs (rusty, broken and missing bolts), and a bridge pier tilted beyond tolerable limits. But, there was apparently no political will to allocate resources for maintenance – until now. In response to the bridge collapse, the Minnesota governor indicated willingness to look at an increase in the gasoline tax to pay for infrastructure repairs, which he had formerly opposed.

Action alert on page 13. For complete details on state budget issues and what you can do about it – via your legislator and otherwise visit

<http://wisea.org/ActionAlert.htm>

Transportation funding and outsourcing: Most SEA members are keenly aware the Wisconsin transportation fund has been drawn drastically low, while at the same time outsourcing has increased at a higher cost (the DOT study estimated costs averaging 18% higher). That is not to say there are never tasks appropriate for outsourcing. From time to time, outsourcing may be deemed a necessary and efficient means to support certain public services. However, the State of Wisconsin continues to spend a lot of extra money outsourcing baseline work. Under Act 89, outsourcing is required to be evaluated and justified. SEA receives copies of "Contracting for Service" notices. Here some of the explanations I read in recent notices:

- "Open positions to recruit employees for this service are not available."
- "No state worker will be laid off as a result of this procurement."



- “... necessary due to high workload.”
- “... the service can be performed more economically by the contractor.”
- Using state staff was investigated, but “agencies felt they had neither the time nor staff to devote” to the project.
- “(T)he implementation requirements are not amenable to using in-house resources.” (This notice was related to money being spent under the Clear Roads initiative for snow blade testing. WDOT lacks in-house expertise to develop testing for snow blades?)

Budget items still under debate: The Assembly version of the budget would cut real wages and benefits by reducing the state’s contributions to the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) and requiring state employees to pay a greater percent of health insurance program costs:


- Certain employees would be required to make contributions to the WRS. The proposal starts with non-represented state employees and municipal employees, requiring 5% and 3% contributions, respectively. At this time, SEA members would not be affected, but we could be next. Hopefully, this will not pass. A July 24 memo to Rep. Suzanne Jeskewitz (R-Menomonee Falls) from deputy ETF secretary Dave Stella says that “the bill appears to create a number of conflicts with current law and contains its own ambiguities.” The memo also notes that proposals possibly having impacts on the state retirement system and employee benefits should be reviewed by the bipartisan Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems. The Assembly version of the budget bypasses this review.
- With the exception of prison guards, State Patrol officers and Capitol police, state employees would under the Assembly version be newly required to pay 10% of their health insurance premiums. It is estimated this would cost the average employee about \$600 per year. This item also could adversely affect efforts to control health care costs under the state’s relatively new tier structure, since a Tier 2 or 3 plan would be available at only an incrementally greater cost to the employee over Tier 1. This would result in greater future health care costs for both the public and private sector in Wisconsin.

Last month we reported on the Assembly's other questionable budget measures. Many of these are also still being resolved in the Assembly-Senate conference committee before going to final votes and then to the governor. There is still time to register your views on these measures, as some of you already have.

One of them would constitute nearly a \$100 million raid of the Compensation Reserve Fund. This is the fund used to pay all increases in employee wages and health insurance. Having reserve funds in place ensures the state’s ability to provide critical services and is sound fiscal policy.

Another would convert the state payroll from biweekly to monthly. Considering the level of automation in place for payroll, one has to wonder what small savings could be realized with monthly payroll.

And how about reduced sick leave? The Republicans seek to limit new employees (except protected service) to only six days of earned sick leave per year. Current law provides 16.25 days of sick leave per year for full time employees (10.56 days of sick leave for legislators). State employees in SEA-represented positions currently pay about 6% of their health insurance costs, and retirees are allowed to convert unused sick leave for health insurance payments. The proposed drastic reduction in sick leave earnings would greatly impact future employees ability to secure health insurance after retirement.

And don't forget the Republican Assembly budget proposal that would convert funds for 25 DOT segregated fund positions to the consultant payment fund. 



RETIREMENT FAQs

by MEL SENSENBRENNER

This column answers frequent questions that members have about their retirement. Submit your question to the SEA office or to view_sea@yahoo.com and we'll get them to Mel for his expert commentary.

Q: What was Act 11, and how did it affect my retirement income?

A: In short, it took money out of your pocket.


Act 11 of the Wisconsin statutes was passed in 1999. Billed as a change that would provide pension improvements for state employees, it provided for the distribution of \$13 billion in the Transaction Amortization Account (TAA) as follows: \$4 billion to all employers (state and other governments) of the Wisconsin Retirement System and \$9 billion to all 475,000 participants in the year 2000 over a five-year period.

Prior to Act 11, Wisconsin statutes required that the TAA be maintained to smooth the impact of market price volatility on the benefit plans invested in the Fixed Retirement Investment Trust (FRIT). All realized and unrealized gains and losses in fair value of investments in the FRIT were recorded in the TAA as they were incurred. Twenty percent of the TAA balance was transferred to and recognized as current investment income in the various program reserves of the FRIT at the end of each year. Act 11 froze the balance in the TAA as of Dec. 31, 1999, before the money was redistributed.

Act 11 passed by large majorities in both houses and was signed into law by Governor Thompson without a complete actuarial study of the effect on the WRS over a 20- to 30-year period. Participants – that's you and me and other public employees in Wisconsin -- lost the \$4 billion that was paid out to employers. Participants also lost the 8% interest the State of Wisconsin and other public employers were paying on their unfunded liability to the WRS at the time. The law was contested in a lawsuit, but eventually upheld by the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

In a news article several years after Act 11 went into effect, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel wrote: "[Gov.] Thompson and the Legislature passed the plan one year before [Milwaukee County's] controversial pension increase, and it resembles the county increase in many ways. It was passed quickly with little debate and without a full actuarial study; it was wrongly described as having no impact on taxpayers; it sweetens a plan that was already very generous; its sweetest benefits go to top officials with the most seniority and the highest salaries, including Thompson."

Because of Act 11, retirees in general did see their monthly pension payments increase somewhat, but at the cost of seeing the value of the fund decline even more. Meaning that later on, there'll be less for everyone.

Beyond that, there was no justification for the state to, in effect, raid the pension fund of some \$4 billion that it then spent on other purposes. The profits of the system belong to the participants, not the employers, because participants provide as much as 85% of the system funding that produces our retirement annuities. 



The La Crosse Section will host the 37th SEA Annual Meeting Oct. 12-13. The meeting will be held at the downtown La Crosse Center Ballroom. All members and their families are invited to enjoy a great weekend along the Mississippi River. This will be a wonderful opportunity for members to meet the SEA Board of Directors and voice your opinions to the board as well as meeting other members from across the state.

Sign up by 9/21 for 37th Annual SEA Meeting

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Holiday Inn (connected to the La Crosse Center via skywalk) under the reservation code "SEA" or "State Engineering Association". The rate for the rooms is \$94 per night. The hotel's address is 200 Pearl Street, La Crosse, WI 54601.

Please call (608) 784-4444 ext. 615 or 1-888-465-4329 to reserve your room by Sept. 21. Please reserve your room as soon as possible as downtown lodging is very limited.

Also check out the Annual Meeting page on the SEA web site for a schedule of events. If you have any questions, please call Ryan McKane (608) 785-9956 or Jeremy Tomesh (608) 785-9462. Thank you and we hope to see you at the 37th SEA Annual Meeting in La Crosse!

Retirement and Health Insurance Report

by Melvin B. Sensenbrenner, SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Representative

WISCONSIN COALITION OF ANNUITANTS (WCOA) MEETING – JULY 18, 2007

The WCOA first discussed the status of the Sudan legislation. Bill Ford of the Legislative Council indicated there has been no action because legislators realize the legal issues it would create.

David Mills, retired Executive Director of SWIB, introduced the new Director of SWIB, Keith Bozarth. Mills was spending one day a week with Bozarth. Mills has known Keith for a number of years, and was pleased that the board appointed him to the position to lead SWIB and to continue the re-organization of SWIB staff. Bozarth agrees with what the Board and Mills have started in the following areas, and he will work to bring them to fruition:

- 1) Major re-organization of domestic and international equities areas by sectoring portfolios according to investment areas and on a global basis.
- 2) Moving more investment management internally, which will require additional resources. Both budget proposals include those resources for SWIB.
- 3) Investment Modernization. In Wisconsin Statutes, we have what is known as the legal list arrangement. SWIB would like the Legislature to move to more of an ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) type, which governs private plans with a positive investment standard. A consultant is working on a background paper to introduce legislation yet this year.
- 4) Bozarth does not want to be isolated from annuitants and wants very much to interact with groups like WCOA and continue the interchange begun by Mills over the last three years.

The next WCOA meeting was scheduled for Sept. 18.



STATE OF WISCONSIN INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING – August 8, 2007

SWIB Performance Calendar YTD

	<u>May 31, 2007</u>	<u>June 30, 2007</u>	<u>July 31, 2007</u>
Core Fund:	+7.6%	+6.9%	+5.8%(B.M. +5.5%)
Variable:	+9.3%	+7.8%	+4.8%(B.M. +4.5%)
Core Fund:	81.812B	80.462B	80.215B
Variable:	7.807B	7.700B	7.486B
	89.619B	88.162B	87.701B

This was the first SWIB meeting coordinated by new executive director Keith Bozarth and everything went well. The portfolio managers are diligently working on re-organization and globalization of their portfolios.

There was a discussion of the housing markets and mortgages between the board and investment staff regarding the sub-prime mortgages. The staff indicated that the investors were looking for the yield from the appreciated value of the mortgages. However, now the triple (BBB) sub-prime has dropped from 97 cents on the dollar to 30 cents on the dollar. The triple (AAA) prime has only dropped to 90 cents on the dollar. The investment staff at SWIB project that it will take 6 months to a year before we know what the outcome will be. Rating agencies may have an effect, and prime markets may be affected by the scores, and could be a larger problem.

On the plus side, SWIB has no investments in mortgages sub-prime or prime.

The FDIC banks are trying to solve the problems to help keep the people in their homes.

I also attended Dave Mills’ retirement party on Aug. 7, wished him well in retirement and hoped he would join our efforts to preserve our retirement system. I also had the opportunity to chat with Matt Pommer, the retired Capital Times reporter, and impressed on him how much we miss his reporting on state government.

The next SWIB meeting was scheduled for Sept. 19.

ETF ANNUITANT ROUND TABLE – AUGUST 7, 2007

Keith Bozarth, executive director of SWIB, was introduced and was our lead-off speaker. Keith gave us an update on SWIB performance as of July 31, 2007, as Dave Mills or Sandy Drew has always provided.

Core Fund dropped to +5.8%; Benchmark: +5.5%
Variable Fund dropped to +4.8%; Benchmark: +5.1%.

The Core Fund is at 79.58 B
Variable Fund is at 7.14B

TOTAL: 86.72B

Bozarth also briefed the Round Table on the same modernization initiatives as outlined in the WCOA article included in this SEA View issue.

The second speaker was Liz Doss-Anderson, who manages the ETF Ombudsperson services program, which assists anyone having difficulty navigating the health insurance program or the disability program, including



the grievance and appeals processes. This includes any question you may have about the Dual Choice Health Plans and the providers.

I have provided all SEA Board members with copies of the 2007 Fact Sheet from ETF for the Ombudsperson Services Program with the following phone, fax, and toll free numbers plus E-mail:

Toll Free: 1-877-533-5020, Ext. 17947

Madison Local: 261-7947

Fax Number: (608) 267-0633

E-mail: ombudsperson@etf.state.wi.us

The Fact Sheet 2007 covers the Program Review, Frequently Asked Questions, the ETF Administrative Review Process and Outcomes of Reviewed Complaints 2004, 2005 & 2006. All SEA Board members also have ETF services backlog and wait-times report dated June 7, 2007. The wait-times vary from a week to seven months, depending on the service you may need.

Seri King updated us on the progress of the Search Committee to replace the secretary of ETF, Eric Stanchfield, who resigned. His retirement party was held on July 24. The committee hopes to have a group of reviewees for the ETF Board at their Sept. 13-14 meeting.

Seri also informed us about the Benefit Booklet update. They now have a one-hour presentation on the ETF website, and they have a new annuitant booklet on their video library. "Now that you're retired" covers 21 frequently asked questions.

Bob Conlin, legislative director for ETF, presented the budget status with Republicans in the Assembly trying to increase employee contributions to health insurance, retirement for unrepresented employees.

ETF is still testing the new computer benefit system until it is perfect.

Seri also corrected the information about the 100 year-old employees who were recently employed. The birth date for one was 1977, not 1907, making the employee only 30 years. In the case of the other person, they used the start date for their birth date; 1-9-07. In fact, this person was only 22 years old, so there were two entries of information in error on the records.

The next Round Table was set for Nov. 13.

August 11, 2007 Board Meeting Summary
Meeting held at East Towne Suites, Madison
By Duane Hubeler, Secretary

Attendance:

Executive Board: Tom Mугan – President, Leroy Stublaski – 1st Vice President, Gretchen Wheat – 2nd Vice President, Duane Hubeler – Secretary, John Bolka - Treasurer

Board Members:

Tom Peronto, Wisconsin Rapids President
Dawn Marshall, Southeast President
Paul Zoellner, Green Bay Section
Sandra Anderson, Central Office President
Ryan McKane, La Crosse Vice-President
John Lund, Rhinelander President

Mohamad Hayek, Eau Claire President
State Agencies Section – Not Represented
Brian Mattson, Superior President
Khader Abu al-eis, Madison President
Bob Schaefer, DNR Madison President



Specialists:

Mel Sensenbrenner, Health and Retirement
Sandy Henke, SEA Office

Ron Legro, Communications Specialist

Meeting Begins:

Tom Mugan called meeting to order at 8:40 am. Introductions were made.

Approvals:

The June 30, 2007 Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Bob Schaefer moved to approve the minutes as written. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

The Correspondence Report was reviewed. Tom Mugan accepted the Correspondence Report.

Editor's note: This summary does not constitute the official minutes of the SEA Board meeting. Official minutes are available only after the next board meeting, once officers vote to approve content. This unofficial report comes to you in each SEA View as soon as possible after each meeting.

Bargaining and G18 Meetings:

Tom Mugan reported on our first bargaining meeting for the new contract period held on July 18. SEA handed the state 17 initial demands. The state handed us three demands. Compensation Chair George Mickelson gave a short presentation on private sector compensation for workers in the "professional" category. Until the budget bill is passed, the state is unwilling to consider most of our demands because they consider them to be economic in nature. The next bargaining session is scheduled for September 26, 2007.

It was announced at the last meeting of unions representing state employees (the G18 group) that some unions are organizing vigils in the Capitol. SEA members can help out by contacting our legislators, especially members of the Assembly.

Grievance Report: *By Leroy Stublaski*

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-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-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.

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. Consolidated 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 4/14/05) – 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-429 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
- A-430 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
- A-431 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
- A-432 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
- A-435 (filed 11-30-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. – Consolidated with A-307.
- A-436 (filed 11-18-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. – Consolidated with A-307.
- A-439 (filed 11-29-05) – DNR - Extra Mileage. Filed at Step 4.
- A-440 (filed 11-09-05) – DOT D1 - Lunch Money. Filed at Step 4.
- A-444 (filed 3-14-06) – DOT D2 – Individual Bargaining. Filed at Step 4.
- A-446 (filed 2-14-06) – DOT SW – PE exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307
- A-447 (filed 3/27/06) – DOT NCR – Fleet vehicle assignment & utilization. Filed at Step 4.
- A-448 (filed 5/12/06) – DOT NCR – HAM used on current state employee in promotion. Filed at Step 4.
- A-451 (filed 7/10/06) – DOT NWR EC – Discipline w/o just cause. Filed at Step 4.
- A-453 (filed 8/18/06) – DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Waived to Step 3.
- A-455 (filed 10/27/06) – DHFS-Reimbursement of surcharge for over 2000 miles. Filed at Step 4.
- A-456 (filed 9/13/06) – DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Waived to Step 3.
- A-460 (filed 12/12/06) – DOT NWR EC - Discipline w/o just cause. Moved to Step 4.
- *A-463 (new) – DOT D2 – Standby pay after a holiday. Filed at Step 3.
- *A-463 (filed 4/16/07) – DOT NER – Unreasonable work rule regarding PE for CE – Adv. Moved to Step 4.
- A-464 (filed 6/5/07) – UW-Madison – Termination without just cause.
- A-465 (filed 6/29/07) – DHFS – Transfer position not posted in accordance with contract.
- A-466 (filed 5/21/07) – DNR – Car rental reimbursement.
- A-467 (filed 7/30/07) – DOT NWR – Termination without just cause. Filed at Step 3.

The current status of several grievances was reviewed. Specifics discussed were as follows:

A-464 had a hearing on 6/26/07 and was denied at step 3. Leroy Stublaski made a motion to move to step 4 with a second by Gretchen Wheat. Bob Schaefer made an amendment to have the grievance reviewed by Willie Haus. Motion carried.

A-465 was filed at step 1. Leroy will follow-up for the next meeting.

*There are 2 grievances with the A-463 number.

Legislative Report: *By Gretchen Wheat*

One of the section presidents forwarded a message from a member listing several budget items of concern in the Assembly's "Transportation and Property Tax Relief" document. One of these items was previously reported: elimination of 25 DOT engineering positions related to the Zoo Interchange. One budget item is to reduce State Highway Map printing to every other year. Two other budget items relate to significant issues for DOT: require "value engineering" for highway improvement projects in excess of a certain threshold (initially \$500,000, and adjusted annually); and require DOT to contract for a study of Wisconsin truck size and weight limit laws (with an eye towards a Minnesota report issued in June 2006).

Communication Report: *By Ron Legro*

The Capital Times in Madison published SEA's article by Tom Mugan relating to the bridge collapse. The article was sent to several newspapers around the state so it could be picked up by additional papers. As always Ron requests additional section information for the newsletter.

By-Laws/Policy Updates:

Duane Hubeler led a discussion on the final drafts of sections 2 and 3 and the initial draft of section 4 of the SEA By-Laws. There was no consensus on the changes to section 2, so Duane will meet with Bob Schaefer and Gretchen Wheat to iron out the differences prior to the next meeting. After discussion, Duane made a motion with a second by Mohamad Hayek to accept the proposed changes to section 3. Motion carried. The proposed changes to section 4 will be voted on at the next meeting.

Tom Mugan appointed an ad hoc committee consisting of Tony Allard, Duane Hubeler, John Bolka and Khader Abu al-eis to develop recommendations for stipend increases for board members.

**Miscellaneous Items:**

Use of Professional Development Time: There is an issue with DOT saying that members on retirement sabbatical are not allowed to schedule PDT. Sandy Anderson will offer to meet with DOT personnel to remind them of their contractual obligation.

PE requirement for CE – Transportation – Advanced: Tom Mугan asked members to document how they could be affected by this policy that DOT implemented on 4/1/2007. DOT has stated they will begin to enforce it 18 months after that date.

Background Checks: There are serious privacy concerns over background checks that are being implemented for certain positions. There is apparently no opportunity to respond to specific issues and no clear policy on how the information is handled and retained. OSER distributed a draft of a handbook on the policy and is asking for comments. Gretchen Wheat has agreed to take the lead in collecting comments and concerns.

Annual Meeting in La Crosse: The Board Meeting will be held first thing on Saturday morning, October 13, with the annual meeting to follow. Forty rooms have been reserved at a rate of \$94.00 per night. After the banquet, the entertainment will be a Casino Night.

CADD Specialists: A meeting with OSER has been scheduled for late August to discuss their proposal to move CADD Specialists from SEA to WSEU. Among the many questions is whether there is an appeal process for these decisions.

Section Reports:

Madison — They have one new employee and one employee who just promoted into SEA.

Southeast — The issue of the SE Freeway Team being treated differently from the Marquette Interchange Team has apparently been resolved.

Green Bay — Many concerns remain over the CADD Specialist survey.

Wisconsin Rapids — They have one new employee. The Labor-Management Team wants management to push OSER to get grievances resolved sooner.

La Crosse – No report.

Eau Claire — There was one recent termination and three new hires. Members are concerned about the sick leave proposal in the Assembly version of the state budget.

Rhineland – No report.

Superior — No report.

Central Office/PSC — No report.

DNR — The longstanding problems relating to the prescription eyeglass procedure seem to be getting resolved. They have a new department secretary who most recently worked at the Department of Corrections.

State Agencies — The annual section meeting will be held September 10. President, Secretary/Treasurer and one Trustee are up for election.

Health and Retirement Report: *By Mel Sensenbrenner*

Mel recently attended a Coalition of Annuitants meeting, an Annuitants Round Table and a SWIB (State of Wisconsin Investment Board) meeting. The Investment Board reported good returns in private equities and real estate for the fiscal year that just ended. There is nearly \$90 billion invested between the fixed and the variable retirement funds.



Financial & Membership Reports: *By John Bolka*

John moved to accept the June and July, 2007 Membership Reports. John Lund seconded. Motions carried w/o opposition.

John submitted the June, 2007 Treasurer’s Report for review and moved for approval. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted the July, 2007 Treasurer’s Report for review and moved for approval. Mohamad Hayek seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted the Board Meeting Vouchers and moved for approval to pay them. Khader seconded. The motion carried w/o opposition.

07-001 => 07-014	\$1591.02
M-001 => M-010	<u>\$2000.00</u>
	\$3591.02

The Board also voted to approve Miscellaneous Voucher 07-15 for \$117.62.

John moved to approve the transfer of a Madison Section member to the SE Section. Khader seconded. Motion passed.

John stated that section audit forms have been mailed out and are due back in the SEA office by September 1.

Bob Schaefer moved to cover the Annual Meeting expenses for SEA staff and committee chairpersons who attend the meeting at the request of the Board. Mohamad Hayek seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

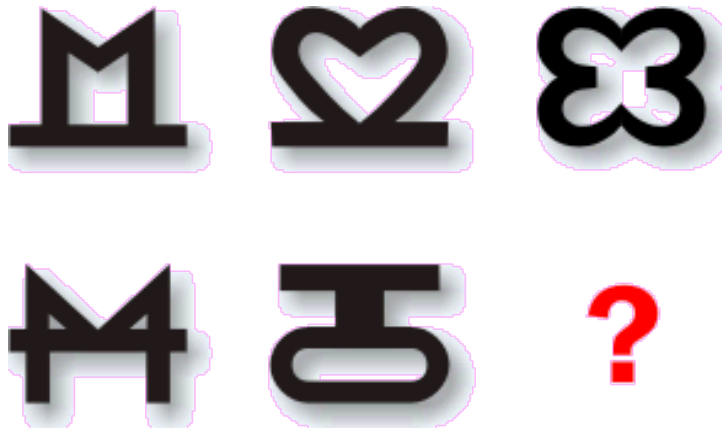
The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

The next Board Meeting will be September 22, 2007, at East Towne Suites in Madison.



PUZZLING PUZZLER: *Picture this!*

This month we present an optical challenge. Look at the first five symbols below, then tell us what the sixth symbol should be, based on your logical analysis of the progression. It is a symbol you can type on any standard keyboard.



Email your answer to our contest address: puzzlesea@yahoo.com. The answer and name of the first person who came up with the correct answer will be in next month’s SEA View. [continued on page 13]



Last issue: A man who valued creative thinking and mathematics skills offered his son \$1,000 if the son could accomplish a special task. He gave his son ten envelopes and a thousand dollars, all in one-dollar bills. He told his son, "Place the money in the envelopes in such a manner that no matter what number of dollars I ask for, you can give me one or more of the envelopes, containing the exact amount I asked for without having to open any of the envelopes. If you can do this, you will keep the \$1,000." When the father later asked for a certain, odd, sum of money, the son was able to give him envelopes containing the exact amount. How did the son distribute the money among the ten envelopes? **Answer:** The contents of the ten envelopes in dollar bills should be as follows:

\$1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 489

Congratulations to the first person to correctly solve the puzzle: **John H. Bridwell**, P.E., Standards Development Engineer, DOT.

CALL TO ARMS: OPPOSE ASSEMBLY'S HARMFUL BUDGET!

Read up on the State Assembly's biennial budget provisions penalizing SEA members along with other state and municipal employees, while outsourcing even more public work. Then, send an email message to your elected state representatives expressing your outrage. You can use the sample message at www.WISEA.org, or write your own. Either way, express your concern, and demand changes to the Assembly 2007-'09 budget proposal. Send your message right away, so your views will be considered while both houses of the Legislature consider the final budget. Join your fellow SEA members and help stop this mess! And also please consider taking time to join the worker vigil at the Capitol.

Moving?

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



WANTED: Great stories, calendar items

What's going on in your area? Are members in your section doing great things, either at work or off hours? What's going on in your neck of state government? SEA View readers want to know. Share your ideas and suggestions. We're also interested in your feedback and suggestions. How are we doing? Email sea_wis@yahoo.com.