

**Teacher Retirement System of Texas
Retirees Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, Oct. 18, 2021**

The Retirees Advisory Committee (RAC) met on Monday, Oct. 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m., hybrid through Zoom and in-person.

RAC members	TRS staff	Other Guests
Grace Mueller, Chair Nancy Byler Dr. H. John Fuller Teresa Koehler Marcy McNeil	Brian Guthrie, Executive Director Katrina Daniel, Chief Health Care Officer Yimei Zhao, Director of Finance, Health and Insurance Benefits (HIB) Monica Bernal, Director of Operations, HIB Meaghan Bludau, Chief of Staff, HIB Cristina Juarez, Health Engagement Manager Umme Salama Oan Ali, Sr. Engagement Implementation Specialist Diana Jarvis, Administrative Assistant, HIBLEO+ Addison Reagan, Assistant Director, Governmental Relations Denise Jimenez, Sr. Lead Consultant, HIB Kristin Hamlett, Manager of Member Coordination, HIB Braidyn Lazenby, HIB Intern Leslie Chandler, Health Benefits Coordinator, HIB Julie Buchanan, IT Teonka Bedford, Supervisor, HIB Kayla Kirkpatrick, HIB Leo Flores, Supervisor HIB Jonathan Botello, HIB	Adriana Salazar (CVS) Amanda Davila (UnitedHealthcare) Michael Heck (SilverScript) Amanda Denis (UnitedHealthcare) Steve Alexander (BCBSTX) Autumn Uchacz, Regional Account Karen Harrison (BCBSTX) Mary McKenzie (UnitedHealthcare) Tracy Fields (CVS)

I. Call to Order

Chair Grace Mueller welcomed the group and called the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call of Retirees Advisory Committee

Chair Mueller called the roll for RAC members and Ms. Oan Ali called the roll for TRS staff and vendors.

III. Approval of Proposed Minutes from the June 17, 2021 RAC Meeting

The Committee approved the minutes from June 17, 2021 RAC Meeting.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Executive Update – Brian Guthrie

Apart from the 87th Texas Legislative Session, there have been three special sessions at the time of this meeting. The second special session passed Senate Bill 7 (SB 7) which capped the 13th check, equal to TRS members' monthly retirement check, up to \$2,400. The Legislature voted for SB 7 to be directly funded by the state and would not impact the TRS pension fund.

TRS is steadily growing and Brian Guthrie, Executive Director, emphasized the need for long-term facilities solution that can accommodate this. Mr. Guthrie stated that TRS' priority is to grow with our membership in a responsible manner. This would be achieved by purchasing a development in the Mueller area, which was approved by the Board in September. This would cost between \$250 and \$300 million. Costs of purchasing this would be offset by selling the TRS Headquarters on Red River St.,

estimated to sell for between \$80 to \$100 million. TRS is purchasing two buildings, with the Alpha building coinciding with the end of the South Congress lease in the spring of 2023.

Moreover, Mr. Guthrie shared that TRS has received approval to open a pilot regional office in El Paso, TX. A substantial number of TRS members reside in El Paso and surrounding areas and face difficulty in accessing TRS Headquarters in Austin. TRS hopes to complete site selection this fall, which would save the commute for these members

Additionally, Mr. Guthrie shared that TRS would be open for member walk-in visits on Nov. 1, 2021 as well as the reopening of the Investments Management Division (IMD). IMD will aim to have 100 percent of staff on-site at least one day per week, with employees having the option to work remotely two days per week. TRS hopes to have a full return to office for all TRS staff in January 2022, which would have 75% working onsite and 25% working from home on any given day.

Mr. Guthrie also informed the Committee that during the third special legislation session, there have been efforts to appropriate federal relief dollars provided for COVID-19 pandemic. We believe there is interest to provide funding to reimburse the health care plans for the costs incurred to provide full COVID coverage. At the time of this meeting, there were a few days left before the special session concluded, so the Committee would be updated in the next meeting.

VI. Legislative Update – Katrina Daniel

Ms. Daniel provided an update of two legislative bills that were passed in the 87th Texas Legislative session and impact both TRS-ActiveCare and TRS-Care.

a. SB 1444

Senate Bill 1444 (SB 1444) is the single biggest piece of legislation to affect TRS-ActiveCare since it was created in FY 2003. SB 1444 provides districts with the flexibility to make health care choices. They can choose to stay, enter, or leave TRS-ActiveCare, closing the historical District of Innovation loophole and keeping the program stable. Education employers must let TRS know of their intent to remain in TRS-ActiveCare by Dec. 31, 2021.

b. HB 2022

House Bill 2022 allows a one-time reenrollment opportunity for TRS-Care retirees who left TRS-Care between Jan. 1, 2017 – Dec. 31, 2019. TRS has identified approximately 30,000 members that may be eligible for this opportunity. Cristina Juarez shared the robust communications campaign which included targeted mailings, informational webinars, and digital outreach. Currently, TRS has received 671 calls about reenrolling.

Moreover, Ms. Daniel shared with the Committee that TRS was accepting nominations for four of the seven RAC member positions that are terminating on Jan. 31, 2022. TRS was accepting nominations from May 1 through Aug. 15.

Ms. Daniel took this opportunity to thank departing members for their service on this Committee which include Dr. Bruce Gearing, Dr. Celeste Cardenas, Ms. Marcy McNeil, and Ms. Nancy Byler. Ms. Daniel also shared the list of new members that were selected by the Board in September and will join the Committee in February: Ms. Sonya, Ms. Anita Young, Ms. Nancy Byler, and Ms. Mary Widmier. Ms. Byler was selected to replace Dr. Bruce Gearing as Vice Chair of the Committee. Ms. Oan Ali informed them that an orientation is scheduled for the incoming RAC members orientation on March 29, 2022, the same day as the next RAC meeting.

VII. TRS-Care Operations Update—Monica Bernal

Ms. Bernal provided an update on operations and customer service. She shared that the one-time reenrollment opportunity is in full effect and applications are coming in and will continue to come in over

the next few months. Peak enrollment season is winding down, directly correlating with active members applying for their retirement.

Medicare open enrollment started on Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. This leads to more calls and questions. Medicare Part B rates have not been released yet. It is important to note that Part B costs are set by CMS and usually go up \$10 to \$12 per year.

The long-term care contract with Genworth was officially terminated on Aug. 31, 2021. Effective Sept. 1, 2021, TRS will refer all members on that long-term policy to call Genworth.

Overall, there was an increase in processing that correlates to when the Health Insurance Line of Business (HILOB) system went live. However, servicing levels continued to stay well above 80 percent threshold the entire year.

Engagement Update—Cristina Juarez:

The health engagement team has been busy coordinating communications materials to be sent out. In September, around 35,000 members received one-time reenrollment packets which included upcoming plan year announcement letter, information session invitations, TRS-Care Plan Highlights, TRS-Care Medicare Advantage Guide, Medicare Comparison Flyer, and SilverScript Summary of Benefits.

About 2,800 attended the virtual TRS-Care information sessions this year. Attendees learned about their medical and prescription benefits and had an opportunity to get their questions answered by TRS and our vendors. Ms. Juarez also shared that all plan materials and recordings of information sessions can be found on the TRS website.

Ms. Juarez shared that TRS also has a Medicare prep session and is looking to do something similar for those who are approaching retirement. This webinar will tell people what they need to do, what they are to expect, and timelines that would be helpful when preparing for retirement.

The engagement team also created the Medicare comparison flyer as a resource for those to use when comparing TRS to other marketplace plans. This document is also on the TRS website. Special thanks to David Weberlein for designing TRS communication materials. Ms. Bernal also added that TRS is working on a guide to make navigating the Medicare application easier.

VIII. Feedback on Topics for *The Pulse*—Umme Salama Oan Ali

The Pulse will feature various topics for the upcoming issues. First, October will cover caregiver resources and Breast Cancer Awareness. Specifically, preventative action such as routine mammograms will be emphasized. November is American Diabetes Month, where comorbidities will be identified, and awareness and lifestyle changes will be a main priority in the issue. Other topics that will be discussed are tobacco cessations programs and mental health resources that participants have access to through TRS-Care. *The Pulse* will also direct readers to the materials for the upcoming plan year on the website as well as holiday safety and care. Ms. Oan Ali mentioned that TRS is open to taking suggestions for future topics.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on March 29, 2022 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. It is not determined whether the meeting will be in-person, hybrid or virtual. In addition, a RAC orientation for new members will be held on March 29, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. In addition, TRS is updating their website page for the RAC with meeting materials, files, and other information that is missing.

X. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.