

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Retirement Boards

FROM: Joseph E. Connarton, Executive Director

RE: Mandatory Retirement Board Member Training-2nd Quarter 2013

DATE: March 28, 2013

As you know, Chapter 32 mandates that retirement board members complete training during each year of service on the retirement board. Failure to meet this mandatory requirement will prohibit the member from serving beyond the conclusion of the term for which the training requirement was not met.

It should be noted that in awarding the number of credits for individual courses the Commission does not necessarily base that number on the length of the program but also considers the nature of the topic involved.

Pre - Approval

The Commission is willing to approve educational credits for a variety of events sponsored by "...local, state, regional and national organizations recognized by the Commission as having expertise in retirement issues of importance to retirement board members or other entities..." This provision of the statute has been interpreted to encompass particular programs offered by such entities. For example, an ethics class or open meeting law class offered as part of a broader conference may be eligible for education credit. However, approval for such credit must take place well in advance of the date of the event. This will enable the Commission to analyze the program and to provide a general notice to retirement board members to maximize participation.

State Ethics Commission Seminars (Three Hours Credit):

The Commission will grant three (3) hours of credit to retirement board members who complete a Public Education Seminar on the Conflict of Interest Law conducted by the State Ethics Commission. As noted above, these sessions are sometimes held in conjunction with meetings of certain organizations. Credit will be granted upon receipt by the Commission of a copy of the Certificate of Attendance issued to the retirement board member by the State Ethics Commission.



MEMORANDUM - Page Two

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The State Ethics Commission will be conducting educational seminars throughout 2013 at its offices in Boston at One Ashburton Place, Room 619:

- (a) April 25, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (b) May 23, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (c) June 27, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (d) July 25, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (e) August 22, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (f) September 26, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (g) October 24, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.
- (h) December 5, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Seating at these sessions is limited. Please contact **617-371-9500** to enroll.

Non-PERAC; Non-MACRS Events

PERAC will award credit for attendance at the following educational events sponsored by entities other than the Commission and MACRS:

(1) NCPERS (TEDS) (Four Hours Credit)

In 2012, in conjunction with MACRS, the Commission finalized a plan for accreditation for retirement board members to attend and receive four (4) hours of credit for the Trustee Educational Seminar (TEDS) of National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS). The same protocol will be in place with respect to the TEDS held in conjunction with the 2013 NCPERS. Should a board member wish to attend these sessions, you will be asked for picture identification, and you will be required to sign in at the beginning of these sessions, and sign out at their completion. In order to receive credit an attendee must forward a copy of the certificate provided to attendees to PERAC.

(2) NCPERS (PATS) (Four Hours Credit)

In 2012 PERAC awarded four (4) hours educational credit to retirement board members participating in the NCPERS Program for Advance Trustee Studies (PATS) at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, MA. In the event the program is offered in 2013 we would expect to award similar credits.

MEMORANDUM - Page Three

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(3) NCTR Trustee Workshop (Four Hours Credit)

In 2012, PERAC awarded four (4) hours educational credit to retirement board members participating in The National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) Trustee Workshop. In the event the program is offered in 2013 we would expect to award similar credits.

(4) International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFB) New Trustees Institute/Advanced Trustees Institute (Four Hours Credit)

Four (4) hours of educational credit will be awarded to retirement board members who attend the 2013 IFB New Trustees Institute or Advanced trustees Institute.

(5) PRIM Investors' Conference (Three Hours Credit)

The Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (PRIM) will be conducting its annual PRIM Investors' Conference on Thursday, May 9, 2013 at Bentley University. Retirement board members who attend the Conference will receive three (3) hours of educational credit. This event is open to all retirement board members including those who do not invest with PRIM. RSVP by calling Paul Todisco, Senior Client Services Officer, at 617-946-8423.

April, May and June Educational Events

Open Meeting Law Regional Workshops

The Attorney General's Office is hosting four regional workshops on the Open Meeting Law. These workshops will provide an update on and guidance about compliance with the Open Meeting Law. The educational forums will be conducted by attorneys and staff from the Division of Open Government and will be an opportunity for retirement board members to understand this important law. The forums are offered free of charge.

Registration:

Please register in advance by emailing OMLTraining@state.ma.us; or calling 617-963-2925 with:

- 1) Your first and last name;
- 2) Your town of residence;
- 3) The public body/organization you represent, if appropriate; and
- 4) Indicate the location of the educational forum you will attend.

MEMORANDUM - Page Four

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When and Where: 2013 Open Meeting Law Regional Trainings

April 10, 2013 – 6:00 PM-8:00 PM
Place: Arthur J. Clark Government Center
Address: 119 School Street, Waltham, MA

May 9, 2013 – 6:00 PM-8:00 PM
Place: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Address: 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA

May 15, 2013 – 6:00 PM-8:00 PM
Place: John Olver Transportation Center
Address: 12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA

For more information on the Open Meeting Law please visit: www.mass.gov/ago/openmeeting.

MACRS JUNE CONFERENCE (NINE CREDITS)

As was the case in 2012 PERAC, in conjunction with MACRS, will be making educational opportunities available at the June MACRS Conference in Hyannis. The breakout will be as follows:

- (1) MACRS 2013 COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAM – On Saturday, June 1 and Sunday, June 2 a program will be available which will include a number of educational sessions. Although some of these presentations are duplicative of programs that have been previously conducted, a retirement board member who attends this event will receive three (3) educational credits – **Three Credits**
- (2) Board members attending the three one hour sessions during the main MACRS Conference designated as receiving credit will be awarded one (1) credit for each session – **Three Credits**
- (3) On Wednesday June 5 PERAC will conduct three sessions. Board members will receive one (1) educational credit for each presentation attended – **Three Credits**

ON-LINE TRAINING

State Ethics Commission On-Line Conflict of Interest Law Training (Three Hours Credit)

In order to access the program retirement board members should go to the Ethics Commission Web Page at www.mass.gov/ethics/ and then click on the link “Conflict of Interest On line Training Programs”. Following transfer to that page scroll down and click the link to “Municipal Employee Online Training Program”.

MEMORANDUM - Page Five

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Office of the Inspector General – Bidding Basics (Three Hours Credit)

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has developed an introductory on-line course that covers the legal requirements for the procurement of contracts by local government bodies for supplies and services under MGL c. 30B. Although that statute does not apply to “a contract for retirement board services” recently enacted law sets forth similar requirements for retirement boards to follow when seeking certain services. In addition, retirement board members, under their fiduciary duty to act as a prudent expert would act, should employ best practices in this area.

Bidding Basics takes two to three hours to complete. It has been designed to be completed through PACE, the Commonwealth’s Web-based Learning Management System, or at your standalone computer using a Compact Disc (CD).

PACE should be accessible to any entity with an Internet connection. Upon registering with the Office of the Inspector General, you will be issued a PACE Login ID and Password so that you may access PACE for free. For further information about Bidding Basics, access <http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcppo/seminars-and-courses/bidding-bascis.html>. In the right-hand column of that page you may access a link to the Bidding Basics FAQs and a link to the Bidding Basics Online Registration Form, or you may obtain the form directly by selecting <http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/forms/bb-online-regform.doc>

Office of the Attorney General – Open Meeting Law (Three Hours Credit)

The Office of the Attorney General (AG) offers an on line web training seminar on the Open Meeting Law. That program is accessible at <http://www.youtube.com/user/MassAttorneyGeneral>. It can also be accessed through the AG’s Web Page by clicking on “Government Resources” and then clicking on “Open Meeting Law” and on that page clicking on “Web Training”.

Retirement board members can confirm participation by filing an affidavit with the Commission.

Other Webinars

In 2012, the Commission approved education credit for participating in a Webinar that, among other topics, addressed the issue of GASB Accounting for Pensions. In 2013, we will entertain requests for credit in relation to relevant Webinars, again, provided that such a request is made well in advance of the session.

Thank You

The Commission would be remiss if we did not also thank all the rank and file members of the retirement boards who, in spite of other pressing duties, are making a good faith effort to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.