



The Corner

by Mike Wilde, Legal Counsel

By the time this PEA newsletter reaches your inbox there is a good chance that the City employees will have voted on the tentative agreement that the negotiations team reached with the City. History tells me that there is a good chance that the voting members of our bargaining unit will approve it. However, there is always a chance that there is a term or two that just doesn't meet the majority's approval.

Regardless of the outcome, there is at least one benefit that again warrants our attention: deferred compensation. That phrase alone strikes some people as a financial planning term that bores us – usually if we are very early in our careers. This is not estate planning, a health declaration or a Final Will & Testament. It's much better understood as FREE MONEY.

Recently I spoke with a federal employee who told me of a benevolent supervisor in their benefits department who helped her establish her retirement contributions when she began her federal service. The supervisor advised her and said, "you will thank me someday." Now, 25 years later, she has amassed a very nice retirement benefit that she would have never initiated on her own. Needless to say, she is very happy with the results that she will soon enjoy in retirement. PEA would like to be your version of a supervisor who gently persuades you to invest now and take advantage of the matching funds paid by your employer. If you're one of the 40% of PEA members who currently overlook this benefit, consider starting your deferred compensation opportunity and start gaining free money now.

If the new City contract is ratified, each employee with 12 months of consecutive service will receive up to \$600 of an employer matching contribution per year. At a modest 7% interest rate that will result in nearly \$27,000 over two decades of service. The contribution cannot be ignored and the interest alone would exceed \$14,000. This was negotiated for you and we encourage you to take advantage of it now.

The School District employees have an even greater opportunity at free money. The St. Paul Public Schools are committed to offering \$1,250 per employee per year. If hired after January 1, 2016 that matching amount is \$1,450. That results in an additional nest egg of \$65,000 after 20 years. One recently retired school district employee urged me personally to remind members of this benefit. He said he was

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Mission Statement

The Professional Employees Association is dedicated to bargain, administer, and enforce labor agreements in a responsible, prudent, and lawful manner for the overall improvement of members' working conditions, with emphasis on general advocacy, education, and communication.

extremely pleased at retirement to learn of his free money earnings. We agreed that many members simply don't understand that there is no downside to this great benefit. And it is there for you upon enrolling in the School's deferred compensation program.

Beyond benefits, there are also obligations that City employees must be aware of under the probable new contract. Severance eligibility is set forth in the contract. One additional requirement that will likely be added is your responsibility to notify the City of your intent to resign or retire two weeks before your final day. This didn't seem too onerous to the negotiations committee considering that it is a common belief by many that employees "should" give a two week notice as a matter of professional courtesy. PEA has tentatively agreed that such a notice will now be a requirement for you to gain the severance money available to eligible employees provided they give the two-week notice.

The School District PEA members also have a caveat in their severance plan. This one has a more progressive, yet demanding, incentive to give ample notice of retirement plans. In that case, School PEA members who give three months notice receive an additional severance benefit of \$2,500 described in the language below:

Employees who meet eligibility requirements of 16.2 of this Article and who complete, sign and submit a Resignation Notice form to the Director of Human Resources three (3) months prior to retirement will receive a District contribution of \$2,500 to the Severance Plan.

Different employers result in different contracts, but rest assured that the City negotiations teams of the future will try to equalize these benefits so all of our members can maximize their retirement savings. We encourage you to understand these terms, ask questions and plan accordingly.

Meet Your New Steward

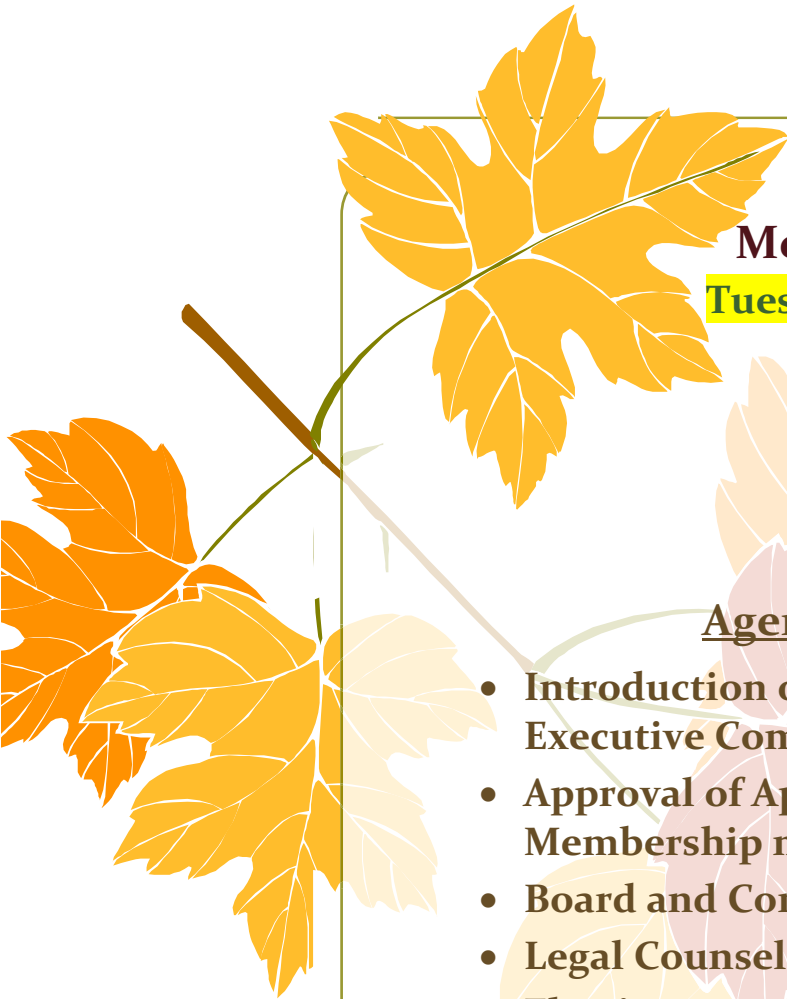
Anne Ahiers, Parks

I've worked at Como Zoo for 3.5 years as an Education Specialist (not counting the last 1.5 years of "other duties as assigned" due to Covid). This was my dream job as I love to talk to people about animals (and plants!), and I've always wanted to work at Como Zoo. I have a B.S. in Equine Industries Management and spent 12.5 year at the Animal Humane Society as an Adoption Supervisor. Working with people has always been something I really enjoy doing, and I'm looking forward to being able to support my coworkers as a Steward in PEA. In my free time I love to bake (hoping for some ribbons at the State Fair this year!), spend time with my dogs and at the cabin, care for an excessive house plant collection, as well as play video games, board games, and read.

PEA Calendar of Events 2021

Tuesday, October 12 General Membership Meeting, Mancini's


See invite in this newsletter & be sure to RSVP – note date has changed to a Tuesday!



**PEA's Annual
Membership Meeting**
Tuesday 10/12/2021 5:30 pm
Mancini's Char House
531 7th St W, St Paul, MN

Agenda

- Introduction of Stewards and Executive Committee Members
- Approval of April 14, 2020 General Membership meeting minutes
- Board and Committee Reports
- Legal Counsel Update
- Elections
 - *only members attending the meeting may vote*
- Member Recognition
- Adjournment



Please RSVP
to justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us
with your choice of entrée
steak, chicken, walleye or vegetarian

*** Nomination and Election Notice ***

Nominations and elections for the seven (7) executive committee positions will be held on October 12 during our PEA general membership meeting. This notice was also provided to all members through their Stewards in July 2021. The incumbents below have informed the Board that they intend on running again in their same position:

President – *Regina Etoll*

Treasurer – *Beth Ulrich*

Secretary – *Sara Nurmela*

Personnel – *Julie Kraus*

Negotiations (SPPS) – *Vaughn Kelly*

Two of the incumbents – Vice President Justine Roe and City Negotiations Chair Joe Musolf – have decided to step down from their executive board positions.

Qualifications

Pursuant to the Constitution and Bylaws as ratified and amended at the April 2018 General Membership meeting, “members are qualified to run for office on the Executive Committee or hold steward positions provided they have joined as a member in good standing one year before the election or appointment for the Executive Board or selection for a steward position and have attended at least one general membership meeting in the past 12 months.” However, the Board voted on July 19th to temporarily suspend the attendance qualification for 2021 (as underlined) because the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to interrupt regular meetings and prevented attendance. PEA wants to be inclusive to all members who would like to run for office.

Also stated in the Constitution and Bylaws “[e]ach nominee is encouraged to submit a short biography that will be submitted in the meeting notice and/or newsletter preceding the election meeting*. Qualified members that are nominated from the floor understand that they will not have had the opportunity to submit such biography for the meeting notice or newsletter.”

* If there are new candidates, a Special Election Newsletter will be sent out with submitted biographies. Otherwise the bios for many of the incumbents can be found at peaonline.org by clicking on Newsletter and Elections Special under 2018.

Nominations should be sent to Mike Wilde (mike.wilde24@gmail.com) or made through participation at the meeting. Nominations can be made for any position. Nonmembers cannot participate in the nomination process, election, or voting.

Diversity is important in the healthy functioning of all organizations. All members are encouraged to fully participate and consider running for office.

SPPS employees, we lost a good member advocate in Charlie Colvin! Charlie has moved on to a position outside the school district. He was a Negotiations Table Committee member and also on the Labor Management Committee on Health Insurance (LMCHI). In that capacity, he was a fierce advocate for not only PEA members, but also for our compatriots in other bargaining units. Charlie filled his LMCHI position with productive energy and, via his departure from the District, has left a pretty big pair of shoes to fill. Luckily, we don't need a single person to fill both of them! Please consider volunteering to work on the LMCHI. The LMCHI is a group of representatives from several bargaining units, as well as representatives from the District. Those parties work closely together to help ensure we all have access to the best possible health plans for us and our families.

If you're interested in sharing your talents on this front, please contact Regina Etoll, our PEA President, at regina.etoll@ci.stpaul.mn.us



SPPS Negotiations Updates & Info

by Vaughn Kelly, School District Negotiations Chair

SPPS employees, please note that contract negotiations are just around the corner. Our current contract's term expires with the last breath of 2021. Not to fear, we do continue to receive the benefits and protections of that contract until a new agreement is reached. In the last round of negotiations, we were able to advance our pay and benefits package with the help of a diverse group of volunteers called the Negotiations Committee.

The Negotiations Committee can be made up of anywhere from five to around ten members. Ideally, those members will represent different departments and work groups, so we can utilize a broad understanding of our member base. Generally, we meet in-person, over several lunch periods to develop a member outreach strategy and turn the subsequent feedback into an opening offer to the District. A sub-committee (2-3 people) then represents our membership at the table with District negotiators. This "Table Committee," as I call it, will likely meet several times to consider offers and counter offers. Some of these meetings will be direct negotiations with the District; others will be meeting of just the Table Committee and our legal counsel, Mike Wilde. During negotiations, the larger Negotiations Committee members are contacted on a need-be basis until a final Collective Bargaining Agreement is reached.

Right now, we're looking to build a Negotiations Committee for the 2022-2023 contract. We had a great one last time around, and we're going to need another dynamite team this fall. If you were part of the last team and want to continue, or if you are new to the process and looking to jump in, please contact me via email (see below). I have committed to chairing the committee for another cycle of negotiations, but am also open to transitioning out if another member makes a solid case for the position. I believe our membership is best served by changing the Chair every couple contract cycles; breathing new life into the process; building experience and opportunity for members as they move to the Table Committee, then on to the Chair position. The Chair, as an elected official of PEA does take part in monthly meetings of the PEA Executive Committee, helping to shape the organization, and directly assists individual members along the way.

Again, if you'd like to get involved, please contact:

Vaughn Kelly, Negotiations Committee Chair for schools
email: vaughn.kelly@spps.org
with the subject "PEA Negotiations."



Professional Employees Association

CITY OF SAINT PAUL & INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625

www.peaonline.org

Executive Committee

President	Regina Etoll <i>regina.etoll@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>PEAmyunion@gmail.com</i>	CAO – 500 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8726
Vice President	Justine Roe <i>justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	WATER – 1900 Rice St., 55113	651-266-1628
Treasurer	Beth Ulrich <i>beth.ulrich@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	PED – 1400 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6689
Secretary	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Personnel	Julie Kraus <i>julie.kraus@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 400 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8776
School Negotiations	Vaughn Kelly <i>vaughn.kelly@spps.org</i> <i>peanegotiations.spps@gmail.com</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1682
City Negotiations	Joe Musolf <i>joe.musolf@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	PED – 1400 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6594

Staff & Others

Legal Counsel	Mike Wilde, Esq. <i>mike.wilde24@gmail.com</i>	545 7th St. W Saint Paul, MN 55102	612-227-8425
Member Outreach & Education Coordinator	Amy Ennen Bertomeu <i>amy.ennen@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-274-4369
Member Outreach & Education Coordinator	Tim Buer <i>tim.buer@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1225 Estabrook Dr., 55103	651-487-8271
LMCHI (City)	Karin Anderson <i>karin.anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 700 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8765
LMCHC (SPPS)	vacant		
Newsletter	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Webpage www.peaonline.org	John Larson <i>john.larson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Libraries (SPPL) – 90 W 4th St., 55102	651-266-7044
Mailing Address	Professional Employees Association	PO Box 7333 Saint Paul, MN 55107-0333	

Stewards

DSI, Police, Public Health	Brian Balfanz <i>brian.balfanz@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5531
Fire, Emergency Management, CAO, OFS	Patricia Lammers <i>patricia.lammers@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5455
Libraries	Peter Borgen <i>peter.borgen@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>PeterBorgenUnionSteward@gmail.com</i>	Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Parkway, 55116	651-695-3700
Libraries	Kathleen Conger <i>kathleen.conger@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	George Latimer Central Library 90 W 4th Street, 55102	651-266-7000
Libraries	Therese Scherbel <i>therese.scherbel@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	George Latimer Central Library 90 W 4th Street, 55102	651-266-7048
OTC / HREEO	Luke Vang <i>luke.vang@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	600 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6789
Parks & Recreation	Mary Henke-Haney <i>mary.henke-haney@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 North Hamline Ave., 55108	651-248-6500
Parks & Recreation – Zoo & Conservatory	Ann Ahiers <i>anne.ahiers@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1225 Estabrook Dr., 55103	651-487-8274
PED	Sarah Zorn <i>sarah.zorn@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 City Hall Annex 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6570
Public Works	Bill Vos <i>bill.vos@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	900 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6113
School District	vacant		
School District	Brianna Nyquist <i>brianna.nyquist@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1807
School District	Jerry Skelly <i>jerry.skelly@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	763-422-9624
Water	Sarah Brown <i>sarah.brown@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1900 Rice St., 55113	651-266-1635