

ILLINOIS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
IRTAPAC Committee Meeting  
March 27, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ed Wollet at 9:29 a.m.

Members Present: Ed Wollet, Chair; Mary Lang, Reg. 1; Ronald Erdmann, Reg. 2; Conrad Floeter, Reg. 3; Joseph Talluto, Reg. 6; Norma Hedges, Reg. 7; Jim Balzer, Reg. 9; Joe Underwood, Reg. 10; Johan Abell, Reg. 12; Gil Deimel, Reg. 14; Luana Flynn, Reg. 15; Steve Launius, Reg. 16; Gerald Herring, Reg. 17 and Gary Threw, Reg. 18.

Members Absent: Mike Wierzbicki, Reg. 4 and Sam Solar, Reg. 5.

Also Present: Jim Bachman, Executive Director; Roger Hampton, IRTA President; John Flaherty, IRTA Vice President; Andrew Bodewes, Contract Lobbyist and Susan Goetz, Administrative Assistant.

Roger Hampton addressed the committee, thanked them for volunteering to serve and spoke about planning for the continued success of IRTA. He gave the rationale for separating the IRTA Legislative Committee from the IRTAPAC Committee. The purpose of the IRTAPAC was reviewed and committee members were reminded to take pride in their IRTA membership and in serving on the IRTAPAC Committee.

Motion by Steve Launius to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 4, 2017. Motion was seconded by Luana Flynn and passed.

After reviewing the IRTAPAC Committee duties, Ed Wollet explained the make-up of the IRTAPAC Board of Directors and that the primary role of the IRTAPAC Committee is to make recommendations to the Board for endorsements of political candidates. Another duty is to assist in organizing campaign volunteers. Jim Bachman stated that IRTA has a strong grassroots membership of nearly 38,000 members that can volunteer at campaign offices and that having volunteers makes a significant impact. He also reiterated that having member email addresses is vitally important in reaching our membership. Communication to local units and members is being sent regularly from the IRTA Office. A weekly legislative update is sent to all IRTA members that we have email addresses for. We have approximately 22,000 emails in the Voter Voice system. The committee should also encourage local units to have political candidate forums. Committee members were also encouraged to create a video with IRTA Director of Membership and Marketing, Nathan Mihelich to send to the Units in their Region introducing themselves and encouraging participation in the \$1.00 per month IRTAPAC deduct donation.

The IRTAPAC Committee goals for 2016-2017 were reviewed. Ed asked the committee to think about these goals and to email him with their additions or suggestions for 2018-2019. New goals will be presented to the IRTAPAC Board of Directors at the April 17, 2018 meeting.

The process for endorsement of candidates was reviewed. It was noted that if we do not receive a completed questionnaire, no endorsement can be made. Mary Shaw will keep the committee updated on who we have and have not received completed questionnaires from prior to the submission deadline. Endorsements are or are not recommended based on the following criteria:

1. A completed questionnaire is received in the IRTA Office.
2. Review of the candidates voting record or campaign platform if no record to date.
3. Input from local units.
4. Input/recommendations from Government Affairs team (Jim Bachman, Andrew Bodewes, Mary Shaw).

Communication with local units during this time can be a difficult process as many local units do not meet during the summer months. Emailing local unit members might be a better solution. It was stressed that the IRTAPAC Committee must stay non-partisan and that endorsements are based on IRTA issues and goals. Andrew Bodewes did inform the committee that they cannot contact any Legislators at their Legislative Offices, they should only be contacted at their campaign offices and that information can be found on the State Board of Elections website.

The Legislative and Gubernatorial questionnaires were reviewed. It was noted that the questionnaires are heavily weighted on Health Insurance issues instead of pension issues. This is due to the State of Illinois not making any payments into the TRIP Fund in 20 months. TRIP is over 200 days before providers are being paid. Jim Bachman will seek advice from our attorney on what course of action should be taken if any to seek payment by the State. He will also try to get information or set up a meeting with the Comptroller's office to find out when payment might be expected in the future. Minor wording changes were made and some additional clarification was added to explain the 1995 pension funding law. Updates will be made and the Legislative and Gubernatorial Candidate questionnaires will go to the IRTAPAC Board of Directors for approval.

The IRTAPAC Committee would like to send a questionnaire to all Illinois US Congressional candidates on their position regarding WEP/GPO. Also, ask what they would do to advance the modification/repeal of WEP/GPO. The questionnaire responses would only be informational to IRTA members and not used for endorsement of any US Congressional Candidates. Ed Wollet will present this recommendation to the IRTAPAC Board of Directors at their April 17, 2018 meeting.

Andrew Bodewes gave an overview of the current candidate races. There are 157 possible elections in the Illinois General Assembly and many are unopposed. Some races will be very competitive. He mentioned that the 4 caucuses which are the House Democrats, the House Republicans, the Senate Democrats and the Senate Republicans determine what are going to be the competitive races in the State. Andrew believes there will be a Tier 1 race in every IRTA Region of the State.

The IRTAPAC fund currently has \$167,000. We should have over \$200,000 in the fund by November 2018. Through March 2018 total IRTA Membership is at 37,794 with 5,264 members participating in the \$1.00 per month IRTAPAC deduction.

If members wish to attend a candidate fundraiser, please contact Jim Bachman or Mary Shaw at the IRTA Office to request an IRTAPAC check to attend.

Motion by Luana Flynn to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Mary Lang. With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Susan Goetz  
Administrative Assistant