

# Retirement News Update

## Board Elects Chair and Vice Chair

The Board elected Mark Monteith as the Board Chairperson and Elizabeth S. Gonzales as the Board Vice Chairperson at the January 23, 2007 Board Meeting.

**Congratulations  
Mr. Monteith and Ms. Gonzales!**

## Defend Yourself Against Identity Theft

Many of us, at one time or another, have left our wallet at a restaurant or store. Fortunately for most of us, our wallet and personal belongings were returned to us. But what do you do if your personal information is stolen? The Federal Trade Commission has the following suggestions on what to do if you think your identity has been stolen:

#1 – Place a fraud alert on your credit reports and review your credit reports. Fraud alerts can help prevent an identity thief from opening any more accounts in your name. Contact the toll-free fraud number of any of the three consumer reporting companies below to place a fraud alert on your credit report.

### National Credit Reporting Agencies:

*Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)*

*Experian: 1-888-397-3742; [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)*

*Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289; [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)*

#2 – Keep the phone numbers to your credit card companies and banks where they are easily accessible. Call and speak with someone in the security or fraud department of each company. It is important to follow-up in writing.

#3 – File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

#4 – File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place.

For more information, you can go to the Federal Government website on identify theft at: [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov); 1-877-438-4338.

COA ERS retirees may also want to contact the Retirement Office at 512-458-2551 to request an alert on change of address or direct deposit concerns.

## Forms and Applications Available Online

Did you know that you can download and print most COA ERS forms directly from our website, [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org)? Just click on the "Forms" link and you will find forms to designate beneficiaries for your retirement death benefits as well as copies of sample Qualified Domestic Relation Order (QDRO) and child support forms. Forms available for active members include the application form to request Service Purchase calculations and the form for vesting/refunding once you leave City of Austin employment. Retired members, terminated vested members, and members with proportionate service can access forms for change of address and name changes. Retired members can also download the form to change their direct deposit account/financial institution designation.

Spanish translated forms are available upon request. You can still call our office at (512) 458-2551 if you have any questions about which form you need, or you can email your question to [member.services@coaers.org](mailto:member.services@coaers.org).

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## COA ERS Receives Prestigious GFOA Award

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City of Austin Employees' Retirement System (COA ERS) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2005. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements. A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. This is the seventh consecutive year that COA ERS has achieved this prestigious award.

# Active Member News & Notes

## Volunteers Needed!!!

We are gearing up for our Active Member Place 6 and 7 election to be held in November of 2007. These places are currently held by Cathy Rodgers and Mark Monteith. The terms of Place 6 and 7 are from January 2008 and expire on December 31, 2011. More information will be available on our website and at the Retirement Office in the next few months for those wishing to run for the election.

The Retirement Office is searching for volunteers to serve on the Nominating and Election Committee to oversee this upcoming election. This Committee is made up of Active City employees. This Committee will oversee the election process including the development of the election ballot and determining the results. The deadline to volunteer for this coming election is **June 1, 2007**.

If you have any questions or concerns or would like to participate in the Committee, please contact Jesse Ortega, Administrative Supervisor at (512) 458-2551 ext. 109 or at [jesse.ortega@coaers.org](mailto:jesse.ortega@coaers.org).

## Meet Your Member Services Coordinators

When you have a retirement question, do not hesitate to call one of the Member Services Coordinators. They are key members of the COA ERS team, who are here to help ensure that your questions get promptly answered and that your transactions are properly processed.



Craig Finkelstein has been with COA ERS for 4 years.



Lori Bateman just recently joined the COA ERS staff.

## Pension 101 Seminars

COA ERS and the City Deferred Compensation Program (Great-West Retirement Services) have developed a joint presentation "Pension 101: A Primer for City of Austin Civilian Employees". This seminar was kicked off last November and has proven very popular. Seminars are being scheduled during 12:00 noon as "brown bags" and after work hours at 5:00 p.m. at different locations. If you are interested in learning more about the seminar or signing up for one of these seminars, please contact Great-West at (512)457-9240 or by email [will.cornforth@gwrs.com](mailto:will.cornforth@gwrs.com).

## Retirement Strategies Presentations

*Presented by the City of Austin Employees' Retirement System*

### Find Out:

- When can I retire?
- How can I purchase service credit?
- How much Permissive Time can I buy?
- What is "proportionate retirement"?
- Do I qualify for the DROP?

Our informal question and answer sessions will help you plan for retirement. To request a presentation for your department, please call the Retirement Office at (512) 458-2551.

## City of Austin Employee Addresses

All correspondence from the COA ERS to an Active COA ERS Member (e.g. Annual Statement of Account, Election Ballots, Creditable Service Calculations, Retirement Calculations, etc.) is sent to the Member's address of record. These records are updated based on the address on file with the City of Austin Payroll Department. Active Members must change their address with the Payroll Department at (512) 974-3001. Please keep your address current to ensure you receive this important information.

## Retirement Annuity and Creditable Service Calculations on the Web

Please visit our website at [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org) to calculate the amount of your retirement annuity or Creditable Service Purchase. Note: These calculations are provided as **estimates only**. Final calculations will be provided by the COA ERS Staff. Please contact the Retirement Office at (512) 458-2551 for additional information.



### ***With Deepest Sympathy***

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of those Members of COA ERS who were Active City of Austin employees who have passed away\*:

Manuel C. Soza

*Date of Death 12/24/2006*

*Austin Water Utility*

*\* Please note, this list only includes those deaths of which COA ERS has been notified.*

# Retired Member News & Notes

## 2007 Annual Affidavits

Once each year, affidavits are mailed to all Retirees and Beneficiaries receiving annuity payments from COA ERS. By signing and completing the affidavit, annuitants confirm that they are alive and that they are eligible to continue receiving their monthly annuity. The affidavit process is used by retirement systems to prevent fraudulent payments to people who are not eligible to receive an annuity. Board policy requires that affidavits be notarized.

Affidavits were mailed February 28, 2007 and were due no later than April 1, 2007. Retirees may stop by the Retirement Office for free affidavit notary services. Annuities may be suspended if affidavits are not returned by that date. Please help protect our Retirement System by completing your affidavit promptly each year. Thank you in advance for making this a successful process.

## Powers of Attorney

There may be occasions when COA ERS retirees become incapacitated or are unable to make decisions for themselves. A Power of Attorney (POA) is a document that allows you to appoint a person to handle your affairs when you are unavailable or unable to do so. It is effective until your death, or until you revoke it. A durable POA is a way to plan ahead and choose who will handle your affairs in a difficult situation.

Original or court certified copies of durable Power of Attorney orders may be accepted by the Retirement Office if they comply with the basic statutory requirements set forth in Section 490, Texas Probate Code. Durable POAs must be reviewed by the System's General Counsel and approved by the Executive Director before the designated agent is allowed to do business on your behalf. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Craig Finkelstein (512-458-2551 ext. 113) or Lori Bateman (512-458-2551 (ext 110)).

## With Deepest Sympathy

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of those Retirees of COA ERS who have passed away\*:

Esther M. Axell  
*Date of Death 03/05/2007*  
*Retired From Brackenridge*

Ace M. Bartlett  
*Date of Death 01/03/2007*  
*Retired From Tax Department*

Marvin J. Bolling  
*Date of Death 02/12/2007*  
*Retired From Human Resources*

Lenore Boston  
*Date of Death 11/4/2006*  
*Retired From Brackenridge*

George W. Cope  
*Date of Death 01/30/2007*  
*Retired From Health Department*

Freddie I. Edmondson  
*Date of Death 01/25/2007*  
*Retired From Solid Waste Services*

John B. Felix, Sr.  
*Date of Death 02/23/2007*  
*Retired From Austin Water Utility*

Ora Lee Fowler  
*Date of Death 01/22/2007*  
*Retired From Brackenridge*

Gladys G. Gassman  
*Date of Death 02/08/2007*  
*Retired From Library*

Angel E. Juarez  
*Date of Death 03/05/2007*  
*Retired From Parks & Recreation*

Larry Kenyon  
*Date of Death 02/02/2007*  
*Retired From Convention Center*

Wade A. Leuckie  
*Date of Death 01/08/2007*  
*Retired From Parks & Recreation*

Alfred Loera, Jr.  
*Date of Death 01/12/2007*  
*Retired From Austin Water Utility*

Corine Maxwell  
*Date of Death 02/05/2007*  
*Retired From Police Department*

Macaria H. Menchaca  
*Date of Death 01/17/2007*  
*Retired From Brackenridge*

J.D. Murchison  
*Date of Death 11/27/2006*  
*Retired From Public Works*

Nadine Neugent  
*Date of Death 12/24/2006*  
*Retired From Parks & Recreation*

Harold Phillips, Jr.  
*Date of Death 02/06/2007*  
*Retired From Austin Energy*

Bernabe Sabana  
*Date of Death 12/27/2006*  
*Retired From Austin Energy*

Eurby W. Sherrod  
*Date of Death 02/22/2007*  
*Retired From Austin Energy*

Danny Spears  
*Date of Death 02/11/2007*  
*Retired From Public Works*

Mary E. Wilson  
*Date of Death 02/17/2007*  
*Retired From Brackenridge*

\* Please note, this list only includes those deaths of which COA ERS has been notified.

## IRS Form W-4P

Do you want to change the amount of federal income tax being withheld from your retirement annuity? IRS Form W-4P "Withholding Certificate for Pension or Annuity Payments" can be completed to adjust this amount.

Have you changed your legal name since the last time your W-4P form was completed? If so, we encourage you to complete a new W-4P with your correct legal name. Please be advised that your Social Security card must be provided showing your correct name.

You may request a new W-4P form from our office by calling 512-458-2551 or download the form from [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## 2007 Retiree Pay Dates

April 30th

May 31st

June 29th

July 31st

August 31st

September 28th

October 31st

November 30th

December 31st

Monthly annuity payments are made on the **last business day** of each month.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

### April

19th - Pre-Retirement Seminar  
24th - COA ERS Board Meeting  
30th - Retiree Payday

### May

17th - Pre-Retirement Seminar  
28th - Retirement Office closed in observance of Memorial Day  
31st - Retiree Payday

### June

21st - Pre-Retirement Seminar  
26th - COA ERS Board Meeting  
29th - Retiree Payday

**Please Note:** Retiree annuity payments will be made the **last business day** of each month.

## Need to Discuss Your Retirement Benefits?

COA ERS Member Services Specialists are available to answer your questions by phone, email, or in person Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. If you would like to speak with a Specialist in person, please call our office at (512) 458-2551 to make an appointment. This will ensure you have adequate time to discuss any questions you may have regarding your retirement benefits. Our staff will continue to serve walk-in Members as scheduling allows.

## COA ERS Board of Trustees

Mark Monteith, *Board Chair*  
Elizabeth S. Gonzales,  
*Board Vice Chair*  
Janet Bartles, *Trustee*  
Francis E. Benoit, *Trustee*  
Leslie Browder, *Trustee*  
Eyna Canales-Zarate, *Trustee*  
Reagan David, *Trustee*  
Betty Dunkerley, *Trustee*  
Ed Golden, *Trustee*  
Cathy Rodgers, *Trustee*  
Anthony B. Ross, Sr., *Trustee*

## Please keep your address up to date!!

**ACTIVE MEMBERS** - Please contact City of Austin Payroll Dept. at (512) 974-3001 to change your address.

**RETIRED & VESTED MEMBERS** - Please submit a change of address in writing to the Retirement Office. Forms are available at [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org) or by calling (512) 458-2551.

**For your security, we will only mail financial information to the address that we have on record.**

## ¿Habla Usted español?

Representantes están disponibles para contestar sus preguntas en español por teléfono o aquí en la oficina de COAERS. Además, contamos con algunas formas en español y podemos dar presentaciones sobre el sistema y la jubilación para los miembros interesados. Favor de hablar al (512) 458-2551 o vea nuestro sitio de Internet: [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org).

*Spanish Translated Forms Available*

## Free Notary Services Available

The Retirement Office offers free notary services to our Members for COA ERS business only. System notaries will not notarize non-COA ERS documents.

## Website/Newsletter Suggestions?

If you have any suggestions regarding information you would like to see on the COA ERS website or in our newsletter, please email them to [jesse.ortega@coaers.org](mailto:jesse.ortega@coaers.org).

## RETIREES:

**Contact the City of Austin Benefits Office at (512) 974-3284 for...**

**All information related to your medical and/or dental benefits:**

*Change of Address  
Claims  
Premiums*

or

**Information regarding your \$1,000 City of Austin Death Benefit.**

## COA ERS Staff

Executive Director  
*Stephen C. Edmonds*

Operations Manager  
*Rhonda Helm*

Finance Manager  
*Donna Boykin*

Administrative Supervisor  
*Jesse Ortega*

## Finance

Financial Analyst  
*Bertie Corsentino*

Accounting Technician  
*Korrie Hoskins*

## Management Services

Executive Assistant  
*Errin Garcia*

## Member Services

Member Services Specialists  
*Jobne Behner  
Teresa Cantu  
Laura L. Fugate*

Member Services Coordinators  
*Craig Finkelstein  
Lori Bateman*

## Operations

IT Coordinator  
*Melissa Adams*

Office Coordinator  
*Cheryl Nelson*

## City of Austin Employees' Retirement System

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Austin, Texas 78752-3720

Phone: (512) 458-2551

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City of Austin Employees' Retirement System