

# Retirement News Update

A Publication of the City of Austin Employees' Retirement System

Available online at [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org)

1st Quarter 2010

## Board of Trustees Certifies Active Member Election Results

Anthony B. Ross, Sr. and James (Jim) Williams, Sr. were elected to the COAERS Board of Trustees in an election which ended in early December. They fill places 8 and 9 representing active-contributory members. Their four-year terms run from January 2010 through December 2013. The Nominating and Election committee met on December 3, 2009 to tabulate the ballots for this election. The Board of Trustees certified the results during their December 18, 2009 Board meeting. Anthony B. Ross received 397 votes; James (Jim) Williams, Sr. received 353 votes; Vicky Valdez received 328 votes; Michael Benson received 305 votes; and Charles Capel received 206 votes. Seven write-in candidates received one vote each.

The Board commended the Nominating and Election Committee for their dedication to this important process.

### Congratulations to Mr. Ross and Mr. Williams!

## Board Members Reappointed by City Council and Board of Trustees

On December 17, 2009, Ed Golden was reappointed to serve in Place 4, one of the Council Appointed Citizen places on the COAERS Board of Trustees. On December 18, 2009, Reagan David was reappointed to serve in Place 5, the Board Appointed Citizen place. Their four-year terms run from January 2010 through December 2013.

### Congratulations to Mr. Golden and Mr. David!

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## 2010 Tax Withholding Changes

All retirees should be aware that the federal tax withholding tables for 2010 have changed. As a reminder, the tax withholding tables reflect changes pursuant to the 2009 Making Work Pay tax credit, *which does not apply to pension income*. So, Retirees should again pay close attention to the amount withheld from their monthly benefit check in 2010 to be sure a sufficient amount is withheld. Our staff cannot provide tax advice, so if you need assistance with determining the amount to be withheld for taxes, contact the IRS by calling 1-800-829-1040 or go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

If you determine that you need to change the amount withheld for taxes, you will need to submit a new IRS Form W-4P which can be found on the COAERS website at [www.coaers.org](http://www.coaers.org) or call us at (512) 458-2551.



## COAERS Issues 1099-R Forms

If you received a payment during 2009 from the COAERS either as a retiree, active member, or beneficiary, you will soon receive your Form 1099-R for your 2009 tax return. COAERS will begin mailing the forms at the end of January 2010.

Form 1099-R, which reports your taxable pension earnings for the 2009 tax year, will be mailed to the address on file with COAERS. The Form 1099-R provides information you will need to use to complete your tax return.

# Active Member News and Notes

## Annual Member Statements

Each year, COA ERS mails Annual Member Statements to all members with funds on deposit with the System. These statements include information regarding your retirement membership date, contributions you made during 2009, interest credited as of 12/31/2009, and both taxable and non-taxable creditable service purchases you made during 2009. For active-contributing members, the 12/31/2009 balance on your annual statement will not match the retirement contribution balance on your City of Austin pay stub. The City does not include any interest, Creditable Service purchases, or prior refunds when calculating lifetime-to-date retirement contributions. Please review your statement carefully and contact COA ERS in writing if you have any questions or concerns about your statement. The statement is provided for information purposes only and allows you to verify our records. It is not a guarantee of benefits.

## COA ERS Pre-Retirement Seminars

If you are thinking about retiring from the City of Austin within the next two years, you may want to attend a Pre-Retirement Seminar. Representatives from COA ERS, the City of Austin Benefits Department (Retiree Healthcare), and Deferred Compensation present valuable information for planning your retirement. The seminar is generally offered the third Thursday of the month at 2:00 p.m. at the Retirement Office, 418 E. Highland Mall Blvd.

If you have any questions concerning the seminar or want to sign up for an upcoming seminar, please call the Retirement Office at 512-458-2551.

## Austin Parks and Recreation Department Memorial Courtyard

Over the years, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department has had many employees who were exemplary public servants. The families of many of those employees, now deceased, have contacted the department asking for suggestions on how to commemorate the service their loved ones provided to the department, the city, and its citizens. In 2008, a proposal to create a Memorial Courtyard was approved.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department now honors deceased employees who completed a minimum of ten years continuous service as a regular full-time employee in good standing by installing brick-size pavers engraved with their name and years of service. Pavers will be installed in the courtyard of the Department's Administrative Offices, at 200 South Lamar. All deceased Department Directors are eligible to be honored.

The donor is responsible for completing an application and submitting it to the office of the Director for approval. A donation of \$75 per paver, one per employee, is the responsibility of the donor (s) and due at time of submittal of the application. The paver, 4" x 8", can be engraved with up to 3 lines of text with up to 60 characters. Pavers will be installed on a quarterly basis and the location will be determined by the Parks and Recreation Department, who will be responsible for maintenance.

For more information and the application form go to:  
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/downloads/memorallanebrochure.pdf>

You can also contact Sharon Yarbrough at the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department at (512) 974-6723.

## 2009 Interest Posting

At the November 24, 2009 Board Meeting, the COA ERS Board of Trustees set the interest rate paid on Member deposits at 3.25%. Interest will be credited as of December 31, 2009 on deposits in Members' accounts as of January 1, 2009. Annual Member statements will be mailed to all Members with funds on deposit with the System as of January 2010 after interest has been posted.

**Please keep your address up to date!!**

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

## Website 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 [michelle.mahaini@coaers.org](mailto:michelle.mahaini@coaers.org) for consideration.

## With Deepest Sympathy

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

**William Booth**

*Date of Death 09/09/2009*

*Watershed Protection*

**Frank Kopic**

*Date of Death 08/16/2009*

*Watershed Protection*

**Sandra Sturgeon**

*Date of Death 09/26/2009*

*Library*

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

# Retired Member News and Notes

## Cost of Living Adjustment Consideration

Each year, the Board of Trustees obtains a report from its actuary concerning the feasibility of a cost-of-living adjustment. By law, an adjustment can be granted only if the actuary certifies in writing that such an adjustment would be sustainable. Currently, the actuary is unable to provide that certification; accordingly, the Board cannot legally authorize an adjustment.

It is important to remember that contributions to the retirement system are structured to finance and pay your lifetime benefit, but are not structured to pay for future adjustments to your annuity. Adjustments to your annuity can be made only when there is extra money beyond what it takes to pay regular benefits. The City is currently contributing more to the Retirement System under a special agreement to strengthen the system. This year, the City took the positive step of accelerating the contributions beyond the original agreement. However, even with the extra contribution subsidy, it is doubtful that adjustments can be granted for the foreseeable future.

If you are still employed and contemplating retirement, you should keep this in mind when making your retirement decision. It is important to consider all sources of retirement income, including Social Security and personal savings, such as the City of Austin Deferred Compensation Program. We recognize that loss of purchasing power is a significant issue for many retirees and this is of concern to the Board of Trustees. The first obligation, however, is to comply with plan provisions and administer a retirement system that can pay the lifetime benefits that are promised under the plan.

**Retirees:** Please contact the City of Austin Benefits Office at 512-974-3284 for all information related to your medical, dental, and/or vision benefits, such as *change of address, claims, premiums, or information regarding your City of Austin Death Benefit.*

## Retiree Statements

COA ERS sends statements to all retirees at the end of January each year. These statements contain information about each retiree's monthly retirement benefit comparing the current year to the previous year. Look for your statement in late January or early February. If you make changes to your benefit during the year, such as a change to your tax withholdings or address, you will receive a follow up statement in the mail to confirm your change.

## 2010 Retiree Pay Dates

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| January 29th  | July 30th      |
| February 26th   | August 31st    |
| March 31st  | September 30th |
| April 30th  | October 29th   |
| May 28th  | November 30th  |
| June 30th   | December 31st  |
| Monthly Annuity payments are made on the last business day of each month. |                |

## With Deepest Sympathy

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

**Jerry Boyd**  
Date of Death 10/26/2009  
Retired from Development Review  
and Inspection

**Pauline Brown**  
Date of Death 08/27/2009  
Retired from Health and Human  
Services

**Coy Bryan**  
Date of Death 10/26/2009  
Retired from FSD - Fleet

**Raymond Cerecerez**  
Date of Death 09/10/2009  
Retired from Austin Energy

**Irene Dobie**  
Date of Death 12/13/09  
Retired from Brackenridge Hospital

**Santos Gutierrez**  
Date of Death 09/24/2009  
Retired from Austin Water Utility

**Ben Harrold**  
Date of Death 10/10/2009  
Retired from Solid Waste Services

**Clifton Jackson**  
Date of Death 11/20/2009  
Retired from Street & Bridge

**Benny Jones**  
Date of Death 11/21/2009  
Retired from Austin Energy

**Edward Malish**  
Date of Death 10/13/2009  
Retired from Austin Water Utility

**William Moffett**  
Date of Death 10/29/2009  
Retired from Brackenridge Hospital

**Patricia Montgomery**  
Date of Death 09/23/2009  
Retired from Police Department

**Bernard Niedt**  
Date of Death 12/07/2009  
Retired from Austin Water Utility

**Constance Owens**  
Date of Death 09/28/2009  
Retired from Brackenridge Hospital

**Lee Perkins**  
Date of Death 06/25/2009  
Retired from Brackenridge Hospital

**Albert Randall**  
Date of Death 11/12/2009  
Retired from Health & Human Services

**Charles Ray**  
Date of Death 08/20/2009  
Retired from Public Works

**Jacquelyn Schrader**  
Date of Death 09/28/2009  
Retired from Human Resources

**William Sokoff**  
Date of Death 08/19/2009  
Retired from Austin Energy

**Hazel Stein**  
Date of Death 10/06/2009  
Retired from Brackenridge Hospital

**Somnuc Stockton**  
Date of Death 11/20/2009  
Retired from Aviation

**David Swaine**  
Date of Death 11/20/2009  
Retired from Austin Water Utility

**James Tisdale**  
Date of Death 11/05/2009  
Retired from Parks & Recreation

**Edwin Tschoerner**  
Date of Death 09/28/2009  
Retired from Austin Energy

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



City of Austin Employees Retirement System

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## COA ERS Board of Trustees

as of 1/1/2010

Elizabeth S. Gonzales,  
*Board Chair*

Anthony B. Ross, Sr.,  
*Board Vice Chair*

Art Alfaro

Janet Bartles

Reagan David

Francine Gertz

Ed Golden

Sam R. Jones

Mark Monteith

Jim Williams

### ¿ 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*

## Upcoming Events

### JANUARY

- 18** Retirement Office closed in observance of Martin Luther King's Birthday
- 21** Pre-Retirement Seminar
- 26** COA ERS Board Meeting
- 29** Retiree Pay Day

### FEBRUARY

- 15** Retirement Office closed in observance of President's Day
- 18** Pre-Retirement Seminar
- 26** Retiree Pay Day

### MARCH

- 18** Pre-Retirement Seminar
- 23** COA ERS Board Meeting
- 31** Retiree Pay Day

**Retirement News Update** is a publication of the City of Austin Employees' Retirement System and is distributed for the information of COA ERS Active, Vested, and Retired Members, and their beneficiaries.

While COA ERS has made every attempt to provide correct information, it does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained or referenced herein.