

# CALIF ORNIA STATE RETIREES

**California State Retirees  
Board of Directors Meeting**

**Wednesday, June 25, 2025  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Westin San Francisco Airport  
1 Old Bayshore Highway  
Millbrae, CA 94030**

## **Minutes**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by President Joe Reynoso.

**2. Salute to the Flag**

The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

**3. Roll Call**

Joe Reynoso, CSR President  
Keith Umemoto, Executive Vice President  
Vincent Herrera, Vice President  
Geanie Hixon, Chief Financial Officer  
Leticia Soria, District B Director  
Maria Aguilar, District C Director  
Patrick Gantt, District D Director  
Merilee Colton, District E Director  
Jerry Fountain, District F Director

Board Members Absent:

Sharon Stoltzman, District A Director  
Jay Jimenez, District G Director

A quorum was established.

**4. Introductions and Agenda Changes**

President Reynoso welcomed attendees and acknowledged the CSR staff for their continued support.

**5. Approval of June 25, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda**

**CSR 25/6/24 Motion:** Umemoto, second by Herrera – The CSR Board of Directors approves the June 25, 2025, Board meeting agenda. CARRIED

**6. Approval of June 26, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes**

**CSR 25/6/25 Motion:** Hixon, second by Umemoto – The CSR Board of Directors approves the February 26, 2025, Board meeting minutes. CARRIED

**7. President’s Report of Activities**

President Reynoso provided a comprehensive report on recent developments and organizational priorities. He noted the successful execution of the 2025 Lobby Day and expressed the intent to expand future events to include increased chapter-level participation through the development of political action committee (PAC) initiatives. He emphasized the importance of fostering relationships with local legislators, encouraging chapter to regularly engage with their elected representatives by inviting them to chapter meetings. President Reynoso affirmed the organization’s commitment to maintaining an annual Lobby Day, with the objective of expanding chapter participation as renovations to the State Capitol are completed.

Additionally, President Reynoso provided clarification regarding travel authorization requirements, underscoring the need for cost-effective travel arrangements and timely communication with leadership when prior authorization is necessary. He reminded members of the importance of securing hotel reservations prior to designated deadlines in order to avoid unnecessary expenses to the organization. He further clarified that members in good standing shall not be charged to attend chapter meetings, while guests are expected to pay full price unless serving in a caretaker or speaker capacity. President Reynoso reinforced that all chapter-related expenditures must be authorized at the chapter-level and do not require approval from the Board of Directors. Lastly, he acknowledged that chapters experiencing financial constraints as a result of increased participation may submit funding requests through their respective District Directors for consideration by CSR Board of Directors.

**8. Swearing in of District B Director**

President Reynoso conducted the swearing in of Leticia Soria, District B Director.

## 9. Chief Financial Officer Report – Geanie Hixon

Chief Financial Officer Hixon provided an overview of CSR's financial position and emphasized the importance of adherence to standardized fiscal procedures. She reiterated the responsibility of chapter leaders to apply sound financial practices, prioritizing expenditures that directly support member engagement and chapter activities. Hixon encouraged chapters to utilize available resources and follow best practices, including minimizing spending on non-essential items.

Hixon reported that for the five-month period ending May 31, 2025, CSR recorded a net deficit of \$81,000, with a budgeted surplus of \$177,000. Total revenue was trending slightly above budget, though expenditures, particularly labor, postage, and meeting costs were higher than anticipated, partly due to January's increased chapter allocations. As of May 31, CSR's combined cash, money market, and investment balances stood at approximately \$7.0 million, slightly below the \$7.1 million reported during the same period in 2024.

She concluded by reaffirming CSR's commitment to provide financial support to chapters experiencing rapid growth or resource constraints, contingent upon appropriate documentation and demonstrated need.

## 10. Board Member Activity Reports

Board members provided verbal reports on chapter visits and activities:

- **Jerry Fountain (District F)**: reported on his chapter activities and engagement efforts within the district. He highlighted his participation at Fresno State Universities STAR Day, where CSR provided outreach and information on retirement benefits to faculty, staff, and graduate students. Fountain acknowledged the dedication of chapter officers throughout the district, noting consistent efforts to serve members effectively. He further commended the strong collaborative relationship between Chapter 11 and Chapter 35, recognizing their joint efforts in organizing events and supporting member recruitment across county lines. Fountain concluded by affirming that chapters within District F are experiencing growth in membership and increased participation, contributing to the overall vitality of CSR.

- **Merilee Colton (District E)**: reported attending all chapter meetings within District E, along with CalPERS Board and Executive Committee meetings as schedules permitted. She described District E as consisting of Chapters 2, 15, and 165, covering Sacramento, Yolo County, and out-of-state members. Colton highlighted Chapter 2's expanded outreach to Yolo County and acknowledged the logistical challenges of serving multi-county and out-of-state chapters. She commended chapter leadership for securing informative guest speakers, including CalPERS representatives and legislative staff.

- **Pat Gantt (District D)**: reported on activity across Chapters 8, 13, 14, and 19, covering thirteen counties. He noted increased participation and strengthened chapter leadership throughout the district. Chapter 8 hosted a well-attended

meeting with local community leaders and CalPERS Board Member Jose Luis Pacheco. Chapter 13 has doubled its meeting attendance and increased membership through targeted outreach. Chapter 14 continues to offer consistent programming, including community donations and regional engagement. Chapter 19 maintains steady participation with efforts focused on retaining active membership. Gantt acknowledged the work of chapter officers in fostering growth and engagement across a geographically large and diverse district.

**-Maria Aguilar (District C):** reported on activities across Chapters 1, 3, 21, and 23, which serve Los Angeles, Inland Empire, San Bernardino, Riverside, and surrounding areas. She noted steady attendance and member engagement across all chapters. Aguilar highlighted Chapter 1's consistent outreach and educational programming, Chapter 3's recruitment efforts and local events, Chapter 21's community involvement and meeting participation, and Chapter 23's focus on maintaining active connections with members. She commended chapter officers for their dedication and for fostering positive member engagement throughout the district.

**- Leticia Soria (District B):** reported she was newly appointed to the position. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to represent District B, which includes Chapters 10, 26, 31, 36. Soria shared her commitment to engaging with chapter leaders, attending local meetings, and supporting efforts to strengthen membership participation across the district. The Board welcomed her to her new role and expressed their support as she begins her term of service.

**- Vincent Herrera (Vice President):** reported on his recent activities and provided recommendations for chapter engagement. While no longer serving as a District Director, Herrera noted his continued involvement in Board functions and support for chapter outreach. He encouraged chapters to utilize local veterans' organizations, such as the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), as guest speakers and resources for members. Herrera emphasized the importance of recognizing and supporting veterans within CSR membership and at chapter events. He also highlighted CSR's endorsement in the current CalPERS election and encouraged members to actively promote and support endorsed candidates at the chapter level.

**-Keith Umemoto (Executive Vice President):** reported on ongoing legislative priorities, including support for CSR-endorsed candidates and Assembly Joint Resolution 3. He encouraged continued outreach to CalPERS members, engagement with local legislators, and advocacy on retiree healthcare improvements.

## **11. Legislative Report**

Legislative Representative Ted Toppin of Blanning & Baker provided a detailed update on current legislative matters. He reported that the Governor's January budget projection of a balanced budget had shifted, with the May Revision revealing a \$12 billion shortfall. Toppin indicated that the budget agreement, expected to move

forward within the next week, included a \$573 million allocation to CalPERS which is significantly less than originally proposed.

Toppin noted that the proposed budget also included a provision to exempt up to \$20,000 of military retirement benefits from state taxation, along with provisions impacting surviving spouses. He additionally provided information on the recently announced Assembly District 63 special election, where Democrat Chris Schults will be running against Republican Natasha Johnson in a Republican-favored district on August 26th.

In closing, Toppin reiterated CSR's legislative priorities, which include protecting defined benefit pensions, supporting cost-of-living adjustments, and improving retiree access to dental and health benefits.

## **12. Committee Reports**

### **12a. Finance Committee – Diane Whorton:**

Chair Whorton reported on recent financial policy updates and training. She reviewed the completion of the new financial procedures training held prior to the Board meeting, noting it was developed to ensure consistent financial practices across chapters and to promote fiscal accountability. Whorton highlighted the recent revisions to the CSR Financial Governing Rules, particularly sections 2.00 through 2.16, which were approved by the Board on May 21, 2025. She emphasized the requirement for chapters to establish checking accounts at Wells Fargo and outlined the updated process for submitting executive board meeting minutes and designated signatory forms to headquarters by July 20. Whorton encouraged chapter leaders to reach out for assistance as needed and expressed appreciation to the Finance Committee and supporting staff for their efforts in completing this work.

### **12b. Health Benefits Committee (HBC) – Jose Gutierrez:**

Chair Gutierrez reported that the committee met in May via Zoom for the first time and discussed a range of topics relevant to retirees. These included updates on long-term care policies, Healthy California initiatives, dementia care, dental and vision benefits, veterans' issues, TRICARE, Blue Shield PPO updates, prescription drug pricing, and wellness programs such as Silver Sneakers. Gutierrez noted there were no current updates regarding Kaiser. He thanked the committee members for their contributions, particularly those who completed research despite not attending the meeting. Gutierrez encouraged members to suggest additional topics for future committee review.

### **12c. Membership Committee – John Bowden:**

Membership Committee Vice Chair John Bowden delivered the report on behalf of Chair Russell Kilday-Hicks. Bowden provided updates on the committee's activities, including efforts to support chapter recruitment and outreach. He highlighted the availability of updated membership materials and encouraged chapters to continue engaging members through local outreach efforts. Bowden noted the committee's

focus on providing resources to assist chapters in expanding membership participation and welcomed feedback on additional support needs.

Staff member Maldonado announced the winners of the recruitment drawing, with each winner receiving a \$50 check:

- Elnora Hunter-Fretwell, Chapter 8
- Renay Rascon Chapter 11
- Linda Currie, Chapter 12
- Ophelia Rabanal, Chapter 26
- Lupe Belloso, Chapter 35

It was also noted a recent increase in reported member deaths, citing one month with nearly 140 reported losses. The importance of continued recruitment efforts to offset natural attrition, and highlighted the protection of rollover accounts, which help maintain CSR membership numbers was emphasized.

#### **12d. BGR Committee – Michael Ellison:**

Chair Ellison reported on the committee's recent activities, including participation in an April working session to review proposed changes to the financial sections of the Governing Rules. Ellison introduced Diane Buffington of Chapter 2 as a newly appointed committee member. He presented a proposed amendment to Governing Rule 7.01 Statewide Officers, to align officer eligibility and election procedures with actions adopted at the October 2024 Delegate Assembly.

**CSR 25/6/26 Motion:** Gantt, second by Herrera – The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment of Governing Rules 7.01 Statewide Officers. CARRIED

A second amendment to add section 14.02 (d) was presented to clarify reimbursement for members who reside less than 40 miles from a meeting location. A member is eligible to receive reimbursement for mileage and parking expenses.

**CSR 25/6/27 Motion:** Gantt, second by Herrera – The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment of Governing Rules 14.02 (d). CARRIED

Ellison encouraged members to submit any additional recommendations for future bylaw and governing rules revisions.

#### **12e. Political Action Committee (PAC) – Steven Alari:**

Chair Alari provided the Political Action Committee report, noting that 59 legislator visits had taken place since the previous meeting. He reported that the PAC Committee convened with approximately 80 members in attendance. The committee focused on providing training regarding procedures for requesting and attending political fundraisers, with an emphasis on appropriate engagement in legislative advocacy. Additionally, Ted Toppin presented a legislative update to the committee, further supporting the committee's ongoing efforts to strengthen CSR's advocacy on behalf of its membership.

### **13. Guest Speakers**

#### Fiona Ma, California State Treasurer

State Treasurer Fiona Ma addressed the Board and provided an update on California's financial outlook. She spoke on the state's bond ratings, debt management strategies, and the overall fiscal health of the state. Treasurer Ma reiterated her commitment to protecting retiree benefits and highlighted the importance of public pension sustainability.

#### Bob Duffield, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

Bob Duffield provided an overview of financial planning considerations for retirees. His presentation covered current market trends, investment options suitable for retirees, and strategies to manage risk while preserving retirement income. He encouraged members to seek personalized financial advice to meet their long-term financial goals.

#### Jose Luis Pacheco, CalPERS Board Member and CSR-Endorsed Candidate

CalPERS Board Member Jose Luis Pacheco spoke on issues affecting CalPERS members, including pension fund management, investment policies, and retiree data privacy. He reaffirmed his commitment to transparent governance, responsible investment practices, and safeguarding retiree information. Pacheco provided updates on CalPERS health care discussions and addressed questions from members regarding retiree benefits and CalPERS operations.

Meeting Date March 17, 2025:

**CSR 25/3/9 Motion:** Jimenez, seconded by Gantt- The CSR Board of Directors approves the removal of constitutional officer names on the CSR PAC Expenditure Authorizations 2025 document. CARRIED

**CSR 25/3/10 Motion:** Jimenez, seconded by Colton The CSR Board of Directors approves proposed changes/additions on the CSR PAC Expenditure Authorizations 2025 Document. CARRIED

**CSR 25/3/11 Motion:** Umemoto, seconded by Gantt- The CSR Board of Directors approves the March 17, 2025 board meeting agenda. CARRIED

**CSR 25/3/12 Motion:** Colton, seconded by Aguilar The CSR Board of Directors approves the January 15, 2025 summary of motions. CARRIED. Jimenez and Stoltzman abstained.

**CSR 25/3/13 Motion:** Hixon, seconded by Fountain The CSR Board of Directors approves February 19, 2025 summary of motions. CARRIED. Jimenez abstained.

**CSR 25/3/14 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Jimenez- The CSR Board of Directors approves the account changes on the updated budget forms. CARRIED

Meeting Date May 21, 2025:

**CSR 25/5/15 Motion:** Soria, seconded by Gantt- The CSR Board of Directors approves of Governing Rule Amendment to include a chapter meeting food charge prohibition for members. CARRIED. Umemoto abstained.

**CSR 25/5/16 Motion:** Hixon, seconded by Fountain The CSR Board of Directors approves the governing rules amendment for items B-E. CARRIED. Jimenez opposed.

**CSR 25/5/17 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Soria The CSR Board of Directors to approve the Governing Rules amendment for Section 2.00 to include form numbers. WITHDRAWN

**CSR 25/5/18 Motion:** Soria, seconded by Jimenez The CSR Board of Directors approves the Governing Rules amendments to Section 2.00. CARRIED

**CSR 25/5/19 Motion:** Umemoto, seconded by Hixon The CSR Board of Directors approves the Governing Rules amendment of section 16.00. CARRIED

Meeting Date June 20, 2025:

**CSR 25/6/20 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves suspension of monthly deposits into CPAC August 1,2025 through January 1.2026. CARRIED

**CSR 25/6/21 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves suspension of monthly deposits into CPAC August 1,2025 through January 1.2026. CARRIED

**CSR 25/6/22 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves suspension of monthly deposits into CPAC August 1,2025 through January 1.2026. CARRIED

**CSR 25/6/23 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves suspension of monthly deposits into CPAC August 1,2025 through January 1.2026. CARRIED

**15. Upcoming Meetings:**

The next CSR Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for October 2025 in Sacramento

**16. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by President Reynoso at 2:20 p.m.