

CHAPTER - SUB-CHAPTER RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

This document is being created to clarify the various relationships between MRSEA and the Sub-chapters currently existing in Minnesota.

When the term MRSEA is used, it refers to the Minnesota Retired State Employees Association, Retiree Chapter 6 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO. It is the Minnesota Chapter, and other states have chapters which are also independent affiliates of the AFSCME.

When the term Sub-chapter is used it refers to organizations of MRSEA members located throughout Minnesota who operate through a charter from MRSEA and are bound by the Constitution, By-laws and Mission Statement of MRSEA.

Mission Statement

Minnesota Retired State Employees Association

United to advocate for the well-being of state retirees by:

- * Monitoring the deliberations of the legislature and the Minnesota State Retirement System Board of Directors; and responding as appropriate to promote, protect and enhance retiree interests.*
- * Providing educational information on State and National issues affecting retirees.*
- * Maintaining working relationships with other retiree organizations.*
- * Promoting social activities through local chapters and statewide meetings.*
- * Advocating for the affordability of state retiree health and long term care benefits.*

It should be noted that this is not an organization that advocates solely for retirees served by MSRS, but may also advocate for issues related to PERA, TRA, and Judicial retirees when issues are held in common.

The rationale for this document is the recognition that Constitutions and By-laws provide a general framework for conduct of the Chapter and its Sub-chapters but little in the way of specific how-to information.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MRSEA TO SUB-CHAPTERS

Chartering of Sub-chapters. The MRSEA Board by assisting in the creation of Sub-chapters and providing some financial input in effect charters these Sub-chapters as part of the statewide organization. Factors considered in establishing a Sub-chapter include, but are not limited to: number of potential members served, location of existing Subchapters and ease of access. This is a formal process requiring a majority vote of the MRSEA Board of Directors favoring establishment

of the Sub-chapter.

Newsletter. MRSEA publishes a newsletter, mailed to all dues-paying members, which attempts to cover critical issues affecting the membership, as well as arranging and announcing social opportunities. This is published four times a year. Another mailing may be in the Call to Action form, in which members are alerted to contact legislators regarding important pending actions impacting members either positively or negatively. This call would also include information clarifying the issue, as well as steps to be taken.

Annual Meeting. Once a year in May the Board arranges an annual meeting, the main purpose of which is to elect 1/3 of the Board each year. The newsletter published in April contains particulars of this meeting and a registration/reservation form. (See Appendix A for election procedures.)

Rebate of dues. Each Sub-chapter holds an annual meeting to elect new officers and conduct necessary business not handled in other meetings during the year. The Subchapter is allowed to request a rebate based upon the number of MRSEA dues-paying members attending this annual meeting. This is to help the Subchapters maintain a fund for operating expenses. A form is provided for this rebate request which is to be accompanied by a list of dues-paying members attending this meeting. Currently the amount rebated per dues-paying member attending is \$2.00. Most Sub-chapters also raise monies for their treasuries with other activities. (See Appendix B for an example of the Rebate Request Form and sign-in sheet.)

Communications to Sub-chapters. A copy of the minutes of each business meeting of the Board will be mailed to each Sub-chapter President after being approved by the Board. A copy of the Annual Audit shall be made available at the Annual Meeting in May.

Assigned liaison. Each sub-chapter is assigned a Board Member who attends Sub-chapter meetings. This will allow communication from the Board to the Sub-chapter and help convey local issues back to the Board. Since the majority of Board meetings are conducted in St. Paul, this becomes one of the best ways to maintain two-way communication. Any Sub-chapter that does not have a Board Member attending at least one of its meetings per year should contact the Business Manager/Administrator thru the toll-free number. These liaisons are assigned by the President of the Board.

Mailing Services. The MRSEA office will code the membership file and the files of recent retirees so as to provide lists and labels of retirees within the general area of the Sub-chapter. Before this can be done the Sub-chapter must provide a list of cities and their ZIP Codes that the Sub-chapter wishes to include within their area. The Sub-chapter makes the decision as to which cities will be included. Because of geographical overlap it is possible for an individual to be coded for more than one Sub-chapter. Lists of new retirees are coded as they are received so lists are constantly changing.

The MRSEA office will provide the following services for Sub-chapter meetings. Requests for any of these items must be received *three weeks* prior to when they are needed:

a. Copies of the meeting notice. You must provide the original notice. We will make copies of

- what you provide. Sub-chapters may choose to prepare copies locally with their own funds.
- b. Envelopes and stamps to mail out the notices, which are pre-folded.
 - c. Mailing labels and lists of retirees that are coded for that Sub-chapter. Lists are alphabetical within the specified area.

To carry out these responsibilities the MRSEA Board has established several committees with specific responsibilities. These Committees are described in Appendix C.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUB-CHAPTERS TO THE MRSEA BOARD

Communication. Subchapters have the responsibility to communicate:

1) to the Business Manager/Administrator: changes of address of members, deaths, new officers (along with phone numbers and mailing addresses), notice of meetings of the Sub-chapter with time, place, date and city so they may be included in the next newsletter. It is also expected that Sub-chapters will provide the Business Mgr/Administrator with copies of any minutes taken at Subchapter meetings.

2) to the liaison or President of the board: activities in the local area impacting retirees or of interest to the Board, problems regarding attendance and/or difficulty keeping the Sub-chapter operating, as well as concerns of the membership along with suggestions or desired help.

Advocacy. It is also requested and expected that a member or members of the Sub-chapter will answer calls to action by contacting legislators and /or other public officials to communicate MRSEA's position on various issues, and feeding results of the contact back to the Board. The MRSEA Board can't be everywhere, and neither can local members. Working together on issues creates bonds between members and an increased effectiveness in meeting the organization's objectives.

Consistency. If a Sub-chapter establishes a Constitution or By-laws regarding their operations, care needs to be taken to assure that those By-laws are consistent with the MRSEA Constitution and By-laws. For this reason, any constitution and by-laws established or later amended by a Sub-chapter must have these actions approved in advance by the MRSEA Board. In addition, Sub-chapters activities need to be consistent with Board policies and formal actions. If disagreement exists this should be resolved to the satisfaction of everyone, or written communications and public statements should not reference MRSEA, or Chapter Six.

Article X, Sec. 2 of the MRSEA Constitution states: "Except to the extent specified in this constitution, no officer of this chapter shall have the power to act as agent for or otherwise bind the chapter in any way whatsoever. No member or group of members or other person or persons shall have the power to act on behalf of or otherwise bind the chapter except to the extent specifically authorized in writing by the president of the chapter or the executive board of the chapter."

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

There are occasions where opinions will differ and conflicting approaches will surface. Often there is no harm when people just agree to disagree and go their separate ways. Where organizations such as MRSEA represent the common interests of a large membership it becomes important to present a united front. Any issue that is different from any position taken by the Board potentially confuses our message and should be resolved. For the purpose of resolving the Association's conflicts the following process is established.

Step one:

Members who have disagreements with the MRSEA Board of Director's actions will communicate this disagreement in writing to the board. The member should clearly state the area of disagreement, the party(ies) involved and any proposed resolution.

Step two:

When the MRSEA Board of Directors receives this communication from the member, it will review the issue and the proposed resolution. The Board will communicate to the member whether the Board agrees with the proposed resolution, needs more written information, or wishes to schedule the member on the agenda of a future Board meeting to make a presentation.

If the Board disagrees with the member's proposed resolution, the Board will communicate this rejection in writing, along with the reasons for the rejection, to the member.

Step three:

If the proposal is rejected by the Board, the member may make a request to be placed on the agenda for the next regular Board meeting to discuss the issue.

Step Four:

If after this face-to-face conference between the member and the Board the issue remains unresolved, the Board shall again communicate its reasons for rejection in writing to the member.

The MRSEA Board of Director's actions regarding the issue shall be the official position of MRSEA. (MRSEA Constitution, Article X, Section 2.)