



Staff Education Association Retirees VEBA

Newsletter

April 2018 – vol. 8

SEARV 2017-2018

The past year has found us getting into more of a routine. We have been fortunate in moving the Trust into a solid investment strategy with an eye toward the future. Our investment advisor and our investment committee along with all of the other Board members and advisors reviewed our investment strategy and did some fine tuning by slightly resetting some targets, removing a small poor performer and adding a different investment category. As we all predicted the market took a bump and although our investments were impacted the performance by the markets far outweighed short term loss. **We encourage you to review the Summary Annual Report when it is released.**

Audit -

2016 was the first year for Salter and Company, LLC to serve as our auditors for the Trust. The audit went very well including finding some small filing differences from previous years.

Health Care Insurance Outlook –

This is an area that is always unpredictable. We continue to monitor what is happening especially at the national level. As you might imagine, the talk in Washington about a voucher system and/or cuts in Medicare is disturbing to say the very least. The numbers being discussed are simply not realistic. As a hedge we are not yet offering any additional benefits until we see what happens in the current administration. **STAY TUNED!**

Trust Participants –

As of January 1, 2018, the Trust had 343 covered participants. There were 44 active employees and covered spouses, 38 under age 65 retirees, 39 participants that currently opted out of coverage, and 222 currently receiving benefits.

Overseas (out of the country) Travel –

This issue continues to be a problem from time to time. We have published on the SEARV web site the federal documents dealing with Medicare and out of country travel – which includes cruise ships! We also discuss what SEARV covers and what you need to do. Please check this out before you travel.

New Medicare Cards Are Coming Soon -

The **Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) of 2015**, requires the removal of Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards by April 2019. A new **Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI)** will replace the SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) on the new Medicare cards for Medicare transactions like billing, eligibility status, and claim status. Under the new system, each person enrolled in Medicare will be assigned a new MBI and will be mailed a new Medicare card. The MBI is confidential like the SSN and should be protected as Personally Identifiable Information.

New Medicare MBI cards will begin being mailed starting in April 2018, in phases by geographic location. The effective date of the new cards, like the old cards, is the date each beneficiary was or is eligible for Medicare.

The new Medicare MBI cards **DO NOT** affect the SEARV Transamerica Premier Life Medicare Supplement or United Healthcare Prescription Drug Cards.

People with Medicare may start using their new Medicare cards and MBIs as soon as they get them. **Also, the new Medicare MBI cards do not change any Medicare benefits.**

During the April 1, 2018 to December 31, 2019 MBI card transition period, you'll be able to use either your current Medicare card (HICNs) or the new Medicare MBI cards.

Turning 65?

Start early! If you need to sign up for Medicare and Social Security, we recommend that you visit your local Social Security office - especially if you try online and have any difficulties. We continue experiencing some challenges with retirees failing to sign up in a timely manner. Please give us as much notice as you can, as it is imperative that you complete your paperwork and get it in to Charlie and Michele at least 30 days prior to your turning 65. Remember that failure to sign up in a timely manner could result in a gap in coverage as well as a penalty for late sign up for Medicare Part 'D' prescription drug coverage. Remember the TPA is there to help you as are your Board representatives. Do not hesitate to call.

SEARV/CORE RELATIONSHIP:

CORE once again had a successful membership year and annual meeting. Please try to attend this year annual meeting. CORE is celebrating the start of its 15th year. This year there have been some major changes in the officers and board of CORE. There is a list published on the SEARV web site under CORE. CORE had 224 members in 2017. You should all be proud to have such a strong organization.

Treasurer Jim Prater has asked that everyone send in their annual dues. Please send your 2018 CORE dues to Jim Prater at 2000 Malvern Road, Columbus 43221. Dues are \$20 (\$40 for husband and wife if both are or will be covered by SEARV when they reach age 65). You can email Jim at prater2000@columbus.rr.com or call 814-486-7597 if you have questions.

Also, don't forget to attend the luncheons coordinated by Denny Roberge. They are a great way to both stay connected with fellow retirees and to stay updated on the issues of the day.

Vendors –

General Counsel – Cook and Logothetis, LLC

Counsel is responsible for making sure the Trust is run in compliance with applicable laws that govern and regulate tax exempt VEBA Trusts. They also advise the Board with respect to legal matters associated with Trust administration. Please do not contact counsel directly, but you may ask questions or communicate through the TPA CW Breitsman Associates.

Third Party Administrator (TPA) – CW Breitsman Associates, LLC

Charlie Breitsman charlie@cw-b-a.com

Michele Gentile michele@cw-b-a.com

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Phone – (412) 325-2805, Toll Free – (866) 520-9174, Facsimile – (412) 325-2801

The TPA is responsible for handling the day to day administration of the Trust including interfacing with each of the other vendors, records retention, and interface with Trust members and the Ohio Education Association concerning Trust matters.

Custodial Bank – Huntington National Bank

The bank is the initial holder of funds and investments monies. Questions concerning banking need to be directed through the TPA.

Medicare Supplemental Provider – Transamerica Premier Life Insurance Company

The Medical supplemental carrier is contracted on an annual basis. You may communicate directly with the provider concerning your account or you may contact the TPA for assistance and contact information.

Transamerica Premier Life Insurance – Company Customer Service: 1-800-752-9797

Prescription Drug Provider (PDP) – United HealthCare/OptumRx

The Prescription Drug (Part D) provider is contracted on an annual basis. You may communicate directly with the provider concerning your account or you may contact the TPA for assistance and contact information.

UHC Customer Service: 1-888-556-6648

Investment Advisors – Dover Consulting Group, Josh Smittkamp

The investment advisor assists the Board in creating and maintaining the Trust's formal investment policy and works with investment managers to ensure the Trust investments are in compliance with the guidelines that policy establishes. They also provide investment reporting to the Board on a regular basis.

Auditors – Salter and Company, LLC

As required by law and for the prudent management of the Trust, independent auditors are engaged to review the finances of the Trust and prepare required annual reports.

Other Actions of the Board –

In addition to those items mentioned above the Board took the following actions:

- Renewed the term of Trustee Bob Hockenberger for 3 more years ending 2020,
- Monitored the performance of the supplement providers and other vendors,
- Determined annual budgets,
- Approved investment strategies, and
- Took actions necessary for special circumstances for some members of the Trust

How are we doing? –

Your Board of Trustees would like to thank all of you for your support and having the confidence in us to allow us to serve as your Trustees on the Board of the Staff Education Association Retirees VEBA Trust. Your feedback is always welcomed and we will work to keep you informed. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the Trustees or the TPA with your questions.

SEARV Board of Trustees -

The Board of Trustees is comprised of five (5) members; three (3) members whom are “Class Members” and two (2) members whom are “Public Trustees”, as required under the VEBA Trust Agreement.

- **John Wardell**, Chairman SEARV Board of Trustees

Ohio – (740) 474-3004, Florida (941) 429-2803, Cell (614) 203-3135 - COREofOEA@aol.com
- **Bob Hockenberger**, Co-Chairman SEARV Board of Trustees, HIPAA Privacy Officer, Investment Committee Chairman

(614) 499-1073 - hocko@insight.rr.com
- **Priscilla Roberge**, SEARV Board of Trustees (614) 774-2190 - prisroberge@gmail.com
- **Paul Gonzalez**, Public Trustee, Budget Chairman, member Investment Committee

(517) 242-4739 - gonz2006@aol.com
- **Garrett Harbron**, Secretary SEARV Board of Trustees, Public Trustee, member Investment Committee (317) 439-0053 - garrett.har@gmail.com

Please visit the SEARV web site:

www.SEARVeba.com

Please notify Michele or Charlie of any address, telephone, email or other contact information changes