



Date: April 11, 2019  
To: PERA Board of Trustees  
From: Kathy Green, Board President  
Subject: Retired, Disabled, and Survivor Representative Position

### Background

On January 31, 2019, the elected Retired, Disabled, and Survivor representative on PERA's Board of Trustees became vacant. Through the PERA Board Election process, candidates were solicited, but nominations for this position were not submitted, and as a result, PERA's Board of Trustees were entrusted with filling the vacancy.

PERA sought candidates to fill the position and provided information and directions on how to apply on PERA's website and in the Winter 2019 publication of PERA NEWS. Applications were accepted February 19 through March 19; twenty-six candidates qualified for the position.

### Subcommittee process

The Board appointed a subcommittee made up of Paul Bourgeois, Paul Ford, Barbara Johnson, Thomas Rupp, Thomas Stanley, and myself, to review and recommend three to five candidates to be considered by the full board in filling the vacancy. The committee debated the strengths and insights of each candidate and what the candidate could bring to the board.

### Subcommittee recommendation

Based upon discussions, it is the subcommittee's recommendation that five candidates be submitted for consideration by the full Board to fill the Retired, Disabled, and Survivor representative vacancy. The five candidates are:

- Robert Bendzick
- Margaret Ingison (Peggy)
- Julie Kleinschmidt
- David Metusalem
- Donald Rambow

### Board review

It is the committee's recommendation that the board have an open discussion of candidates submitted for the Retired, Disabled, and Survivor representative vacancy. Once discussions are completed, a ballot election would be taken. Before declaring the vacancy filled, the candidate must receive a majority vote by the board. If no candidate receives a majority vote, the candidates with the fewest votes are dropped and the candidates with the two highest votes are submitted to the board for consideration with another round of balloting.

PERA Board of Trustees Vacant Retired, Disabled, and Survivor Representative Position  
 Biosketch of Candidates and Candidate Questions  
 April 11, 2019

Name:	Robert M. Bendzick	Margaret Ingison (Peggy)	Julie Kleinschmidt	David Metusalem	Donald Rambow
City	Rochester	St. Paul	St. Paul	St. Anthony	Maple Grove
Occupation:	Retired accountant and manager	Retired	Retired Ramsey County Manager	Retired-Annuitant	Retried- Local Government Finance Officer
Education and Training:	Bachelor of Science, Accounting, Mankato State University, 40 years of CPE to maintain my CPA Certificate.	B.S. Bemidji State University - Major: Accounting Mini-MBA Certificate Program University of St Thomas Public Education Leadership Program Harvard University.	I have 32 years experience in senior level management positions for the two largest and most diverse counties in Minnesota. In Ramsey County, I served as the County Manager/Chief Executive Officer from 2009 to 2018 and as the Director of Finance/Chief Financial Officer from 2000 to 2008. In Hennepin County, I served in increasingly responsible financial management positions, including County Controller, from 1986 to 1999.	MA-Public Administration: Hamline University BA-Liberal Arts Metropolitan State University Attended Multiple Pension Educational Conference Including: NCPERS Accredited Fiduciary Program, NCPERS Public Safety Pension and Benefits Conference, NCPERS Annual Convention, Klausner Pension and Benefit Client Conference.	Bachelor of Science- Mankato State University; Major- Accounting, Minor- Economics Mini- MBA for Government Managers- University of St. Thomas
Experience:	Accounting - eight years audit and tax at "Big 8" accounting firm 33 years CFO - Olmsted County, MN. As CFO, I was responsible for financial statements, budgets, banking, investments, debt issuance and risk management. We created and managed self-insured Health, Dental, Liability, Worker Comp plans and developed funding models ratified by actuaries. A co-worker called me "explainer-in-chief" as I explained what the county does and made it understandable to customers. In retirement, I've written and presented retirement and investment classes for county employees. After 40 years as an active CPA I changed my certificate to inactive when I retired.	2011 - 2018 Minnesota Historical Society - Chief Financial Officer 2007 - 2011 Minneapolis Public Schools - Chief Financial Officer 1996 - 2007 Minnesota Department of Finance - Commissioner of Finance 2004 - 2007 - Assistant Commissioner, State Budget Director 1996-2004 1982 -1996 Minnesota Senate - Fiscal Analyst; Chief Fiscal Analyst 1976 - 1982 Minnesota Department of Transportation - Transit Financial Manager; Auditor	My experience includes developing and implementing long term, sustainable funding and financing strategies for major county investments including the County's retiree health insurance obligation, light rail transit and capital improvement programs.  In addition to my county experience, I have served on the Metropolitan Council Audit Committee and the City and County Credit Union Board of Directors.	Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, May 2017 – December 2018, Executive Director- Served as Executive Director of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association. As the chief lobbyist, played an integral role in lobbying for the passage of the 2018 Pension Omnibus Bill.  Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, 1988 – 2017, 2019- Served for 29 years including 21 years in senior management positions of Chief Deputy and Undersheriff. Provided leadership and oversight of the Office's over 400 members, 600 volunteers, and \$60 million annual budget.  Public Employees Retirement Association, 2015-2017 - Trustee (Vice President 2016)- Served as a trustee and vice president on the PERA board of trustees. Participated in the process to hire the current Executive Director. Participated in facilitating stakeholder input from police and fire members that resulted in consensus on sustainability measures that were subsequently included in the 2018 Pension Omnibus Bill.	Finance Director- City of White Bear Lake- 25 Years Assistant Finance Director/ Accountant- City of St. Louis Park- 15 Years Pera Board of Trustee member- 12 years. Elected President for a 4 year period. Served in the Minnesota National Guard- 6 years
1. What do you think should be the primary role of a PERA Trustee?	To protect PERA by understanding the mission of PERA, asking PERA staff questions to assure my understanding, actively participating on the board, assuring PERA staff have what they need to carry out board goals, and advocating for PERA to legislators, contributing employers, members, and taxpayers.	To provide governance and oversight of the management and operations of the public employee pension fund, including establishing policies and determining legislative priorities.	To fulfill the mission of PERA on behalf of all the members and to oversee the administration of the pension funds for the long term sustainability of the plans. Trustees should bring their diverse viewpoints to policy discussions and should act and speak with one voice as a Board. Trustees should promote transparency and communication with members.	The primary role of a trustee is to act as a fiduciary and ensure the appropriate level of governance is exercised so that the direction and oversight of the organization ensures sustainability for all members. Fulfilling this responsibility is detailed in Minnesota Statutes 353.03.	To ensure the long-term viability of Pera to serve retirees, survivors, actives, deferred, and future members as an on-going defined benefit plan. That all plans remain supported by its members, local governments, state government, and taxpayers.
2. How do you think you could contribute to PERA as a member of the Board of Trustees?	I understand financial operations and when I volunteer for a task, I do the job. I understand how long-term obligations are funded and feel a responsibility to assure that PERA remains strong. I'll raise questions as necessary at board meetings and with staff and legislators. I'm not afraid to pursue questions. I will explain how PERA works to whomever will listen and advocate for it.	My 40+ years of experience in public (state / school district) and non-profit service has included responsibility for financial management. I previously served on the State pension board (MSRS). I have experience and familiarity with the long-term policy issues that face the state and the importance of its support of public pensions. I also previously served on the Investment Advisory Committee of the State Board of Investment, which has responsibility for investing and managing public pension funds.	I would bring a collaborative, creative and practical perspective to the Board in addition to my technical expertise. I would also bring extensive experience balancing policy, operational and political realities with broad stakeholder acceptance. I would bring the perspective a wide range of retirees, disabilitants and survivors	My experience previously serving as a trustee and then as a chief lobbyist during a time when the top priority was passage of the Pension Omnibus Bill gives me a unique perspective regarding how the goals and objectives of the board can intersect with the legislature. I believe that this will make my participation on the board more constructive and strategic as future challenges arise.	Experience as the City of White Bear Lake's Finance Director for 25 years whereby developed and adherence to solid financial policies and management resulted in 4 bond rating upgrades to AA+ in 2018. I offer prior Pera Board experience, dedication, and a strong desire to serve the Board again. I could bring to the Board the knowledge that maintaining a financially strong Pera pension plan benefits all constituents. As a public servant for nearly 40 years, I have developed an understanding that all the State's citizens benefits from a quality local government workforce which is supported by a solid defined benefit plan administered by Pera.
3. Do you have any additional comments?	After contributing to PERA for 33 years I now rely on it. When I was young my family relied on the social security survivor benefit. I appreciate what survivor benefits do for a family. I have the time to be an active trustee. PERA is a model that sets a high standard for a pension plan and sets an example for what is possible for all workers.	I understand the value of the public pension plan and its importance to public employees, retirees, the public employers of the state and the state economy generally. The long-term sustainability of the plan is of critical importance.	I am excited about this rare opportunity to contribute to the long term success of PERA. The Board will continue to face challenges and difficult decisions in the next several years. I am committed to working with with all stakeholders - retirees, active members, employers, the legislature and the general public in making progress towards 100% funded plans.		As a past Board of Trustee member who was entrusted by the Board to serve as its President, I understand the complex issues that the Board routinely deal with. The Board operated in a political environment which requires compromises (shared sacrifice) to achieve a vibrant future.  It would be an honor to serve Pera again as its retired, disabled, and survivor representative.