

President's Report for 2023

Good evening and welcome once again to our 3rd Governing Board Meeting in Gettysburg. I hope you are enjoying the Wyndham. I want to thank PISI/AMBA for hosting our reception and dinner, they will also be hosting breakfast tomorrow. True Hearing is also helping to offset some of our expenses, and I want to acknowledge them for that assistance. We have numerous items on the agenda so I will be brief in my "State of PARSE" remarks.

Let me introduce our officers:

Paul Sebasovich – Vice President-Treasurer

Vickie Bailey – State Secretary

Judy Janis – Administrative Assistant

Jodi Boal – Fiscal Assistant

Central Region VP – Paul Miller

Northeast Region VP – Jack Quirk

Norwest Region VP – Dr. James Godlewski

Southeast Region VP – Mike Gart.

Southwest Region – Tom Buerkle.

I also want to thank Evelyn Trent who will serve as parliamentarian. The work of the members of the various PARSE committees is vital to PARSE and their efforts are acknowledged. Similarly, I want to acknowledge the dedication of all the chapter officers.

In brief some PARSE highlights:

1. We crossed the 33,000-member threshold at the end of 2022. We continue to have a goal of 35,000 members and we are currently at 34+K. I appreciate the efforts some of the chapters made to contact those who had not responded to either the original invoice or the reminder invoice. We continue to collect more 2023 dues as insurances are renewed. I want to thank PISI/AMBA for their efforts to recruit new members.
2. We held regional meetings in-person this year and it was good to see some faces in person rather than on a screen.
3. We had over 10,700 members use the on-line payment option for dues this year. Once again, the State Office absorbed the costs associated with an online transaction (almost \$1) and we will do the same this year. We implemented changes to that system to hopefully make it easier for more people to pay dues online and saw an increase of some 2,000 additional on-line payments.

4. The Audit Committee did perform an audit for 2022, Tom Hoffman will be presenting that report. I thank Tom and his team for their efforts.
5. PARSE finances remain solid and as a result dues remain at \$20 for next year and the following 3 years as you might note on the projected budgets. A member of the Finance Committee will present the budget for the next fiscal year.
6. You voted last year to return to Gettysburg for a third year. In 2024 we will be at the Best Western in Harrisburg; we were scheduled to have our 2020 meeting at that venue but had to cancel for COVID.
7. I know that the PISI/AMBA team of benefit advisors continue to attend numerous meetings at the chapter level. The feedback I have received on these has been very positive with the presenters' reviewing products and being available after the meetings for one-on-one consultation.
8. We will share with all the chapters the information presented by the Office of Administration.
9. After the general elections last fall, I approached our Government Relations advisor, NOVAK Strategic Advisors, with what I saw as an opportunity. My idea was to find a way to help retirees particularly those who retired pre 2002 (before the factor change). My proposal was to use some of the surplus as a stipend/13th payment or stimulus. As you know the stimulus funds the Commonwealth received, during COVID, could not be used for pensions, by law. NOVAK began scheduling meetings for me with some of the new leadership and to date there have been 18-20 meetings. We saw some interest in a COLA for those who retired prior to 2002. There are now 2 bills in the process. We will continue to work to see if we can generate interest in some help for the post 2002 retirees but must keep in mind that the unfunded liability issue has not evaporated. You received a letter from me on the bills in process and I hope that many of you took the time to write or call our elected officials. **By a show of hands how many of you contacted your elected officials.**
10. NOVAK has been keeping us updated on any other legislation that might be important to retirees. I hope that you have found their monthly reports interesting and useful. A member of the NOVAK team will speak at your chapter meetings on request.
11. AMBA has proposed an extension of the current marketing agreement from 2025 until 2030. As part of that proposal AMBA added some support items for PARSE. A member of the Executive Committee will review the proposal with you and call for a vote on that extension.
12. You have all seen the increases in the cost of postage. It costs about \$9,000 to print and mail a letter to members. I wanted a fast way to reach out to many PARSE members, if for example there were some urgent matters for a vote in Harrisburg. If PARSE attempted a large email, we would be blocked as spam. In conjunction with our IT consultants, we are utilizing a service that is authorized for bulk emailing. The annual cost for that service is about 1/3 the cost of a single mailing. Some of you have seen test emails from that service, known as

Constant Contact. I have been using that service to send a welcome email to all new members monthly. We also know that many of the email addresses we have on file are no longer in use or not correct. We are developing a process to ask members to review and update their email address. This will be much like the invoice process where you will have the option, at no cost, to go online and confirm or update your email address or you can mail the card you receive back to the State Office with your valid email information. We anticipate beginning this project in January. I also want to assure you that we do not give out this type of information, your email will be used for PARSE business only. As we get our email addresses, they will be reflected on files you receive. I would also hope in the future using Constant Contact the State Office could do announcements for chapter events.

Previously I mentioned looking for new ideas or ways to attract new members to come to meetings and hopefully become involved. I have talked to some other organizations, and they have tried specific events. Some examples: meet at a museum or historic site and have a guided tour, perhaps lunch after the tour. One group told me they started a book club and will meet separately or before or after a chapter meeting. The Phila-Bucks chapter have a trip to a casino and another to a winery. These are just a few suggestions of things that might appeal to new members and get them involved in the chapter. If any have you tried something, and it went well let us know and we will share that experience with all the chapters.

This next year will be one of challenges:

1. Get the COLA legislation for the pre 2002 retirees passed.
2. Push for some type of a stimulus for all other retirees.
3. Continue our efforts to reach 35K members.
4. Find ways to engage new retirees, they are the future of PARSE.
5. Complete our email refresh project to enable effective communication with many members.
6. Implement an on-line application process.

I look forward to a great meeting this evening and tomorrow!

Thank you.