

TMRS E-Bulletin for Cities – Vol. 15
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**THIS ISSUE: Legislative Stakeholder Group, 2008 Annual Seminar, City Portal
and New TMRS Website**

Legislative Stakeholder Group (LSG) Finalizes Report to TMRS Board

The LSG has completed the pre-legislative session phase of its work on the TMRS legislative proposal for 2009. A subcommittee of the group reviewed draft legislation and made minor suggested changes to the language before sending it to the whole group on September 5, 2008. The full group sent the report to the TMRS Board of Trustees for their consideration at their meeting on September 25-26.

The report recommends these provisions:

- Establish a guaranteed 5% floor for member interest credits and the annuity purchase rate used to calculate benefits. (Statutory change)
- Allow cities to receive an annual rate of interest that will vary from the employee rate and that will rise and fall based in part on the fund's annual net investment gain or loss. In good years, employers will receive a higher rate of interest, but in poor performing years, the employer rate may be lower or even negative. (Statutory change)
- Establish a larger reserve fund to help mitigate investment return volatility and to stabilize future city contribution rates. (Change enabled by the legislation but not directly addressed in the draft language. Reserve policies are established by Board action.)
- Maintain the LSG as an advisory body to the Board. (Non-statutory; the TMRS Board will consider expanding the TMRS Advisory Committee on Retirement Matters to include the organizations represented in the LSG at its September 25-26 meeting.)

The LSG was formed in April 2008 and included representatives from employee associations, TML and affiliated groups, and elected officials. TMRS Board member Frank Simpson chaired the group, and Board member April Nixon acted as vice chair. The meetings provided a lively exchange of viewpoints and a consensus on issues vital to the future of TMRS.

If you have questions about TMRS legislation, please contact Government Relations Director Eddie Solis at esolis@tmrs.com.

Hurricane Ike: Notice to Cities

With the potential threat of Hurricane Ike, if your city services are disrupted, please know that TMRS will work with all cities affected to accommodate payroll reporting needs. Please contact TMRS if your city is unable to meet payroll reporting deadlines.

TMRS Annual Training Seminar Draws Correspondents to Corpus Christi

Over 200 City Correspondents and other city personnel joined the TMRS staff in Corpus Christi for the 2008 Annual Training Seminar. Attendees heard presentations from the Honorable Henry Garrett, Mayor of Corpus Christi; TMRS Executive Director Eric Henry; the TMRS Travel Team; Government Relations Director Eddie Solis; Peter Madsen of investment consultant R.V. Kuhns & Associates; and Mark Randall of actuarial firm Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company (GRS). This seminar focused on basic training in TMRS benefits.

On March 1-3, 2009, TMRS will host a Seminar on Funding and Legislation at the Hyatt in Austin. The programming at that event will be focused on TMRS' legislative proposal, the continuing dialogue about changes in TMRS investments, and early observations on the actuarial valuation that will be performed as of 12/31/08. The intended audience for the March Seminar will be city finance officers, city managers, and decision makers. We will send detailed information on that seminar soon.

City Portal Survey – Last Chance!

In August, TMRS sent many of you a link to an online survey concerning the possible contents of the new “City Portal” that TMRS will be developing over the next two years. If you have not taken the survey, please see the e-mail that was previously sent to you for the link.

New TMRS Website Coming

Attendees at the Annual Training Seminar got an early look at the new TMRS Website, which offers a new “look and feel” and additional functionality and information. We will be switching over to the new site in two weeks and will send an announcement when it's “live.”

Movement from the “old” site to the new one will be transparent when people go to www.TMRS.com.

NOTE - Previously issued e-bulletins and correspondence are posted in the “Breaking News for Cities” section on the TMRS Website.