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HONOLULU-PACIFIC

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Honolulu-Pacific Federal Executive Board
Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
5 December 2019 1:00 – 3:30 PM
Hosted by Hawai'i National Guard
MXG HQ, JBPHH, Hawaii

Executive Committee Members in Attendance:

Scott Ebell DPAA – Chair
COL Tim Farr - DKI APCSS
Mark Stegman - USPACOM, Deputy J9
COL Scott Peterson – US Army IMCOM Pacific
Chris Robinson – USCIS
Kimberly Evans – FAA
Torrey Cunningham – FEMA
Todd Schafer – Navy Pacific Fleet
Richelle Takara – FHWA
Ryan Okahara – HUD
Glory Gervacio Suarez – EEOC
Chris Conklin – HPFEB
Brian Mikel – HPFEB
COL Dann Carlson – HIANG 154th Wing (Host)

1:00: Chair Opens Meeting, Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Ebell called the meeting to order, and made preliminary remarks. He thanked the Executive Committee members for the investment of leadership and effort in serving on the board, as well as the Air National Guard for hosting the meeting. He also asked for support into taking the HPFEB to the next level, including continued commitment, leadership, mentorship and resources, including providing support to the variety of working groups under the auspices of the board. Chair Ebell also discussed the fact that many of our organizations are facing, or currently dealing with, a wave of retirements, and asked for members' help in strengthening partnerships with educational institutions, participating in job fairs/conferences and similar forums to help communicate the value of a public service career. This includes highlighting the benefits and opportunities of working for the nation's largest employer, our federal government.

Last, the Chair asked for help in resourcing the HPFEB when needed and agencies can help. FEB's have the ability, unlike agencies with congressional appropriations, to accept donations (funding and otherwise) from other federal agencies, in addition to organic support from the local host agency. This is a standard

practice for the annual federal employee awards event, and in the past some agencies have provided invitational travel orders to support FEB staff travel to annual conferences and workshops (NOAA NMFS and PACFLT are specifically thanked for this support in FY2019), and the Chair asked that if agencies are in a position to provide this support going forward that they contact the HPFEB staff.

1:10: Recognition of FY2020 Executive Committee Chair and Members

Chair Ebell recognized the FY2020 Executive Committee members and introductions were made for those in attendance or representing.

1:15: Update on Combined Federal Campaign (Chris Conklin)

ED Conklin provided an update on the 2019 Combined Federal Campaign Solicitation period, which is under the leadership of Campaign Chair U.S. Army Pacific. The 2019 campaign is generally proceeding smoothly and is currently trending above 2017 and 2018 campaign numbers for total pledges and donors, with nearly \$800K raised to date. A strong on the ground effort and improvements to the on-line portal have helped. CFC remains a program still struggling to find footing after the major re-organization in 2017 and agency leadership support to the campaign is requested. Updated slides are available here: <https://honolulu-pacific.feb.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Hawaii-Pacific-Area-CFC-2019-Updates-to-Executive-Committee.pdf>

1:25: HPFEB Operations, Lines of Business Topics (Brian Mikel)

-Retirement Training Discussion

DD Mikel presented a summary of the significant role the HPFEB plays in the delivery of retirement and benefits training for federal employees, including a discussion of the four primary sources of retirement training, all of which seem to have broad appeal and remain in high demand. Training is provided in a variety of forums, including strictly government trainers (SEC/TSP/SSA/OPM), professional trainers on a strictly tuition basis for workshops, and no-cost, typically half-day FERS retirement training – typically provided by pre-screened trainers who may have links to the financial planning/advisory industry. Some individual agencies have direct relationships with trainers. The HPFEB is diligent in screening trainers, and EC members commented that most agencies do not have funds to dedicate so free or no-cost trainings are likely far greater benefit and outweigh the potential risk but HPFEB staff should remain vigilant vetting and monitoring the presenters whom we sponsor.

-Interagency Training Working Group

DD Mikel shared progress of the re-developed training working group to share resources and coordinate efforts across FEB member agencies. He requested that EC members delegate their workforce development staff to partner in the effort. The network should allow for each of them to expand their reach and for development opportunities to their employees. There was a robust discussion about this topic, and of interest was mid-career (GS-12/13) leadership development opportunities. Specifically, EEOC shared that internally they offer trainings that fulfill Individual Development Plans and soft skills requirements, meet the competencies necessary to meet the supervisory training requirements established by 5 CFR Part 412. FAA added that soft skills training, often via webinar are valuable. As a larger effort, HPFEB is going to focus on utilizing our local leadership/talent to develop trainings, sharing expertise across our workforce. We have successfully offered no-cost interagency training by Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS) and were scheduled to host more from FMCS, and Defense Intelligence Agency is hosting training in early 2020. Both have been met with great enthusiasm, if you have expertise that you would like to share...let the HPFEB know and perhaps a collaborative workshop can be developed.

Additionally, the HPFEB has developed a community events submission page on the website that allows agencies to submit events, such as training courses in which extra seats might be available to other agency

employees, these will then be reviewed and posted on the main events calendar. You can submit an event here: <https://honolulu-pacific.feb.gov/home/federal-agencies-can-submit-community-events-to-our-event-calendar/> .

-Working Groups:

Each working group is in need of support. Serving on a Working Group is a great opportunity for interested personnel to broaden their scope and gain valuable experience working with colleagues across agencies. It is a no-cost development opportunity that everyone agrees helps themselves and his or her organizations perform at a higher level. Our active working groups include:

- Diversity Working Group
- Emergency Preparedness Working Group
- Mediation/ADR Working Group
- Training/Workforce Development Working Group

As Chair Ebell stated in his opening remarks, key areas to support the HPFEB are in identifying personnel to contribute to working groups or related projects. HPFEB can also utilize delegated staff, interns or volunteers.

1:50: Review and Approval of FY2020 Local Operating Plan (Chris Conklin)

ED Conklin presented the FY2020 HPFEB Local Operating Plan, highlighting specific areas of emphasis. The focus continues to leverage technology, particularly the modernized and interacting HPFEB website, to do things better, smarter, faster and cheaper. Follow up review was done by e-mail, and with minor changes the plan was approved and submitted to OPM. It is posted here: <https://honolulu-pacific.feb.gov/who-we-are/hpfeb-annual-reports-plans/>

2:00: Update on DOD support to FEBs (Chris Conklin)

ED Conklin updated the committee on the current status of DoD support to the FEB network – currently 8 of 28 FEBs are supported by DoD agencies nationwide (salaries and benefits, via the DoD White House Service (WHS)). There is increased scrutiny of this budget line item by DoD-WHS, however there is no current indication that this support will not be continued, though expect increased focus on structuring the process and increasing transparency. HPFEB will continue to monitor and partner with the host agency (PHSY an IMF).

2:10: Workforce Updates (Chris Conklin)

ED Conklin presented the workforce update for the end of calendar year 2019, including proposed 2020 pay raises, changes to Thrift Savings Plan withdrawal options, and local congressional support to direct OPM to assess the current status of the COLA/Locality Pay transition and the overall equitability of federal pay in Hawaii. That update is attached. A brief discussion followed regarding opportunities for the HPFEB to foster local “listening sessions” with Members of Congress so that agency leaders can hear from Hawaii legislators and share concerns on an informal basis. The HPFEB staff will research best practices by other network FEBs who do these annually and poll local legislative staffs, and share this information with the board.

2:25: Upcoming FY2020 events EC read outs/presentations/questions/concerns (Brian Mikel)

DD Mikel reviewed the planned 2020 Calendar of Events (please see attached - note key events of Excellence in Gov Awards May 1, 2020 and graduation ceremonies for the Pacific Leadership Academy July 24, 2020).

Proposed Executive Committee dates for remainder of FY2020: *March 5, 2020, June 4, 2020, September 10, 2020*. Please notify us of any known conflicts to consider alternate dates.

2:35: Chair Adjourns Meeting; relocate to the F-22 Static Display from your Hawaii National Guard.

Chair Ebell thanked the EC meeting members and their representatives for supporting the HPFEB and all that they do in their leadership roles, and adjourned the meeting. A part of the HPFEB's professional development initiative EC members were presented an informative static display of the Air National Guard F-22 Raptor presented by the Commander and Pilots of the 154th Air Wing Group at JBPHH (picture attached). This event enhanced EC members' understanding of how the Air National Guard supports the National Defense Strategy.

3:30: Conclusion of Static Display and Meeting

Submitted: Dec 17, 2019



Chris Conklin
HPFEB Executive Director

Approved: Dec 18, 2019



Scott Ebell
HPFEB Chairman

- Attachments:
- (1) FY-2020 1st Quarter HPFEB Workforce Update
 - (2) FY-2020 HPFEB Calendar of Events
 - (3) EC and F-22 Raptor (Hawaii Air National Guard)

HPFEB Workforce Update: December 17, 2019

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...Bipartisan Spending Package Includes 3.1

Percent Federal Pay Raise: Congress just unveiled a bipartisan appropriations package that would fully fund the federal government for fiscal year 2020. The deal includes a 3.1 percent average federal pay raise - a 2.6 percent increase across the board (as authorized previously by President Trump) with 0.5 percent for locality pay. **Currently, final action on the raise pends agreement by the Senate and the President's signature on the bill.** Locality pay will be apportioned by OPM in accordance with current labor and salary models – typically the updated pay tables are promulgated during the last week of the year. Since Hawaii and other non-foreign COLA areas remain in a multi-year transition from COLA to Locality Pay, employees in Hawaii, Guam/CNMI will see any increase in locality pay offset by a smaller offset in COLA, which effectively eliminates the Locality Pay raise (except for calculating retirement annuities).

Military Members will see a 3.1% pay raise in 2020: The package also includes a provision to repeal the "Cadillac tax," which is a 40 percent excise tax on high-value employer-sponsored health insurance. With the current funding deadline set for midnight on Friday, December 20, Congress must act on appropriations this week to avoid a government shutdown.

Also at issue in that bill is House language to prevent any further breakup of OPM, which already has lost its background investigative function (and associated revenue) to DoD; the administration wants to further send its other operating divisions to the GSA while putting its policy functions in a new sub-office of OMB.

White House, Democrats Reach Deal to Provide Paid Family Leave to Feds: The Trump administration and congressional Democrats reached a tentative deal late last week to provide all federal employees with paid family leave, marking a culmination of years of advocacy on the issue.

According to a congressional source familiar with negotiations, the White House agreed to support the provision as part of the fiscal 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, in exchange for Democrats' acquiescence on the establishment of the U.S. Space Force as an independent branch of the armed services. The policy, set for implementation by October 2020, would allow federal employees to take the leave coinciding with the birth, adoption or fostering of a child, but not the provision allowing for the care of an ailing loved one.

Effective December 17, 2019, the bill had been passed by Congress and was heading to the President's desk for signature.

OPM is again pressing agencies quickly adhere to three executive orders signed by President Trump: These have been under legal challenges, this time with a focus on union-related provisions in those orders. This follows earlier guidance pushing agencies to put into effect the disciplinary-related provisions.

“Agencies should adhere to the now-effective provisions of the EOs in ongoing negotiations and reopen collective bargaining agreements at the soonest possible opportunity in order to conform applicable provisions of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) with the EOs’ requirements. The soonest possible opportunity will generally be at the conclusion of a current term of a CBA when all relevant provisions of the EOs become operative and enforceable,” OPM said.

The guidance recounts the provisions that were enjoined by court order at one time but now are in effect, including time limits on negotiating over ground rules and over the subject-matter bargaining, a bar on negotiating over matters that are negotiable at management’s discretion under federal labor law, and limits on what agencies are to agree to in bargaining.

Those include a number of limits on “official time” for employees with union roles, including to generally limit the total to one hour per employee in the bargaining unit per year; allow employees to use it no more than 25 percent of their time at work; bar its use to pursue grievances except on an employee’s own behalf or under other limited circumstances; and generally require advance written approval by the agency for using it.

Further, agencies “shall not subject to grievance procedures or binding arbitration disputes involving subjects such as performance ratings and awards” and “generally should not afford employees more than a thirty day period to demonstrate acceptable performance” before taking disciplinary action if the employee’s performance remains unacceptable. Also included are directives to deny unions “free or discounted use of government property or any other agency resources if such free or discounted use is not generally available for non-agency business by employees when acting on behalf of non-federal organizations.”

Latest White House guidance here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-executive-orders-13836-13837-13839/>

New employee conduct and disciplinary rules being finalized: OPM has projected finalizing in March proposed rules to give management greater discretion and control over disciplinary policies while giving employees accused of poor performance less of an opportunity to improve before being disciplined.

The rules, which OPM proposed in September—and whose comment period expired in October—would carry out many of the provisions of three executive orders on disciplinary and union related matters that are now in effect following the lifting of a court injunction against some parts of all three. OPM projected the March date in a notice of ongoing and planned rule-making activities.

Among other things, the rules would:

- Tell agencies to choose up to the maximum penalty regardless of the employee’s disciplinary record or what was done in prior similar situations;
- Strongly discourage them from committing to using progressive discipline or tables of penalties on grounds that they hinder management’s discretion;
- Refuse to agree in negotiations to limits on their discretion;

-Require that managers be notified when a probationary period is about to expire and give the employee stronger appeal rights;

-Bar agencies from removing certain information from employees' personnel files as part of settlement agreements; and

-Generally limit the period for an employee to respond to a disciplinary notice to the 30 days guaranteed by law, after which agencies would make a final decision within 15 days.

Further, any measures taken during a yearly performance appraisal cycle to assist an employee, not just those taken during a formal performance improvement opportunity period, would meet an agency's obligation under law to give the employee a chance to improve.

Once an agency has met that obligation, it could order discipline up to firing if the employee's performance continued to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements of the job.

The rules also would carry out a 2017 law requiring disciplinary action against a management official found to have retaliated against a whistleblower—at least a three-day suspension and up to firing for a first offense, and mandatory firing for a second.

In formal comments, unions have raised numerous objections to both the letter and the spirit of the proposed rules, which they characterized as pushing agencies to take more, and more severe, disciplinary actions than currently.

2020 by the numbers: The Internal Revenue Service has announced the 2020 contribution limits for the Thrift Savings Plan and for Individual Retirement Arrangements. The amount federal employees can save in their TSP accounts is increasing next year.

Pay Raise

Per above, awaiting final agreement by Congress and the President's signature. Military members would see a 3.1% across the board raise, federal civilians will see a 2.6% across the board raise and 0.5% average apportioned to locality pay across the locality pay areas.

2020 TSP Contribution Limits

The annual contribution limit in 2020 for the TSP will be \$19,500, up from \$19,000 in 2019, a 2.6% increase. This limit also applies to 401(k), 403(b), and most 457 plans.

The catch-up contribution limit for employees aged 50 and over who participate in these plans is increased from \$6,000 to \$6,500.

2020 IRA Contribution Limits

The contribution limit for Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRA) remains unchanged at \$6,000. In 2019, it increased to this amount, up from \$5,500 in 2018.

Social Security Earnings Cap

On October 10, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announced that the 2020 social security wage base will be \$137,700, which is an increase of \$4,800 from \$132,900 in 2019 [SSA, Press Release, 10-10-19].

Maximum social security tax. The FICA tax rate remains 7.65% for 2020 up to the social security wage base (see the Social Security Fact Sheet: 2020 Social Security Changes). The maximum social security tax employees and employers will each pay in 2020 is \$8,537.40, an increase of \$297.60 from \$8,239.80 in 2019.

2020 COLA Increase



Securing today
and tomorrow

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) from the third quarter of 2018 through the third quarter of 2019, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries will receive a 1.6 percent COLA for 2020. This COLA is also applied to other defined benefits such as civil service annuities, veterans' benefits, military retired pay, etc. Get the fact sheet from the Social Security Administration: [2020 COLA Fact Sheet 1.6% Increase](#) .

New TSP withdrawal options went into effect in September: The TSP recently announced new withdrawal options for both active and retired federal account holders, which will greatly increase flexibility in managing account withdrawals. These new options address longstanding concerns with the lack of flexibility for employees who begin to take TSP withdrawals, and help to demonstrate the value of remaining in the TSP after retirement. Download the TSP fact sheet here: [Fact Sheet New TSP Withdrawal Options – 09-15-19](#) .

COLA/Locality Pay Transition in HI and other non-foreign areas: At current transition rate, it is estimated that the complete transition of non-foreign COLA to Locality Pay in Hawaii could last another 20+ years. During this transition period, any locality pay raises are essentially “given up” by current employees as COLA is offset. The tradeoff for small increases in eventual retirement annuities is that Hawaii federal employees’ pay gap with high cost areas on the mainland is increasing each year.

Congressman Ed Case (D-HI) recently introduced language in a House Appropriations Committee report: Directing OPM to issue a report analyzing the calculation of locality pay in salary and benefit adjustments for employees living in non-foreign areas, including an assessment of how the calculations compare with those of Federal employees living in the rest of the United States. In addition, the report should include information, where possible, on the differential in pay received by retirees and survivor annuitants in these locations who did not receive consideration of full locality pay amounts in their high-3 earnings on which annuities are calculated. The language also directed OPM to include policy recommendations on these issues for Congress, and to assess the forecasted transition timeline.



Honolulu-Pacific Federal Executive Board

FY20 Important Dates and Events

Bookmark HPFEB events calendar: <https://honolulu-pacific.feb.gov/event/>

October 23: GEBI Retirement & Benefits Training (\$\$ - Advisors)

October 24: Keys to Driving Successful Teams – FMCS Training

October 28 – November 7, 2019: PLA Senior/Emerging Week 1

November 14: Inspiring Women Financial Literacy Workshop (Free - Advisor)

November 19 & 21st: GEBI Retirement & Benefits Training (\$\$ - Advisors)

December 5: Executive Committee Meeting

December 12: FERS Training – NOAA IRC – Connolly (Free - advisor)

January 9/10, 2020: Retirement Training – Pinnacle Services – Hatch (\$\$ - expert)

January 12: CFC Campaign closes

January 22: Three Levels of Listening – Mike Spencer DIA (two sessions)

January 28/29: What's in your Retirement Portfolio? (Dependent on CR/budget) (GOV)

January 31: Employee of the Year Nominations Open

March 3 & 4: "Think and Act Like a Leader" (Strategic Thinking, Creative Thinking, Social Emotional Intelligence) – Jerry Strom

March 18: Excellence in Government Awards Nominations due

March 5: Executive Committee Meeting

March 23 – April 2: PLA Senior/Emerging Week 2

March (date TBD): FMCS training

May 1: Excellence in Government Awards Ceremony, JBPHH (Tradewinds or O Club)

June 21-24: Pacific Leadership Academy Senior/Emerging Week 3

June 24: Pacific Leadership Academy Graduation, Tradewinds Hall, JBPHH

July 20-22: "Lead-In to Leadership" (Six Core Competencies of Leadership, Relationships, and Communication) – Jerry Strom

July (dates TBD): What's in your Retirement Wallet?

Additional Activities:

**UH Outreach College Project Management and other Professional Development trainings offered throughout the year.*

**Monthly COOP Trainings in coordination with EPWG & San Francisco FEB*

**Diversity Working Group – Forum (Targeting August)*

**Schedule ADR Working Group trainings*

...and more to be added throughout the year!



As part of the Honolulu-Pacific Federal Executive Board's Professional Development Initiative Executive Committee members were presented an informative static display of the Hawaii Air National Guard's F-22 Raptor by the Commander and Pilots of the 154th Air Wing Group, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI. This event enhanced the Executive Committee members' understanding of how the Air National Guard skillfully uses both service members and civilian employees to support the National Defense Strategy.