

SPOTLIGHT

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

MAY 15-16, 2026

UPDATES

Lobby Day delivered results

May 6 Lobby Day had a real impact. SEANC's lobbying team credits the day with moving retiree relief from a likely 1% to 2.5% one-time, and with strengthening pay-raise provisions for specific groups. Strong showings came from the East and West. Pension-system funding, COLAs, and pay raises were the central asks.

Officers met with Senator Phil Berger's office for nearly an hour and then with Speaker Destin Hall's staff. During the meeting, Senate Leader Phil Berger announced the General Fund revenue forecast for the biennium has been revised from \$68.5 billion to \$71.1 billion. SEANC views this as confirmation that the state has the money for meaningful pay raises and a real retiree COLA, and legislative pressure is working.

SEANC wins partial pause on WakeMed/Atrium merger; pressure continues

SEANC's advocacy contributed to Wake County Commissioners voting to pause the proposed Atrium Health takeover of WakeMed for 90 days.

State Auditor Dave Boliek and State Treasurer Brad Briner both publicly opposed the merger. The Treasurer's office projects the merger would add \$7 per month – \$84 per year – in State Health Plan premiums for every member paying a premium, even if everything else in the plan went perfectly.

Both hospitals were originally built as public hospitals (Atrium as Charlotte Memorial; WakeMed as a Wake County hospital). Atrium pays its CEO \$26 million a year. SEANC built a tool on the website to help members contact Wake County Commissioners directly here: <https://www.seanc.org/atrium-wakemed-merger>

Craggy Correctional closure announced

The Department of Adult Correction announced to Craggy staff that the facility will close, with offenders leaving in June. The state reportedly plans to sell the property for \$100 million, but the department has already spent the \$80 million the legislature appropriated. The old unit at Marion Correctional (108 beds) will reopen, but Craggy has more than 400 beds. SEANC is engaged with the Secretary and OSHR on behalf of Craggy personnel facing uncertain reassignments.

Guest Speaker - Executive Director of Retirement System Sam Watts

Watts discussed preparing for the future. He walked the board through the state of the retirement system: \$141 billion in the fund, \$9 billion paid out annually, with NC consistently punching above its weight nationally. He emphasized that the system is at an inflection point. The legislature wants the pension to become self-sufficient and fund its own COLAs. Investments would need to generate \$109 billion in gains over 10 years just to meet assumed returns, and \$190 billion to support a COLA. Watts personally believes the governing board, not the legislature, should have COLA-granting authority with appropriate safeguards. His presentation PowerPoint is included in the Post-Packet.

Guest Speaker - State Auditor Dave Boliek

Boliek discussed his vacant-positions report, the DMV audit (which won national Audit of the Year), and the NC A&T audit that uncovered \$5.1 million in misused university funds being used to pay friends' and associates' tuition. The matter has been referred to the SBI and the Guilford County DA. Upcoming work includes the NC Education Lottery (first performance audit since 2008) and Medicaid.

Boliek and SEANC had a frank, sometimes tense exchange on whether vacancy problems are a management issue or a pay issue. Members made clear that state facilities cannot even participate in local job fairs because the pay isn't competitive.



UPDATES CONTINUED

Guest Speaker - National Director of One Voice Brian Dawe

Dawe presented the benefits of SEANC hosting the 2027 One Voice Medal of Honor. After the presentation and discussion, the board voted to host the event.

Two-Year Convention - Past President Charles Johnson, Two-Year Convention

Johnson reported that the committee is tasked with exploring moving the convention from annually to biennial (every other year) with a virtual/streamlined session in the off year for elections and required business.

A Town Hall is set for June 2 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom to discuss the proposal with delegates. The Zoom link will go to district chairs to forward to their delegates. The bylaw amendment text and talking points will be in the post-packet. It must be passed by a district in order to be considered at convention. The state Bylaws Committee meets July 15 to consider amendments from the districts; final action will be at the 2026 Convention.

Convention - Brenda Johnson

- The new convention website (built by the Communications Department) is convention.seanc.org. It includes schedule, venue info, registration, deadlines, bylaw proposals, candidates, and policy platform.
- Registration: \$25 (delegates, alternates, guests, hospitality workers).
- Banquet tickets: \$80 (ribeye and chicken).
- President's Reception: Mexican Fiesta.
- Deadlines: registration, hospitality suites, raffle tickets, banquet tickets due July 15; final numbers locked June 30; all payments due August 15.
- Trying to eliminate check collection at convention.
- Room change requests after August 7 are district responsibility, must be by email with Brenda copied at bjohnson@seanc.org.
- 2027-2029 hotel agreements: Brenda negotiated suites back from \$375 to \$250 and food/beverage minimum from \$95,000 to \$75,000. 2029 agreement on hold pending the two-year convention vote.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

President's Report – Wendell Powell

- Since the last BOG meeting, Powell has actively engaged in advancing SEANC's mission through committee participation, member engagement, advocacy efforts, leadership development, and strategic planning. A list of his committee and board participation is included in the May 2026 Pre-BOG E-Packet.
- During the One Voice United Conference (April 30 - May 2), Powell was invited to speak on issues and challenges facing correctional professionals and law enforcement officers across the country.
- Powell motivated and energized members during the May 6 Lobby Day. He also met with Sen. Phil Berger.
- Powell attended the Public Service Summit on May 7. During the event he listened as Gov. Stein expressed his appreciation and support for North Carolina's state employees. Powell also had the opportunity to speak with Director of OSHR Staci Meyer and Secretary of DMVA Jocelyn Mallette.
- Continues to work closely with Brenda Johnson on the Penny for Pennies/purchasing power program.
- Encouraged the board to make decisions based on facts rather than feelings: "What we do today is going to affect us 50 years from now."



LEADERSHIP REPORTS

First Vice President's Report – Emily Jones

- Jones attended many meetings and events including: Retiree, Insurance, Emerging Leaders projects, Executive Board, Convention Planning, N.O.B.L.E meeting, WAGE meetings and conference.
- She encouraged everyone to convey information so that your delegation is in the best possible position to make informed decisions.

Second Vice President's Report – Stacie Crabtree

- Crabtree attended Lobby Day on May 6 and the Two-Year Convention planning meetings.
- Participated in District ELC Adopt-a-Highway cleanup.
- Most committees will be active in the coming months. She will have a fuller report at the next BOG meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Timothy Morgan

- Morgan reviewed the FYTD 2025-2026 budget which is on track for the fiscal year.
- Reminder: HR1 (the "Big Beautiful Bill") includes two provisions that may affect district tax reporting next January. Refer to the Finance Department email or contact the office with questions.

Past President's Report – Kirk Montgomery

- Montgomery attended the International City County Management Association in Orlando Florida (ICMA). Many North Carolina city and county managers were there and Montgomery shared SEANC benefits with them as a municipal government. He also received some contact information.
- Montgomery presented at the Society of Research Administrators International SIG meeting at Duke University on Artificial Intelligence. He met many state university representatives and discussed SEANC as an organization with them.
- Montgomery was the keynote speaker during the Police Chief Association annual meeting. He discussed Artificial Intelligence for Criminal Justice Information Systems. Montgomery is looking into SEANC being included as a sponsor next year.

Executive Director's Report – Ardis Watkins

- The legislature has released pay proposals, not a budget. No paper bill exists yet; the framing shifted within 24 hours from "budget" to "framework."
- The correctional officer step plan is a win, but covers only Correctional Officers I, II, III – not lieutenants, captains, programs, food service, or other certified staff working behind the walls. Wage compression is a real concern.
- The 8% teacher raise is an average; veteran teachers receive over 5%, but other school employees receive 3%.
- One-time retiree money moved from a likely 1% to 2.5% after Lobby Day pressure. SEANC will thank legislators when warranted, but 2.5% one-time is not enough.
- \$500 million per year is the real cost of turnover from a chronic revolving door of state employees – money that could fund raises.
- Population has grown by 2 million since 2009 while the state workforce has stayed flat.
- Outlined SEANC's pension legacy: suing Governor Easley over escrowed retirement funds (2001), eliminating placement-agent fees, passing the law requiring steady employer contributions, blocking the 10% crypto allocation last year, and 20 years of transparency advocacy.
- Legislator emails are going into quarantine due to heightened security. Members are encouraged to phone offices directly.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit – Alicia Simpson Warren

- The committee met on Feb. 19, April 15, April 20, and April 23
- The committee is finalizing district audits for Districts: 58, 28, 11, 10, and 6. Additional documentation is still being requested for these reviews.
- Upcoming district audits are Districts 42, 4, and 8.
- Please note, your updated District Audit Liaison information is in your BOG notebooks. Committee members are reaching out to District Chairs and Treasurers to assist.
- Districts: Please remember that it is policy to submit your monthly financial reports to the SEANC office each month. Failure to do so will result in a possible fine or withholding of district monthly rebate reimbursement.
- Should you have any questions or concerns you can reach Alicia via cell phone: 252-714-7818 or email: alicia040679@yahoo.com

Awards – Pam Hailey

- 2025-26 nomination forms are available on the SEANC website (seanc.org/awards). Electronic submissions of all awards with the exception of District of the Year Award are encouraged.
- Monetary awards during Convention: Distinguished Service - \$300; Member of the Year - \$200; District Chairperson of the Year - \$200
- Nomination Form Deadline: 4 p.m. Friday, July 17 (Friday of the July BOG meeting). District of the Year scrapbooks must be given to Beth Dew no later than Friday, July 17.
- The Awards Judging Meeting is scheduled for Thurs., Aug. 6 beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Benevolence – Deborah Fleming

- Please send information on members you know have passed, including address, to seancbenevolence@gmail.com.

Building – Janice Smith

- We are on schedule to have the restoration completed by the end of May. Once restoration is completed the process for returning to the office will begin.
- Goal is to have all equipment and staff back on the premises by the end of June.

Bylaws – Kim Martin

- Next Bylaws meeting is July 15: Advisory Committee will meet at 9 a.m.; Statewide will meet at noon.
- The Bylaws Advisory Committee has approved an updated amendment form, which can be found on the SEANC website. This form is easier for districts to complete
- Send forms to bylaws@seanc.org no later than July 15.

DHHS Study – Stephanie Nmashie

- The committee's dedicated DHHS email has gone quiet – no new submissions since the February BOG meeting. Stephanie asked the body to keep spreading the word.
- The revised DHHS study survey is in final stages of being republished, thanks to Jonathan and the Communications team.
- At Lobby Day, Stephanie secured a one-on-one meeting with Senator Amy Galey, Vice Chair of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee for HHS and the Oversight Committee for Medicaid. Galey was encouraging that a budget solution is coming.
- A communication project is in the works between Cherry and O'Berry employees and Rep. John Bell, likely virtual to maximize attendance. Suzanne is helping coordinate.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Emerging Leaders – Tiffany Vaughn

- Since the Feb. BOG conducted a meeting in March and April.
- Next Adopt-a-Highway is Aug. 1.
- Community Service Projects - Expanding its statewide efforts through both Eastern and Western region initiatives: East - planning underway for a community service project supporting Ronald McDonald House Charities. West: A quarterly themed donation initiative is being developed by a designated subcommittee. The project is anticipated to launch in late June or July.
- Convention - ELC Bowl Night and Breakout Sessions - the council is coordinating two breakout sessions. The sessions will focus on leadership development, engagement, and member involvement opportunities.

EMPAC – Junior Hulen

- During the April 29 State EMPAC meeting the committee discussed the November 2026 General Election and Endorsement Interviews, Volunteer Poll Site Training, and Convention Event Preparations
- Call your legislators. If you do not have a list, contact Junior.
- Suggestions or questions? Email Junior at m.hulen@hotmail.com.

Growth & Expansion – Alexandra Kaulback

- Working on plans for new convention buttons (mascot, theme) for distribution.
- Developing FAQ pamphlets for new members and delegates to prepare them for convention.
- Brainstorming a "Bingo at Convention" activity for new delegates to meet members.
- Send questions you commonly hear from members so the materials reflect real needs.

Insurance Board – Amy Robinson

- Committee met May 5 in conjunction with the Retiree Council. Six educational sessions held this year; August session will feature Shadow Lake and Aflac Accident.
- Mentoring program launching – Pam Hailey leading. Districts can mentor members toward becoming Insurance Board members.
- Boston Mutual term-life special open enrollment closed May 13. Sixty enrollments in the first two weeks versus a typical 2-3 per month. New account manager committed to a recurring \$2,500 annual scholarship donation.
- New Aflac Accident plan launches June 1; Aflac products now include retirees and self-enrollment.
- New broker-of-record arrangement on Aflac brings commission income directly to SEANC.
- Insurance Board nominations due July 15 to Amy.
- IB survey is collecting responses with a \$50 gift certificate prize (295 responses to date).

Investment Advisory – Angela Lyght

- During the April 28 meeting, the committee finalized the RQF for Investment Advisory Services. They also approved the following actions: Renewal of Existing CD and to allocate funds for a second CD.

Membership – Jamie Robinson

- The committee met on Monday before BOG.
- Robinson urged members: "Recruit, recruit, recruit." His model – using a pizza serving line to talk to non-members and offer scholarship tickets to sign-ups – yielded 5 new members for \$1 each.
- Regional cookout planned in the western Piedmont in August. District 9 events recruited 16 new members.
- Recruit the Recruiter - We have very few workplace recruiters. This is an initiative to grow our recruiters in the workplace, train them, and keep them engaged and excited about recruiting new members.
- School Convocations - School systems were sent an email and letter from Ardis requesting an opportunity to attend their upcoming convocations. We are creating a calendar of events and will share it with the districts this summer.
- Districts must make membership recruitment a priority! When a MRR has scheduled an event in your district, you are needed to assist with the event. districts and MRRs working together is a recipe for success.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning Committee – First Vice-President Emily Jones

- The committee met twice in May and began strategic planning for next year.
- The budget proposal will be presented during the next BOG meeting.

Policy and Oversight – Cliff Johnson

- Use the "What Has SEANC Done For Me" document at every membership event. It's on the website.
- New Board of Governors portal at board.seanc.org is live (password: seanc2026). Includes member directory, meeting materials, district page update forms, and the meeting flyer generator.
- A retiree-specific portal is active at retirees.seanc.org.
- Contact Cliff at clifford.johnson57@yahoo.com or 828-507-2991.

Policy Platform – Kelly Russell

- Our mission was discussed during the March 11 committee meeting. While salary is always a top priority, we want to look deeper into worksite-specific recommendations, and the requests from our retirees
- The Advisory Committee is reaching out to the District Policy Platform Chairs to gain insight that will aide in choosing this year's objectives.
- The next meeting is July 16 via Zoom for both the Advisory and Statewide Committees. An email with the information will be sent with the information and Zoom link.

Prison Reform – Deborah Harney

- Read: Governor's 2030 Re-entry Plan. First Lady Anna Stein has made re-entry her top priority.
- Goldsboro former prison purchased for \$275,000 by Mr. Pickman for a re-entry partnership with community colleges. A similar facility is being explored in the mountains.
- Members are reporting management pressure not to speak out publicly. Prison Reform Committee will support any member exercising First Amendment rights.

Public Education – Mark Dearmon

- N.C. State campus access: Dearmon uncovered specific policy language barring use of facilities for membership recruitment or product sales. UNC System President Peter Hans will host a Zoom with all 17 institution HR directors. N.C. State meeting is tentatively scheduled for next month.
- N.C. State recruitment campaign pilot (3 weeks, Meta-focused): 83,304 views, 38,538 accounts reached, 928 landing page views, 1,024 lead clicks. Surprised the committee by skewing 58.5% male. Currently zero member sign-ups. This confirms that face-to-face conversation, particularly on insurance, drives conversion better than political messaging.
- Considering extending the campaign to N.C. public schools (statewide), since K-12 non-teacher employees have no voice in the legislature.
- The Chancellor's College Golf Tournament is Sept. 29 at UNC Chapel Hill. Districts with a UNC System university (14 of them) are asked to consider helping fund the sponsorship.

Retiree Council – Benny Brigman

- Council met May 5 in conjunction with the Insurance Board.
- Shout-outs to Kathy Merritt and Stanley Drewery (East) for driving vans to Lobby Day, and to District 58 for bringing 10 attendees.
- Retiree Council position deadline: July 15. Notify Lynn Cote or Carri Derrick. No floor nominations.
- Brad Langhans has stepped in for Mitch Leonard on retiree forums at recent forums at Districts 69 and 56. There were 44 people in attendance at District 56's forum.
- Upcoming forums: May 30, June 11, July 16, Aug.14.
- Working with Ardis on getting SEANC members into Treasurer's Office retirement conferences.
- The Retiree Council voted to support a retiree dues increase, matching what active members pay – a \$7 increase. Districts are asked to help promote the change.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Scholarship – Nicole Hunter

- Updated Policy and Procedures Manual. Working on revising the bylaws.
- District judging has been completed, and the Foundation judging will begin soon.
- Reminder: districts cannot run parallel scholarship applications using SEANC's forms outside the official process – must maintain 501(c)(3) compliance.
- If districts would like additional raffle tickets or would like to turn in tickets early, please contact Nicole or Daisy so they can make the necessary adjustments.
- Bowl-a-Thon is Sat. July 18. Form submission deadline: July 7. Forms can be found on the SEANC website.

SEANC Cares – Carl Elliott

- Volunteered with First Vice President Emily Jones at the NCDAC Re-entry Conference to boost membership.
- Member case: Ms. Ray received notice from CVS Caremark that a prescription would no longer be covered. Elliott connected her through Lynn and Suzanne to Lisa Bingham at the State Health Plan/Treasurer's Office. Resolution pending.
- Reminder: SEANC Cares is available to help members navigate workplace and community issues.

MOTIONS

PASSED: To adopt the Board of Governors' Meeting Agenda of Friday, May 15, 2026 – Saturday, May 16, 2026.

PASSED: To accept and approve the Board of Governors' Meeting Minutes of Friday, February 20, 2026.

PASSED: That SEANC support hosting the One Voice Conference in 2027 at a cost of \$25,000 and that the funding will come out of reserves.

PASSED: To approve renewing the current \$300,000 CD for a term of up to 18 months. The final term will be determined based on the most favorable rate of return available at the time of renewal (August 2026).

PASSED: To approve allocating an additional \$300,000 CD for a term of up to 12 months. The final term will be determined based on the best available rate of return at the time of investment.

PASSED: To request a quote from experienced and qualified investment management services for SEANC's invested funds. The qualified Investment Advisor would provide strategic investment guidance and portfolio management, ensure alignment with SEANC's Investment Policy and Objectives, support prudent fiduciary oversight and long-term financial growth, and assist in developing investment strategies, asset allocation, and performance benchmarks. The amount of assets to be managed would range between \$200,000 to \$500,000.

PASSED: To approve the updated Insurance Board Operational Policy/Procedures.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Junior Hulen announced that he plans to run for re-election for EMPAC Chair at convention.

Next BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING is JULY 17-18, 2026

