

Minutes BREA Meeting

February 11, 2025

Via Zoom

Minutes recorded by Mona Rowe

Contact Information:

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association BREA

BNL Bldg. 400A

BERA Recreation/ Attention BREA Meeting

Upton, NY 11973

Officers 2024-2026: President: Arnold Moodenbaugh, Vice President: Andy Feldman, Secretary: Laura Miller, Treasurer: Louise Hanson

Present: Arnie Moodenbaugh, David Cox, Betty Elder, Ronnie Evans, Andy Feldman, Les Fishbone, Vinita Ghosh, Louise Hanson, Mark Israel, Mona Rowe, Steve Shapiro, Don Sievers, Barry Siskind, Ed Sperry, Kathy Walker, Gwyn Williams.

Guests from the Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP), Queen's College: Laura Buscemi-Robles, BNL coordinator (631)807-0457 buscemi.robles@gmail.com), Wajdy Hailoo, occupational medicine physician, (631)780-6611, info@msalive.com.

At the pre-meeting, the BREA Board approved the minutes from BREA's meeting on January 14, 2025.

BREA President Arnie Moodenbaugh called the meeting to order at 12:59 p.m.

1. Talk by Wajdy Hailoo about WHPP

I am in private practice and a professor at Stony Brook. I helped establish the WHPP, which is connected to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program. When the program started, it covered mostly cancer from radiation exposure. Parts were added later to cover chemicals and toxic substances at DOE sites. The screening is nationwide. I am contracted to do the screening exams and follow-up for BNL.

This is not a research program. It is a service program, helping individuals with medical and financial benefits. Some of the tests are unique, like testing for beryllium. The screening is free. Occupational medicine is a specialty. Primary physicians do not know what you are exposed to at work. What is tritium? What is beryllium? Screening is done specifically by occupational specialists. Also, we know the sites. I know BNL.

Prevention is also important. We are trying to detect work-related disease early and manage it.

Finally, screening is totally confidential, from the minute you start to when you get a report. Your privacy is completely maintained.

Application processing is now done around the country, east to west. The process is faster.

The compensation component is not part of screening. That is for the Department of Labor to decide.

WHPP has a National Advisory Committee. Through that committee, the program is continuously updated. It is dynamic. Noise exposure is also accepted.

Question: Is there any hesitancy from Department of Labor to compensate?

Answer from Hailoo: If you meet the criteria, the process is straightforward.

Q: Does the application require a letter from you?

A from Hailoo: There is a process, and you fill out the forms. You are assigned to a medical examiner.

Q: I went through the process while living on Long Island and it went well. But when I moved away, it was just the opposite.

A from Buscemi-Robles: We are following up.

A from Hailoo: If we did the initial exam, we will continue to include that person in our local program.

Q: How many are in the program?

A from Hailoo: Right now, the current list is >100. From the beginning, thousands of individuals have gone through the program. Over the years, \$28-29 million in compensation. Compensation can include lost-work time, survivor benefits.

Q: I worked at HFBR, and we had a lot of visitors.

A from Hailoo: Exposure was documented. We look at the year(s) and the day(s).

Q: Are the results available to my primary care physician?

A from Hailoo: One form asks for that contact information. If you chose that option, then that is shared.

General comments: Laura Buscemi-Robles and Wajdy Hailoo have been wonderful.

Treasurer's report from BREA Treasurer Louise Hanson

Louise provided an update on the account activities for January 2025 and the CDs in BREA's account, one of which is coming due soon. Her report was approved.

Membership report from BREA Membership Chair Betty Elder

Eight memberships were paid. They include maybe one or two new members; the rest are renewals. Mark asked if Ken White had joined. Betty: Not yet. Andy: Do you have contact info for everyone? Betty: I have everybody in our database. Arnie: Our database likely includes retirees who have passed away. Betty: I can check with HR about

updating our membership list. Mona: Melissa Schuchman in HR is responsive; she's very busy so you might have to wait a few days. Membership report accepted.

Action: Betty will contact Melissa about getting help identifying deceased retirees.

Newsletter report from BREA News Editor Mona Rowe

The March/April 2025 issue will carry a list of top 10 science discoveries at BNL, plus a follow-up on the Science User Support Center in Discovery Park. That follow-up was triggered by questions at the January BREA meeting regarding access to the new building in Discovery Park, renewing BNL IDs, BREA meetings in the SUSC, etc. Steve Shapiro was in the cafeteria a few days ago and reported on the food. Louise heard BNL Director JoAnne Hewett's State of the Lab talk. Hewett mentioned that they will be reopening cafeteria service.

Update on Tesla donation from Arnie Moodenbaugh

They have a huge chunk of money from New York state. BREA will donate up to \$1,050. After discussion about text for the brick, the membership agreed on: Brookhaven National Laboratory Retired Employees Association'. We can send a check to their fund raiser.

Action: Louise will look into this.

New Business

Donation: Les Fishbone moved to donate \$500 to the United Way of Long Island and \$500 to the Caltech and JPL Disaster Relief Fund for the recent wildfires in California. He gave the following: United Way of Long Island – <https://www.unitedwayli.org> and disaster relief fund at Caltech and JPL – <https://giving.caltech.edu/areas-to-support/relief>. As justification, Les pointed to salient sections in BREA's constitution and by-laws. The motion was approved.

Action: Louise will talk to Les.

DEI: Louise reported that BNL's DEI office is gone.

The next BREA meeting is Tuesday, March 11, 2025, via Zoom.