

Berkshire County Retirement Board Meeting
November 25, 2024

The meeting of the Berkshire County Retirement Board was called to order at 1:04P.M. in the Berkshire County Retirement Office, located at 29 Dunham Mall, Pittsfield, MA. Present at the meeting were Mark Bashara, Elected Member, Timothy Sorrell, Elected Member. Sue Funk, Advisory Board member and Beth Matson, Appointed member participated remotely. Michael Ovitt, Chairman, participated remotely without audio or visual and did not participate in debate, discussion or voting. Thomas Gibson, Legal Counsel participated remotely.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 1.) Members of the public have the opportunity to address the Retirement Board. There was no public comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 2.) **Executive Session:** under Purpose 7 of the Open Meeting Law: To comply with Exemption (c) of the Public Records Law (G.L. c. 4, s. 7(26)(c)) exempting information and other materials or data relating to a specifically named individual, the disclosure of which may constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. RE: Review of applications for disability benefits.

On motion, made by Michael Ovitt to enter Executive Session and then return to open meeting. Seconded by Mark Bashara. A roll call vote was taken, and the vote was unanimous.

A roll call vote was taken to enter into executive session @ 1:05pm.

The Board returned to regular session at 1:30pm.

Mark Bashara: At 1:30pm, returning to regular session, actions taken by the Board in executive session; the Board voted to approve ADR benefits to Kevin Larkin and to request additional information for the review of Kurt Degreniers ADR application.

3.) CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES:

- a.) The Board minutes of the regular meeting held October 31, 2024, were signed and approved.

Minutes provided as an attachment to email

INVESTMENTS:

- b.) The Board received from PRIT a statement of performance for October 2024. The PRIT Fund returned -1.43% for the month of October.

BANK STATEMENTS:

- c.) The Board received the bank statements for Oct 2024 and the budget for Nov 2024. *Cash Books for October were sent to Board by email.*

MONTHLY WARRANTS:

- d.) The Board approved payment vouchers:
11-01-24 \$28,799.79

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11-02-24	\$114,504.43
11-03-24	\$22,692.68
11-04-24	\$16,746.69

REQUESTS FOR RETIREMENT:

e.) The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Ronna Brandt, Clarksburg, Administrative Assistant. The retirement will be effective 12/31/2024.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Christine Dobbert Burdick, Florida, Town Administrator. The retirement will be effective 10/04/2024.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Katherine Pemble, MGRSD, Paraprofessional. The retirement will be effective 12/31/2024.

MEMBER TRANSFERS OUT OF SYSTEM:

f.) The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Xinyue Allen, a member in Stockbridge, to the Hampden County Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 3 years and 1 month of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$21,078.88.

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Lisa Blackmer, a member in Clarksburg, to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 3 years of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$46,943.57.

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Jana Bush, a member in FRRSD, to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 13 years and 3 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$27,785.80.

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Audrey Console, a member in BHRSD, to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 6 years and 6 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$13,775.64.

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Emily Hakkinen, a member in Clarksburg, to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 10 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$968.88.

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Tanya Harris, a member in CBRSD, to the Hampshire County Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 1 year and 4 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$2,424.49.

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The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Thorstein Murray, a member in Lee, to the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept 3 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$1,527.17.

REQUEST FOR SERVICE BUYBACK:

g.) Brian Fahey, a member in Monterey, is eligible to buy back 4 years of military service through Chapter 178 of the Acts of 2024, veteran's buyback. If Mr. Fahey pays \$16,809.88 into the annuity savings fund by August 8, 2025, the Board will grant 4 years of creditable service. (This is a recalculation of Mr. Fahey's Buyback to provide him the full 4 Years of Military Service.)

Mary Angelo-Roberts, a member in MGRSD, is eligible to buy back 4 years of military service through Chapter 178 of the Acts of 2024, veteran's buyback. If Ms. Angelo-Roberts pays \$5,918.58 into the annuity savings fund by August 8, 2025, the Board will grant 4 years of creditable service.

Kelly Bessey, a member in BHRSD, is eligible to buy back 2 years and 9 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Bessey pays \$5,553.51 into the annuity savings fund by December 30, 2024, the board will grant 2 years and 9 months creditable service.

Laurie McArthur, a member in Sandisfield, is eligible to buy back 1 month of prior creditable service. If Ms. McArthur pays \$476.35 into the annuity savings fund by December 30, 2024, the board will grant 1 month creditable service.

REQUESTS FOR REFUNDS:

h.) The Board approved the applications for refunds from the following members: (Pending approval from Dept. of Revenue- child support division)

J. Archer	Lee	\$2,537.43
J. Donovan	Monterey	\$895.71
L. Kowalczyk	Hinsdale	\$7,868.76
K. Mazzeo	MGRSD	\$3,905.83
J. Sylbert	Sandisfield	\$13,765.04
M. Zaleski	Clarksburg	\$95.91

INJURY REPORTS:

i.) There were no injuries reported in month of November.

NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS:

j.) The Board approved for membership in the Berkshire County Retirement System the following members:

8029	John Guzzi	Hinsdale	10/24/2024	DPW laborer	1
8030	Michael Dutil	Stockbridge	10/15/2024	Equipment Operator	1
8031	Shannon Zoito	Clarksburg	10/29/2024	Cafeteria cook	1
8032	Lisa Kane	CBRS	10/28/2024	paraprofessional	1
8033	Glen Reinhold	CBRS	11/4/2024	Buildings Grounds Maint	1
8034	Jessica Daviau	CBRS	11/4/2024	paraprofessional	1
8035	James Crane	Dalton	10/21/2024	HWY Operator	1

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8036	Donna Gerwitz	Gt. Barrington	10/16/2024	Driver	1
8037	Matthew Perry	Gt. Barrington	10/28/2024	Mechanic	1
8039	Mason Mihlek	Lee	9/30/2024	Firefighter/EMT	4
8040	Jodie Hostetter	Washington	10/28/2024	Bus Driver	1
8041	Juliette Gagnon	Lee	11/7/2024	Perm Sub	1
8038	Evan Miller	MGRSD	11/4/2024	Custodian	1
8042	Molly Downing	MGRSD	10/15/2024	Paraprofessional	1
8043	Jordan Smith	MGRSD	10/25/2024	Custodian	1
8044	Jacob Keplinger	MGRSD	10/15/2024	Technology/AV Specialist	1
8045	Ivan Rodriguez	Sheffield	11/4/2024	Police Officer	4
8046	Jeffrey Gamelli	Otis	11/4/2024	Waste Water Operator	1
8047	Elizabeth Ballard	Clarksbury	11/1/2024	Teacher's Assistant	1
8048	Pamela Coons	Clarksbury	11/1/2024	Cafeteria Cook	1
8049	Alina Mercer	BHRSD	11/6/2024	paraprofessional	1

RETIREMENT ALLOWANCE APPROVALS:

k.) The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Beth Hull, SBRSD, as of 11/28/2024. Annual pension amount is \$32,097.84.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Cheryl Sniezek, CBRSD, as of 09/13/2024. Annual pension amount is \$18,446.04.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Michael Williams, Clarksbury, as of 09/20/2024. Annual pension amount is \$39,551.04.

3(8)c REIMBURSEMENTS:

l.) The Board received a letter from PERAC ordering the State Retirement Board through the provisions of MGL Sec 3(8)(c) to reimburse the Berkshire County Retirement Board \$1,602.95 a year toward the retirement allowance of Beth Hull.

PERAC CORRESPONDENCE:

m.) The Board received from PERAC the following memorandums:

#29/2024 FY26 Appropriation Questionnaire in Prosper

Note: Copies of memorandums and letters given to each Board member

TRAVEL & EDUCATION APPROVALS:

n.) There are no requests for travel or Education reimbursements for November

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE:

o.) 2023 PERAC Annual Report

PERAC Pension News

Notice of DALA Hearing February 18, 2025 10:00am Lisa Mendel

Mark Bashara: On the Consent Agenda, is there anything to and discuss separately?

Timothy Sorrell: I will make a motion that we accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Beth

Matson: I will second your motion.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote was unanimous.

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4.) **Legal Update:** Presented by Board Counsel Thomas Gibson. There was no legal update presented in November.

5.) Approve the Marcum Financial audit for 2023 & Governance Letter

Timothy Sorrell: I will make a motion to approve the Marcum financial audit.

Sue Funk: I will second.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the Marcum Financial Audit for 2023 as presented. The vote was unanimous.

6.) Review of proposed 2025 annual budget. Mark Bashara made a suggestion to table the Budget for the December meeting.

Timothy Sorrell: I will make a motion to table the budget until December. Sue Funk: I will second.

A roll call vote was taken to table the budget until December. The vote was unanimous.

7.) Directors update: Staff Evaluations, COLA Base Update

Sheila LaBarbera: My evaluation and observation is they both do an amazing job and I am happy to have them. They are a pleasure to work with and they do a great job.

The COLA base update I have spoken to John Boorack, and we will have some numbers some time in February. That is the earliest he can do.

A motion was made by Tim Sorrell to adjourn the meeting at 1:36pm. Sue Funk, second.

A roll call vote was taken to adjourn, the vote was unanimous.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Friday December 27, 2024 @ 8:30am.

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RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sheila LaBarbera, Executive Director

APPROVED BY:

Michael Ovitt, Chairman

Mark Bashara, Elected Member

Timothy Sorrell, Elected Member

Sue Funk, Advisory Council Member

Beth Matson, 5th Member Appointed