

Berkshire County Retirement Board Meeting  
April 24, 2019

**The meeting of the Berkshire County Retirement Board was called to order at 9:00 A.M. in the Retirement Office, located at 29 Dunham Mall, Pittsfield, MA. Present at the meeting were, Michael Ovitt, Chairman, Mark Bashara, Elected Member, Karen Williams, Elected Member, Paul A. Lisi, Jr., Advisory Board Member and Gerald Doyle Jr., Appointed Member.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Members of the public have an opportunity to address the Retirement Board. Haven Orecchio-Egresitz from the Berkshire Eagle was present at the meeting.

**MINUTES:**

1.) The Board minutes of the meeting held March 27, 2019, were reviewed and approved  
**Voted to approve the minutes.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

2.) The Board reviewed the proposed personnel policy updates for the Berkshire County Retirement System with Attorney Elisabeth Goodman. Attorney Goodman will edit and share edits with the Board. The Board will review the edited proposed personnel policy at a future date, possibly at a separate meeting.

3.) The Board reviewed an opinion from PERAC regarding the Chairman's compensation from the Berkshire County Retirement Board. Mark Bashara asked to have an item added to next month's agenda to discuss an increase of \$600 annually to the Chairman's compensation. Paul Lisi asked to have an item on next month's agenda to add a bylaw to change the Chairman's compensation to a stipend with no benefits eligibility. Chairman Ovitt abstained from this discussion.

4.) The Board reviewed an application for accidental disability benefits for James Salice, Town of Lee. After review of the disability application it was determined the applicant cannot be retired with a section 7 disability retirement as a matter of law. Mr. Salice separated from service and retired for superannuation on February 26, 2016, without an established disability, which precludes retirement for a subsequently matured disability. Additionally, the member's application which asserts that the applicant is disabled as a result of a personal injury, fails to provide information or documentation of a personal injury sustained "as a result of, and while in the performance of...duties at some definite place and at some definite time," as required by G.L. c. 32 sec.7.

**Voted to deny the disability application. Karen Williams abstained.**

5.) The Board reviewed the court action regarding the application for retirement benefits for Joseph Buffis. The Berkshire District Court upheld the decision of the Retirement Board to deny retirement benefits to Mr. Buffis. Mr. Buffis had submitted an appeal of the Judge's ruling to the Civil Appeals Court. On April 15, 2019, Mr. Buffis submitted a letter to the Courts and a copy to the retirement board withdrawing his appeal. Mr. Buffis will request a return of accumulated deductions rather than appealing for pension benefits.

**Voted to note the record.**

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6.) The Board approved a 3% Cost Of Living Adjustment on the COLA base of \$14000, for Berkshire County retirees who retired before June 30, 2018. The COLA will be effective for the July 1, 2019 pension payroll.

**Voted to approve a 3% COLA**

**INVESTMENTS:**

7.) The Board received from PRIT a statement of performance for March 2019. The PRIT Fund returned .80% for the month of March.

**Voted to note the record.**

**BANK STATEMENTS:**

8.) The Board received the bank statements for March 2019 and budget for April 2019.

Paul Lisi inquired about giving the staff a premium holiday for the BCIG reimbursement.

*Note: copies of cashbooks for February 2019 were emailed to each Board member prior to the meeting.*

**Voted to note the record.**

**MONTHLY WARRANTS:**

9.) The Board approved payment vouchers:

04-01-19	\$1621.70
04-02-19	\$6529.88
04-03-19	\$4461.10
04-04-19	\$20525.35
04-05-19	\$29362.67
04-06-19	\$1325073.94
04-07-19	\$8038.04

**Voted to approve payments as presented.**

**REQUESTS FOR RETIREMENT:**

10.) The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Deborah Ball, Gt Barrington, Asst Treasurer/Collector. The retirement will be effective 03/15/2019.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Janet Pumphrey, Lenox, Selectman. The retirement will be effective 04/11/2019.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from John Ostrander, Great Barrington, Maintenance Dept. The retirement will be effective 08/10/2019.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Raymond Tarjick Jr., CBRSD, Custodian. The retirement will be effective 5/12/19.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Dawn Frissell, Hinsdale, Town Clerk. The retirement will be effective 06/30/19.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Gary Wellington, Lee, Facilities Director. The retirement will be effective 6/29/19.

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The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Judith Buker, Lee, Cafeteria. The retirement will be effective 06/15//19.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Kyle O'Brien, MGRSD, SPED ESP. The retirement will be effective 04/26/19.

**Voted** to approve retirements as presented.

**REQUEST FOR SERVICE BUYBACK:**

11.) Eileen Cote, a member in BHRSD, is eligible to buy back 8 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Cote pays \$1242.10 into the annuity savings fund by May 31, 2019, the Board will grant 8 months of creditable service.

Cheryl Dodge, a member in CBRSD, is eligible to buy back 2 years and 10 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Dodge pays \$7654.37 into the annuity savings fund by May 31, 2019, the Board will grant 2 years and 10 months of creditable service.

Stephen Carlton, a member in Lenox, is eligible to buy back 4 years of military service through Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1996, as amended by Chapter 468 of the Acts of 2002, veteran's buyback. If Mr. Carlton pays \$16601.64 into the annuity savings fund the Board will grant 4 years of creditable service.

**Voted** to approve buybacks as presented.

**MEMBER TRANSFERS OUT OF SYSTEM:**

12.) The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Courtney Burratto, a member in Lenox to the Teacher's Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept liability for 2 years and 2 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$4173.70

The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of Emma Cornwell, a member in CBRSD to the Teacher's Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept liability for 5 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$1057.63

**Voted** to approve transfers as presented.

**REQUESTS FOR REFUNDS:**

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

Abigail Mello	Gt Barrington	\$6900.63
Richard Paris	MGRSD	\$17068.37

**Excess deductions on retirement payout:**

Florence Ammendola	Lenox	\$772.90
Joanne Fischetti	Stockbridge Housing	\$524.46

**Section 15 Refund:**

Joseph Buffis	Lee	\$119,999.38
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**Voted** to approve refunds as presented.

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**INJURY REPORTS:**

14.) There were four injuries reported by the Town of Lee and one injury reported in the Town of Stockbridge in the month of April.

**Voted to** note the record.

**NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS:**

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

6931	CHARLES G LOCKENWITZ	SHEFFIELD	3/14/2019	FACILITIES MGR	1
6932	CHRISTIN M PRUE	BCRHA	3/18/2019	HOUSING COUNS	1
6933	SCOTT T NASH	LANESBORO	3/25/2019	HWY LABORER	1
6935	CAROLINE MA HALPIN	LENOX	4/2/2019	PROG CORD	1
6936	BRANDON R CROUSE	MGRSD	4/26/2019	Custodian	1
6937	ROSLYN D BROCH	WILLIAMSTOWN	3/25/2019	ASST DIRECTOR	1
6938	ELI S PHILLIPS	MGRSD	4/8/2019	ADMIN ASST	1
6939	DAVID E McCOY	CBRS	4/18/2019	TECH ASST	1

**Voted to** approve new members as presented.

**RETIREMENT ALLOWANCE APPROVALS:**

16.) The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Stanley Tracy, Cheshire as of December 27, 2018. Annual pension amount is \$30338.28.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Thomas Carmody, Lanesboro as of January 1, 2019. Annual pension amount is \$24007.92.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to David Fish, Washington as of February 5, 2019. Annual pension amount is \$18,253.56.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to June Lovett, BHRSD as of February 15, 2019. Annual pension amount is \$19,651.92.

**Voted to** note the record.

**3(8)c REIMBURSEMENTS:**

17.) The Board received a letter from PERAC ordering the Teacher's Retirement Board through the provisions of MGL Sec 3(8)(c) to reimburse the Berkshire County Retirement Board \$1349.70 a year toward the retirement allowance of Cynthia Brouker.

**Voted to** note the record.

**PERAC CORRESPONDENCE:**

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

#12/2019	Tobacco Company List
#13/2019	Mandatory Board Training 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2019
#14/2019	Pension Forfeiture List
#15/2019	Application for Waiver of Educational Credits

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

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**TRAVEL & EDUCATION APPROVALS:**

19.) The Board approved the travel expense for one Board member and two staff to attend the spring MACRS Conference in Hyannis June 2, 2019 thru June 5, 2019.

**Voted to** approve the travel expense.

**MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE:**

- a.) Berkshire County Treasurer's Association meeting May 14<sup>th</sup> Hilton Garden
- b.) Copy of the letter of engagement for Thomas Gibson
- c.) Copy of the PERAC Pension News April 2019
- d.) PRIT Annual investment update with Francesco Daniele
- e.) Copy of letter sent to PERAC regarding the amended supplemental regulation for membership.

Board member Gerald Doyle left the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 9:00am.

**Voted to** adjourn at 11:15am.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



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Sheila LaBarbera, Executive Director

APPROVED BY:



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Michael Ovitt, Chairman



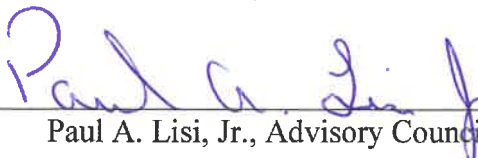
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Mark Bashara, Elected Member



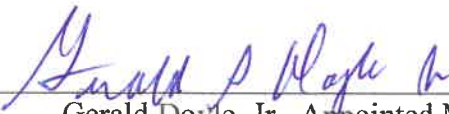
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Karen Williams, Elected Member



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Paul A. Lisi, Jr., Advisory Council Member



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Gerald Doyle, Jr., Appointed Member