

Berkshire County Retirement Board Meeting
June 30, 2021

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Members of the public had an opportunity to address the Retirement Board as the remote link to the meeting was posted with the agenda. No members of the public attending the meeting or were connected remotely.

MINUTES:

1.) The Board minutes of the regular meeting held May 26, 2021, were signed and approved. **Vote to approve the minutes and the vote was unanimous.**

NEW BUSINESS: 9:00am remote presentation

2.) PRIT Director of Client Services Francesco Daniele presented the annual review of the PRIT Fund. Berkshire County Retirement System is a participating system with the PRIT Fund and 100% of the assets are invested with the PRIT Fund. Mr. Francesco Daniele and Ms. Laura Strickland participated remotely. Both Mr. Daniele and Ms. Strickland introduced themselves and presented a quick bio of their qualifications and job responsibilities with the PRIT Fund. Mr. Daniele presented a PRIM Board and PRIT Fund overview reviewing oversight, staffing, mission, vision and values of the PRIM Board. Mr. Daniele also reviewed the investment team members and the PRIM Finance and Operations team. Ms. Strickland reviewed the economic outlook and reviewed the PRIT Fund asset allocation targets and the PRIT Performance. Mark Bashara asked if the PRIT Team was working on an alternate asset allocation for retirement systems that were reaching fully funded status? Mr. Daniele indicated that the PRIT Fund offered a segmentation program and encouraged the Board to investigate the use of a less risky portfolio with a segmented asset allocation rather than the asset allocation of the general fund. The presentation ended at 9:40 am

Attorney Thomas Gibson and Attorney Gerry McDonough joined the meeting remotely @9:15am.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

3.) **Executive Session** under Purpose #7 of the Open Meeting Law – To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general law, the Exemption (c) of the Public Records Law (GL c. 4, s. 7(26)(c)). Review of Accidental Disability Retirement Application.

At 9:41am executive session was requested, a motion made by Karen Williams to convene in executive session for Purpose #7, To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general law, the Exemption (c) of the Public Records Law (GL c. 4, s. 7(26)(c)). Review of Accidental Disability Retirement Application seconded by Mark Bashara.

A roll call vote was taken to enter into executive session. The vote was **Unanimous**.

All of the remote participants attested to their participation in a private location.

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The Board returned to regular session @ 10:07am. Chairman Michael Ovitt noted that a vote was taken during the executive session and an affirmative vote to convene a medical panel for an ADR application for Christopher Colello was approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

4.) The Board was provided a copy of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, Extension of Virtual meetings, which permits virtual public meetings of retirement boards through 4/01/2022. Attorney Thomas Gibson reviewed all of the allowable remote participation changes that continue to remain in effect until April 1, 2022. Tom Gibson stated that there were no votes required only a recommendation by the Board so that going forward the Executive Director will provide the public with options to participate in public meetings. Gerry McDonough stated that the Board must allow public access to board meetings. Attorney Gibson noted that professional advisors, for example PRIT client services or attorneys are able to continue to participate remotely. Beth Matson asked about in person meetings, Tom stated if a meeting does not offer remote it must be stated on the posting that no remote is available and the only option is in person. Paul Lisi Jr. recommended that the board continue with the hybrid model of in-person and remote participation as it has worked well for Board members, it provides advantages for Board members who may not have the ability to travel to Pittsfield for a meeting but are able to participate from their home or work. The hybrid model also allows for easy public participation in board meetings.

A roll call vote to note the recommendation to continue to allow remote participation and the vote was unanimous.

5.) The Board approved a policy on Consent Agendas. Karen Williams asked how the issue of a consent agenda was brought forward for consideration. Executive Director Sheila LaBarbera noted that the Berkshire County Board had discussed a consent agenda several years ago but took no action at that time. A recent discussion with Board Attorney Tom Gibson it was noted Middlesex County uses a consent agenda very successfully and thought it might be something the Berkshire Board could utilize to streamline the regular and recurring items on every monthly agenda. Mark Bashara asked about the consolidation of the regular and recurring items. Items listed on the consent agenda would require only one vote for approval. Any item on the consent agenda can be taken off the consent agenda before or during a board meeting and discussed and approved individually. Paul Lisi Jr. made a motion to approve the policy on Consent agendas second by Karen Williams.

A roll call vote to approve the Policy on Consent Agendas and the vote was unanimous.

6.) The Board reviewed and discussed the salary and benefit options available to new employees of the Berkshire County Retirement Board. Beth Matson asked about changing the personnel policies so that all employees would have the same benefits rather than new employees being offered PTO time in lieu of sick and personal time. Longer serving Board members noted that they had just revised the personnel policies several years ago and they had spent many hours reviewing and updating the policies, in particular PTO time. The majority of the Board felt they would not support changing the PTO schedule set up in the personnel policies at this time.

The Board set up a schedule for applicant interviews. There are currently four applicants for the open position in the retirement office, the Board selected a date of July 21, 2021 to schedule the interviews. The interviews for the two new candidates will be ½ hour and start

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at 8:30am, the returning applicants will be scheduled for 15 minute interviews to begin at 9:30am. The Executive Director will contact the applicants set up a schedule and forward the schedule to the Board members.

At 11:12 am Board Attorneys Thomas Gibson and Gerry McDonough left the meeting.

INVESTMENTS:

7.) The Board received from PRIT a statement of performance for May 2021. The PRIT Fund returned .97% for the month of May.

A roll call vote to note the record and the vote was unanimous.

BANK STATEMENTS:

8.) The Board received the bank statements for May 2021 and the budget for April 2021.

Note: copies of cashbooks for May 2021 were emailed to each Board member prior to the meeting.

A roll call vote to note the record and the vote was unanimous.

MONTHLY WARRANTS:

9.) The Board approved payment vouchers:

06-01-21	\$9,777.82
06-02-21	\$19,219.82
06-03-21	\$11,850.98
06-04-21	\$1,479,477.50
06-05-21	\$33,185.04
06-06-21	\$6,441.48

A roll call vote to approve payments and the vote was Unanimous

At 11:16am Beth Matson lost her internet connection and was not able to return to the meeting.

REQUESTS FOR RETIREMENT:

10.) The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Patricia Becker, CBRSD, paraprofessional. The retirement will be effective 06/16/2021.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from John Marley, Dalton, Police officer. The retirement will be effective 06/29/2021.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Nancy Giardina, Lanesboro, Treasurer. The retirement will be effective 06/30/2021.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Arthur Mottor, CBRSD, custodian. The retirement will be effective 07/09/2021.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Delores Harasyko, Sandisfield, Town Clerk. The retirement will be effective 07/12/2021.

The Board approved the application for superannuation retirement from Nancy Crawford, SBRSD, paraprofessional. The retirement will be effective 08/26/2021.

A roll call vote to approve retirement and the vote was Unanimous

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MEMBER TRANSFERS OUT OF SYSTEM:

11.) The Board approved the notice of transfer of the account of William Hunt, a member in Lenox to the Teacher's Retirement Board. The Berkshire County Retirement Board will accept liability for 11 months of creditable service. The amount of the transfer is \$7,503.80. **A roll call vote to approve the transfers and the vote was Unanimous**

REQUEST FOR SERVICE BUYBACK:

12.) Erica Pecor, a member in Clarksburg, is eligible to buy back 2 years and 8 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Pecor pays \$7,148.84 into the annuity savings fund by July 31, 2021, the Board will grant 2 years and 8 months of creditable service.

Stephanie Burdick, a member in Lee, is eligible to buy back 1 year and 6 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Burdick pays \$1,435.14 into the annuity savings fund by July 31, 2021, the Board will grant 1 year and 6 months of creditable service. (4(2)b)

Amy Lane -Carmody, a member in Lanesboro, is eligible to buy back 2 years and 2 months of prior creditable service. If Ms. Lane-Carmody pays \$15,859.77 into the annuity savings fund by July 31, 2021, the Board will grant 2 years and 2 months of creditable service.

A roll call vote to approve service buybacks and the vote was Unanimous

INJURY REPORTS:

13.) There were no injuries reported in the month of June.

REQUESTS FOR REFUNDS:

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

Sandra Haigh	BCRHA	\$1,113.32
Traci Borden	CBRSD	\$11,504.74
Diane Allard	MGRSD	\$3,105.65
Ray Ellsworth	Stockbridge	\$13,335.95
Dion Hall	Richmond	\$902.33
Amanda Merk	Lee	\$4,007.21
Christopher Roy	Dalton	\$329.16

A roll call vote to approve refunds and the vote was Unanimous

NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS:

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

7243	Domenic Orlandi	Dalton	5/10/2021	transfer station	1
7244	Iona Smith	BHRSD	5/5/2021	Wellness Co-Ord	1
7245	Ana-Lisa Parise	Dalton	5/18/2021	Asst Collector	1
7246	Elizabeth Bernardy	MGRSD	5/24/2021	Paraprofessional	1
7247	Craig Taylor	MGRSD	6/04/2021	custodian	1
7248	Jacqueline Harrington	SBRSD	5/20/2021	food service	1
7249	Michael Barthe	MGRSD	5/21/2021	paraprofessional	1
7250	Michael Renton	W. Stockbridge	5/13/2021	police officer	4

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7251	Bridget Higgins	CBRSD	5/27/2021	Paraprofessional	1
7252	Jaime Keefner	Lee	6/16/2021	Fire/EMT	1
7253	Shelby Dempsey	BCRHA	5/31/2021	TPP Service Coord	1
7254	Hunter Roosa	Lee	6/15/2021	Police officer	1

A roll call vote to approve new members and the vote was Unanimous

RETIREMENT ALLOWANCE APPROVALS:

16.) The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Mary Oggiani, Lenox, as of as of 02/01/2021. Annual pension amount is \$5,807.16.

The Board received approval from PERAC to grant a retirement allowance to Mary Alarie, Lee, as of as of 05/10/2021. Annual pension amount is \$10,313.64.

A roll call vote to approve retirement allowances and the vote was Unanimous

3(8)c REIMBURSEMENTS:

17.) The Board received a letter from PERAC ordering the Berkshire County Retirement Board through the provisions of MGL Sec 3(8)(c) to reimburse the State Retirement Board \$1,388.87 a year toward the retirement allowance of Cheryl Penna.

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 \$286.24 a year toward the retirement allowance of Mary Oggiani.

The Board received a letter from PERAC ordering the Pittsfield Retirement Board through the provisions of MGL Sec 3(8)(c) to reimburse the Berkshire County Retirement Board \$1007.47 a year toward the retirement allowance of Mary Alarie.

A roll call vote to note the record and the vote was unanimous.

PERAC CORRESPONDENCE:

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

- #16/2021 Corona Virus Reopening
- #17/2021 Corona Virus Emergency Measures Extended

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

TRAVEL & EDUCATION APPROVALS:

17.) There are no travel requests for the month of June.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE:

- a.) PERAC letter regarding the assignment of the Hoosac Water Quality District's participation in Mass. Retirement Systems. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to Attorney Thomas Gibson.
- b.) MACRS agenda and registration for virtual conference
- c.) Mass Retirees letter regarding post retirement earnings
- d.) PTG Security Information

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 9:00am.

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Motion to adjourn at 11:30am was unanimous.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sheila LaBarbera, Executive Director

APPROVED BY:

Michael Ovitt, Chairman

Mark Bashara, Elected Member

Karen Williams, Elected Member

Paul A. Lisi, Jr., Advisory Council Member

Beth Matson, 5th Member Appointed