

PERAC AUDIT REPORT



Berkshire County
Contributory Retirement System



JAN. 1, 2013 - DEC. 31, 2016



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PERAC

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS | PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION

PHILIP Y. BROWN, ESQ., *Chairman*

JOSEPH E. CONNARTON, *Executive Director*

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September 7, 2018

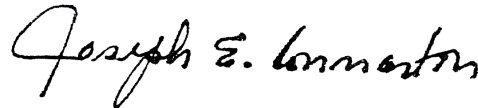
The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission has completed an examination of the Berkshire County Retirement System pursuant to G.L. c. 32, § 21. The examination covered the period from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2016. This audit was conducted in accordance with the accounting and management standards established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission in regulation 840 CMR 25.00. Additionally, all supplementary regulations approved by PERAC and on file at PERAC are listed in this report.

In our opinion, the financial records are being maintained and the management functions are being performed in conformity with the standards established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

We commend the Berkshire County Retirement Board for the exemplary operation of the system.

In closing, I acknowledge the work of examiners Scott Henderson and Richard Wrona who conducted this examination, and express appreciation to the Board of Retirement and staff for their courtesy and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Connarton
Executive Director



STATEMENT OF LEDGER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	AS OF DECEMBER 31,			
	2016	2015	2014	2013
Net Assets Available For Benefits:				
Cash	\$2,795,681	\$3,430,909	\$3,713,620	\$4,366,359
PRIT Core Fund	204,295,976	190,849,003	189,606,480	176,050,248
Accounts Receivable	2,654,653	1,915,021	1,677,717	239,847
Accounts Payable	(68,296)	(62,552)	(992)	(1,805)
Total	<u>\$209,678,015</u>	<u>\$196,132,381</u>	<u>\$194,996,825</u>	<u>\$180,654,649</u>
Fund Balances:				
Annuity Savings Fund	\$40,530,106	\$40,283,731	\$38,936,696	\$37,231,962
Annuity Reserve Fund	12,359,545	11,114,543	10,499,886	10,557,687
Pension Fund	1,312,751	1,051,436	1,376,731	142,827
Military Service Fund	14,742	18,818	18,800	18,781
Expense Fund	0	0	0	0
Pension Reserve Fund	<u>155,460,871</u>	<u>143,663,853</u>	<u>144,164,713</u>	<u>132,703,392</u>
Total	<u>\$209,678,015</u>	<u>\$196,132,381</u>	<u>\$194,996,825</u>	<u>\$180,654,649</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

	Annuity Savings Fund	Annuity Reserve Fund	Pension Fund	Military Service Fund	Expense Fund	Pension Reserve Fund	Total All Funds
Beginning Balance (2013)	\$36,241,890	\$9,932,125	\$66,367	\$18,762	\$0	\$113,103,421	\$159,362,565
Receipts	4,171,951	300,966	6,888,916	19	1,287,847	21,999,174	34,648,873
Interfund Transfers	(2,179,068)	2,169,187	2,409,084	0	0	(2,399,202)	0
Disbursements	(1,002,810)	(1,844,591)	(9,221,540)	0	(1,287,847)	0	(13,356,789)
Ending Balance (2013)	37,231,962	10,557,687	142,827	18,781	0	132,703,392	180,654,649
Receipts	4,401,897	309,423	9,779,714	19	1,339,556	12,844,774	28,675,383
Interfund Transfers	(1,614,426)	1,614,974	1,382,905	0	0	(1,383,453)	0
Disbursements	(1,082,738)	(1,982,198)	(9,928,715)	0	(1,339,556)	0	(14,333,207)
Ending Balance (2014)	38,936,696	10,499,886	1,376,731	18,800	0	144,164,713	194,996,826
Receipts	4,527,984	308,841	8,837,270	19	1,393,350	486,860	15,554,324
Interfund Transfers	(2,411,452)	2,399,904	999,267	0	0	(987,719)	0
Disbursements	(769,496)	(2,094,089)	(10,161,833)	0	(1,393,350)	0	(14,418,767)
Ending Balance (2015)	40,283,731	11,114,543	1,051,436	18,818	0	143,663,854	196,132,382
Receipts	4,627,358	346,491	9,350,722	19	1,465,823	13,643,285	29,433,698
Interfund Transfers	(3,387,057)	3,354,551	1,882,869	(4,095)	0	(1,846,267)	0
Disbursements	(993,927)	(2,456,039)	(10,972,276)	0	(1,465,823)	0	(15,888,064)
Ending Balance (2016)	<u>\$40,530,106</u>	<u>\$12,359,545</u>	<u>\$1,312,751</u>	<u>\$14,742</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$155,460,871</u>	<u>\$209,678,016</u>

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS

	FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,			
	2016	2015	2014	2013
Annuity Savings Fund:				
Members Deductions	\$4,098,562	\$4,038,721	\$3,922,604	\$3,756,403
Transfers from Other Systems	245,601	326,227	253,363	59,795
Member Make Up Payments and Re-deposits	110,034	75,511	60,398	135,884
Member Payments from Rollovers	94,037	24,002	99,367	162,167
Investment Income Credited to Member Accounts	<u>79,124</u>	<u>63,523</u>	<u>66,166</u>	<u>57,703</u>
Sub Total	<u>4,627,358</u>	<u>4,527,984</u>	<u>4,401,897</u>	<u>4,171,951</u>
Annuity Reserve Fund:				
Investment Income Credited to the Annuity Reserve Fund	<u>346,491</u>	<u>308,841</u>	<u>309,423</u>	<u>300,966</u>
Pension Fund:				
3 (8) (c) Reimbursements from Other Systems Received from Commonwealth for COLA and Survivor Benefits	311,566	296,855	278,349	272,402
Pension Fund Appropriation	163,472	62,601	104,337	173,543
Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claims	8,875,684	8,477,815	9,397,029	6,432,972
Recovery of 91A Overearnings	0	0	0	10,000
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Sub Total	<u>9,350,722</u>	<u>8,837,270</u>	<u>9,779,714</u>	<u>6,888,916</u>
Military Service Fund:				
Investment Income Credited to the Military Service Fund	19	19	19	19
Expense Fund:				
Investment Income Credited to the Expense Fund	<u>1,465,823</u>	<u>1,393,350</u>	<u>1,339,556</u>	<u>1,287,847</u>
Pension Reserve Fund:				
Federal Grant Reimbursement	4,552	4,327	0	0
Interest Not Refunded	10,580	5,821	10,276	8,562
Miscellaneous Income	1,041	0	1,205	1,226
Excess Investment Income	<u>13,627,112</u>	<u>476,712</u>	<u>12,833,293</u>	<u>21,989,385</u>
Sub Total	<u>13,643,285</u>	<u>486,860</u>	<u>12,844,774</u>	<u>21,999,174</u>
Total Receipts, Net	<u>\$29,433,698</u>	<u>\$15,554,324</u>	<u>\$28,675,383</u>	<u>\$34,648,873</u>

STATEMENT OF DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,				
	2016	2015	2014	2013
Annuity Savings Fund:				
Refunds to Members	\$506,236	\$383,459	\$475,372	\$504,160
Transfers to Other Systems	487,690	386,037	607,366	498,651
Sub Total	<u>993,927</u>	<u>769,496</u>	<u>1,082,738</u>	<u>1,002,810</u>
Annuity Reserve Fund:				
Annuities Paid	<u>2,456,039</u>	<u>2,094,089</u>	<u>1,982,198</u>	<u>1,844,591</u>
Pension Fund:				
Pensions Paid:				
Regular Pension Payments	9,199,138	8,348,966	7,966,916	7,607,407
Survivorship Payments	489,353	467,403	463,620	421,056
Ordinary Disability Payments	95,347	65,767	63,856	62,395
Accidental Disability Payments	541,040	581,299	591,329	561,964
Accidental Death Payments	114,854	113,174	111,494	109,814
Section 101 Benefits	38,619	28,456	25,091	30,825
3 (8) (c) Reimbursements to Other Systems	<u>493,925</u>	<u>556,768</u>	<u>706,409</u>	<u>428,079</u>
Sub Total	<u>10,972,276</u>	<u>10,161,833</u>	<u>9,928,715</u>	<u>9,221,540</u>
Expense Fund:				
Board Member Stipend	17,000	17,000	17,000	15,000
Salaries	222,920	216,746	207,413	205,753
Legal Expenses	1,079	1,106	0	11,074
Medical Expenses	0	25	0	0
Travel Expenses	6,022	4,776	2,315	7,204
Administrative Expenses	66,254	67,998	59,901	59,818
Accounting Services	17,000	24,750	0	0
Education and Training	1,900	1,620	1,032	2,860
Furniture and Equipment	1,885	2,003	3,375	1,751
Management Fees	1,062,659	993,539	985,299	924,648
Rent Expenses	25,493	25,493	25,493	25,493
Service Contracts	31,240	26,290	26,046	23,124
Fiduciary Insurance	12,369	12,004	11,681	11,123
Sub Total	<u>1,465,823</u>	<u>1,393,350</u>	<u>1,339,556</u>	<u>1,287,847</u>
Total Disbursements	<u>\$15,888,064</u>	<u>\$14,418,767</u>	<u>\$14,333,207</u>	<u>\$13,356,789</u>

INVESTMENT INCOME

	FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,			
	2016	2015	2014	2013
Investment Income Received From:				
Cash	\$8,935	\$6,384	\$6,925	\$11,813
Pooled or Mutual Funds	<u>5,695,632</u>	<u>5,046,549</u>	<u>5,249,153</u>	<u>4,821,784</u>
Total Investment Income	<u>5,704,567</u>	<u>5,052,932</u>	<u>5,256,079</u>	<u>4,833,598</u>
Plus:				
Realized Gains	5,622,887	7,057,354	8,319,972	7,739,903
Unrealized Gains	<u>17,169,454</u>	<u>9,959,765</u>	<u>11,979,268</u>	<u>19,964,046</u>
Sub Total	<u>22,792,341</u>	<u>17,017,120</u>	<u>20,299,240</u>	<u>27,703,949</u>
Less:				
Realized Loss	(109,269)	(90,855)	0	0
Unrealized Loss	<u>(12,869,071)</u>	<u>(19,736,753)</u>	<u>(11,006,862)</u>	<u>(8,901,627)</u>
Sub Total	<u>(12,978,340)</u>	<u>(19,827,607)</u>	<u>(11,006,862)</u>	<u>(8,901,627)</u>
Net Investment Income	<u>15,518,568</u>	<u>2,242,445</u>	<u>14,548,457</u>	<u>23,635,920</u>
Income Required:				
Annuity Savings Fund	79,124	63,523	66,166	57,703
Annuity Reserve Fund	346,491	308,841	309,423	300,966
Military Service Fund	19	19	19	19
Expense Fund	<u>1,465,823</u>	<u>1,393,350</u>	<u>1,339,556</u>	<u>1,287,847</u>
Total Income Required	<u>1,891,456</u>	<u>1,765,733</u>	<u>1,715,164</u>	<u>1,646,535</u>
Net Investment Income	<u>15,518,568</u>	<u>2,242,445</u>	<u>14,548,457</u>	<u>23,635,920</u>
Less: Total Income Required	<u>1,891,456</u>	<u>1,765,733</u>	<u>1,715,164</u>	<u>1,646,535</u>
Excess Income (Loss) To The Pension Reserve Fund	<u>\$13,627,112</u>	<u>\$476,712</u>	<u>\$12,833,293</u>	<u>\$21,989,385</u>

SCHEDULE OF ALLOCATION OF INVESTMENTS OWNED

(percentages by category)

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016		
	MARKET VALUE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ASSETS
Cash	\$2,795,681	1.3%
PRIT Core Fund	<u>204,295,976</u>	<u>98.7%</u>
Grand Total	<u>\$207,091,658</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

For the year ending December 31, 2016, the rate of return for the investments of the Berkshire County Retirement System was 8.15%. For the five-year period ending December 31, 2016, the rate of return for the investments of the Berkshire County Retirement System averaged 9.13%. For the 32-year period ending December 31, 2016, since PERAC began evaluating the returns of the retirement systems, the rate of return on the investments of the Berkshire County Retirement System was 8.92%.

The composite rate of return for all retirement systems for the year ending December 31, 2016 was 8.08%. For the five-year period ending December 31, 2016, the composite rate of return for the investments of all retirement systems averaged 9.12%. For the 32-year period ending December 31, 2016, since PERAC began evaluating the returns of the retirement systems, the composite rate of return on the investments of all retirement systems averaged 9.11%.

SUPPLEMENTARY INVESTMENT REGULATIONS

The Berkshire County Retirement System voted on February 12, 1998 to invest all of the system's assets with the PRIT fund as of July 1, 1998. As a result of that motion, the supplemental investment regulations submitted and previously approved by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission were effectively rescinded.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE I – SUMMARY OF PLAN PROVISIONS

The plan is a contributory defined benefit plan covering all Berkshire County Retirement System member unit employees deemed eligible by the retirement board, with the exception of school department employees who serve in a teaching capacity. The Teachers' Retirement Board administers the pensions of such school employees.

ADMINISTRATION

There are 104 contributory retirement systems for public employees in Massachusetts. Each system is governed by a retirement board and all boards, although operating independently, are governed by Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. This law in general provides uniform benefits, uniform contribution requirements and a uniform accounting and funds structure for all systems.

PARTICIPATION

Participation is mandatory for all full-time employees. Eligibility with respect to part-time, provisional, temporary, seasonal or intermittent employment is governed by regulations promulgated by the retirement board, and approved by PERAC. Membership is optional for certain elected officials.

There are 4 classes of membership in the retirement system, but one of these classes, Group 3, is made up exclusively of the State Police. The other 3 classes are as follows:

Group 1:

General employees, including clerical, administrative, technical and all other employees not otherwise classified.

Group 2:

Certain specified hazardous duty positions.

Group 4:

Police officers, firefighters, and other specified hazardous positions.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Member contributions vary depending on the most recent date of membership:

Prior to 1975:	5% of regular compensation
1975 - 1983:	7% of regular compensation
1984 to 6/30/96:	8% of regular compensation
7/1/96 to present:	9% of regular compensation
1979 to present:	an additional 2% of regular compensation in excess of \$30,000.

In addition, members of Group 1 who join the system on or after April 2, 2012 will have their withholding rate reduced to 6% after achieving 30 years of creditable service.

RATE OF INTEREST

Interest on regular deductions made after January 1, 1984 is a rate established by PERAC in consultation with the Commissioner of Banks. The rate is obtained from the average rates paid on individual savings accounts by a representative sample of at least 10 financial institutions.

RETIREMENT AGE

The mandatory retirement age for some Group 2 and Group 4 employees is age 65. Most Group 2 and Group 4 members may remain in service after reaching age 65. Group 4 members who are employed in certain public safety positions are required to retire at age 65. There is no mandatory retirement age for employees in Group 1.

SUPERANNUATION RETIREMENT

A person who became a member before April 2, 2012 is eligible for a superannuation retirement allowance (service retirement) upon meeting the following conditions:

- completion of 20 years of service, or
- attainment of age 55 if hired prior to 1978, or if classified in Group 4, or
- attainment of age 55 with 10 years of service, if hired after 1978, and if classified in Group 1 or 2.

A person who became a member on or after April 2, 2012 is eligible for a superannuation retirement allowance (service retirement) upon meeting the following conditions:

- attainment of age 60 with 10 years of service if classified in Group 1, or
- attainment of age 55 with 10 years of service if classified in Group 2, or
- attainment of age 55 if classified in Group 4.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

AMOUNT OF BENEFIT

A member's annual allowance is determined by multiplying average salary by a benefit rate related to the member's age and job classification at retirement, and the resulting product by his creditable service. The amount determined by the benefit formula cannot exceed 80% of the member's highest three year (or five year as discussed below) average salary. For veterans as defined in G.L. c. 32, s. 1, there is an additional benefit of \$15 per year for each year of creditable service, up to a maximum of \$300.

For employees who become members after January 1, 2011, regular compensation is limited to 64% of the federal limit found in 26 U.S.C. 401(a)(17). In addition, regular compensation will be limited to prohibit "spiking" of a member's salary to increase the retirement benefit.

- For persons who became members prior to April 2, 2012, Average Salary is the average annual rate of regular compensation received during the 3 consecutive years that produce the highest average, or, if greater, during the last 3 years (whether or not consecutive) preceding retirement.
- For persons who became members on or after April 2, 2012, Average Salary is the average annual rate of regular compensation received during the 5 consecutive years that produce the highest average, or, if greater, during the last 5 years (whether or not consecutive) preceding retirement.
- The Benefit Rate varies with the member's retirement age. For persons who became members prior to April 2, 2012 the highest rate of 2.5% applies to Group 1 employees who retire at or after age 65, Group 2 employees who retire at or after age 60, and to Group 4 employees who retire at or after age 55. A .1% reduction is applied for each year of age under the maximum age for the member's group. For Group 2 employees who terminate from service under age 55, the benefit rate for a Group 1 employee shall be used.
- For persons who became members on or after April 2, 2012 and retire with less than 30 years of creditable service, the highest rate of 2.5% applies to Group 1 employees who retire at or after age 67, Group 2 employees who retire at or after age 62, and to Group 4 employees who retire at or after age 57. A .15% reduction is applied for each year of age under the maximum age for the member's group.
- For persons who became members on or after April 2, 2012 and retire with more than 30 years of creditable service, the highest rate of 2.5% applies to Group 1 employees who retire at or after age 67, Group 2 employees who retire at or after age 62, and to Group 4 employees who retire at or after age 57. A .125% reduction is applied for each year of age under the maximum age for the member's group.

DEFERRED VESTED BENEFIT

A participant who has attained the requisite years of creditable service can elect to defer his or her retirement until a later date. Certain public safety employees cannot defer beyond age 65. All participants must begin to receive a retirement allowance or withdraw their accumulated deductions no later than April 15 of the calendar year following the year they reach age 70½.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

WITHDRAWAL OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Member contributions may be withdrawn upon termination of employment. The interest rate for employees who first become members on or after January 1, 1984 who voluntarily withdraw their contributions with less than 10 years of service will be 3%. Interest payable on all other withdrawals will be set at regular interest.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT

The Massachusetts Retirement Plan provides 2 types of disability retirement benefits:

ORDINARY DISABILITY

Eligibility: Non-veterans who become totally and permanently disabled by reason of a non-job related condition with at least 10 years of creditable service (or 15 years creditable service in systems in which the local option contained in G.L. c. 32, s. 6(1) has not been adopted).

Veterans with ten years of creditable service who become totally and permanently disabled by reason of a non-job related condition prior to reaching “maximum age”. “Maximum age” applies only to those employees classified in Group 4 who are subject to mandatory retirement.

Retirement Allowance: For persons who became members prior to April 2, 2012, the benefit is equal to the accrued superannuation retirement benefit as if the member was age 55. If the member is a veteran, the benefit is 50% of the member’s final rate of salary during the preceding 12 months, plus an annuity based upon accumulated member contributions plus credited interest. If the member is over age 55, he or she will receive not less than the superannuation allowance to which he or she is entitled.

For persons in Group 1 who became members on or after April 2, 2012, the benefit is equal to the accrued superannuation retirement benefit as if the member was age 60. If the member is a veteran, the benefit is 50% of the member’s final rate of salary during the preceding 12 months, plus an annuity based upon accumulated member contributions plus credited interest. If the member is over age 60, he or she will receive not less than the superannuation allowance to which he or she would have been entitled had they retired for superannuation.

For persons in Group 2 and Group 4 who became members on or after April 2, 2012, the benefit is equal to the accrued superannuation retirement benefit as if the member was age 55. If the member is a veteran, the benefit is 50% of the member’s final rate of salary during the preceding 12 months, plus an annuity based upon accumulated member contributions plus credited interest. If the member is over age 55, he or she will receive not less than the superannuation allowance to which he or she would have been entitled had they retired for superannuation.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

ACCIDENTAL DISABILITY

Eligibility: Applies to members who become permanently and totally unable to perform the essential duties of the position as a result of a personal injury sustained or hazard undergone while in the performance of duties. There are no minimum age or service requirements.

Retirement Allowance: 72% of salary plus an annuity based on accumulated member contributions, with interest. This amount is not to exceed 100% of pay. For those who became members in service after January 1, 1988 or who have not been members in service continually since that date, the amount is limited to 75% of pay. There is an additional pension of \$871.56 per year (or \$312.00 per year in systems in which the local option contained in G.L. c. 32, s. 7(2)(a)(iii) has not been adopted), per child who is under 18 at the time of the member's retirement, with no age limitation if the child is mentally or physically incapacitated from earning. The additional pension may continue up to age 22 for any child who is a full time student at an accredited educational institution. For systems that have adopted Chapter 157 of the Acts of 2005, veterans as defined in G.L. c. 32, s. 1 receive an additional benefit of \$15 per year for each year of creditable service, up to a maximum of \$300.

ACCIDENTAL DEATH

Eligibility: Applies to members who die as a result of a work-related injury or if the member was retired for accidental disability and the death was the natural and proximate result of the injury or hazard undergone on account of which such member was retired.

Allowance: An immediate payment to a named beneficiary equal to the accumulated deductions at the time of death, plus a pension equal to 72% of current salary and payable to the surviving spouse, dependent children or the dependent parent, plus a supplement of \$871.56 per year, per child (or \$312.00 per year in systems in which the local option contained in G.L. c. 32, s. 9(2)(d)(ii) has not been adopted), payable to the spouse or legal guardian until all dependent children reach age 18 or 22 if a full time student, unless mentally or physically incapacitated.

The surviving spouse of a member of a police or fire department or any corrections officer who, under specific and limited circumstances detailed in the statute, suffers an accident and is killed or sustains injuries while in the performance of his duties that results in his death, may receive a pension equal to the maximum salary for the position held by the member upon his death. In addition, an eligible family member may receive a one-time payment of \$150,000.00 from the State Retirement Board. This lump sum payment is also available to the family of a public prosecutor in certain, limited circumstances.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

DEATH AFTER ACCIDENTAL DISABILITY RETIREMENT

Effective November 7, 1996, Accidental Disability retirees were allowed to select Option C at retirement and provide a benefit for an eligible survivor. For Accidental Disability retirees prior to November 7, 1996, who could not select Option C, if the member's death is from a cause unrelated to the condition for which the member received accidental disability benefits, a surviving spouse will receive an annual allowance of \$6,000. For Systems that accept the provisions of Section 28 of Chapter 131 of the Acts of 2010, the amount of this benefit is \$9,000. For Systems that accept the provisions of Section 63 of Chapter 139 of the Acts of 2012, the amount of this benefit is \$12,000.

DEATH IN ACTIVE SERVICE

Allowance: An immediate allowance equal to that which would have been payable had the member retired and selected Option C on the day before his or her death. For a member who became a member prior to April 2, 2012 whose death occurred prior to the member's superannuation retirement age, the age 55 benefit rate is used. For a member classified in Group 1 who became a member on or after April 2, 2012 whose death occurred prior to the member's superannuation retirement age, the age 60 benefit rate is used. If the member died after age 60, the actual age is used. For a member classified in Group 2 or Group 4, whose death occurred prior to the member's minimum superannuation retirement age, the benefit shall be calculated using an age 55 age factor. The minimum annual allowance payable to the surviving spouse of a member in service who dies with at least two years of creditable service is \$3,000 unless the retirement system has accepted the local option increasing this minimum annual allowance to \$6,000, provided that the member and the spouse were married for at least one year and living together on the member's date of death.

The surviving spouse of such a member in service receives an additional allowance equal to the sum of \$1,440 per year for the first child and \$1,080 per year for each additional child until all dependent children reach age 18 or 22 if a full time student, unless mentally or physically incapacitated.

COST OF LIVING

If a system has accepted Chapter 17 of the Acts of 1997, and the Retirement Board votes to pay a cost of living increase (COLA) for that year, the percentage is determined based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index used for indexing Social Security benefits, but cannot exceed 3.0%. Section 51 of Chapter 127 of the Acts of 1999, if accepted, allows boards to grant COLA increases greater than that determined by CPI but not to exceed 3.0%. Only a certain portion of a retiree's total allowance is subject to a COLA. The total COLA for periods from 1981 through 1996 is paid for by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Under the provisions of Chapter 32, Section 103(j) inserted by Section 19 of Chapter 188 of the Acts of 2010, systems may increase the maximum base on which the COLA is calculated in multiples of \$1,000. For many years the COLA base was calculated based upon the first \$12,000 of a retiree's allowance. Now the maximum base upon which the COLA is calculated varies from system to system. Each increase in the base must be accepted by a majority vote of the Retirement Board and approved by the legislative body.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

METHODS OF PAYMENT

A member may elect to receive his or her retirement allowance in one of 3 forms of payment.

Option A: Total annual allowance, payable in monthly installments, commencing at retirement and terminating at the member's death.

Option B: A reduced annual allowance, payable in monthly installments, commencing at retirement and terminating at the death of the member, provided, however, that if the total amount of the annuity portion received by the member is less than the amount of his or her accumulated deductions, including interest, the difference or balance of his accumulated deductions will be paid in a lump sum to the retiree's beneficiary or beneficiaries of choice.

Option C: A reduced annual allowance, payable in monthly installments, commencing at retirement. At the death of the retired employee, 2/3 of the allowance is payable to the member's designated beneficiary (who may be the spouse, or former spouse who is has not remarried, child, parent, sister, or brother of the employee) for the life of the beneficiary. For members who retired on or after January 12, 1988, if the beneficiary pre-deceases the retiree, the benefit payable increases (or "pops up" to Option A) based on the factor used to determine the Option C benefit at retirement. For members who retired prior to January 12, 1988, if the System has accepted Section 288 of Chapter 194 of the Acts of 1998 and the beneficiary pre-deceases the retiree, the benefit payable "pops up" to Option A in the same fashion. The Option C became available to accidental disability retirees on November 7, 1996.

ALLOCATION OF PENSION COSTS

If a member's total creditable service was partly earned by employment in more than one retirement system, the cost of the "pension portion" is allocated between the different systems pro rata based on the member's service within each retirement system. In certain circumstances, if a member received regular compensation concurrently from two or more systems on or after January 1, 2010, and was not vested in both systems as of January 1, 2010, such a pro-ration may not be undertaken. This is because such a person may receive a separate retirement allowance from each system.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 2 - SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounting records of the System are maintained on a calendar year basis in accordance with the standards and procedures established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

Cash accounts are considered to be funds on deposit with banks and are available upon demand.

Short Term Investments are highly liquid investments that will mature within twelve months from the date of acquisition.

Investments are reported at their fair value. Securities traded on recognized exchanges are valued at the most recent sales price at year end. If no sale was reported, the mean of the bid and asked price is used when available, or the most recent bid price. Mutual, commingled and pooled funds are valued based on the net asset or unit value at year end. Real estate and alternative investments are valued based on estimates provided by the managers of those respective investments. Purchases and sales of securities are reflected on the date the trade is initiated. Realized gain or loss is largely based on the difference between the cost or the value at the prior year end and the funds realized upon liquidation. Dividend income is generally recorded when received. Interest income is recorded as earned on an accrual basis. Income from alternative investments is recorded as reported by the managing partner. Appreciation or depreciation in the value of investments consists of the unrealized gains and losses reported as the difference between the previous period and the current value.

The system makes estimates and assumptions that affect the reported values of assets and liabilities and the reported amounts added and deducted during the reporting periods. The fair value of real estate and alternative investment holdings are generally estimated in the absence of reliable exchange values. The actual funds realized upon liquidation may differ from these estimates.

The provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32, § 23(2) generally govern the investment practices of the system. The Board primarily relies upon the investment strategy of the PRIM Board to maintain their progress toward full funding of the system. That strategy seeks to balance the exposure to common deposit and investment risks related to custody, credit concentrations, interest rate and foreign currency fluctuations.

Operating expenses include the ordinary and necessary cost of investment and professional services and the other miscellaneous administrative expenses of the system.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

The Annuity Savings Fund is the fund in which members' contributions are deposited. Voluntary contributions, re-deposits, and transfers to and from other systems, are also accounted for in this fund. Members' contributions to the fund earn interest at a rate determined by PERAC. Interest for some members who withdraw with less than ten years of service is transferred to the Pension Reserve Fund. Upon retirement, members' contributions and interest are transferred to the Annuity Reserve Fund. Dormant account balances must be transferred to the Pension Reserve Fund after a period of ten years of inactivity.

The Annuity Reserve Fund is the fund to which a member's account is transferred upon retirement from the Annuity Savings Fund and Special Military Service Credit Fund. The annuity portion of the retirement allowance is paid from this fund. Interest is credited monthly to this fund at the rate of 3% annually on the previous month's balance.

The Special Military Service Credit Fund contains contributions and interest for members while on a military leave for service in the Armed Forces who will receive creditable service for the period of that leave.

The Expense Fund contains amounts transferred from investment income for the purposes of administering the retirement system.

The Pension Fund contains the amounts appropriated by the governmental units as established by PERAC to pay the pension portion of each retirement allowance.

The Pension Reserve Fund contains amounts appropriated by the governmental units for the purposes of funding future retirement benefits. Any profit or loss realized on the sale or maturity of any investment or on the unrealized gain of a market valued investment as of the valuation date is credited to the Pension Reserve Fund. Additionally, any investment income in excess of the amount required to credit interest to the Annuity Savings Fund, Annuity Reserve Fund, and Special Military Service Credit Fund is credited to this Reserve account.

The Investment Income Account is credited with all income derived from interest and dividends of invested funds. At year-end the interest credited to the Annuity Savings Fund, Annuity Reserve Fund, Expense Fund, and Special Military Service Credit Fund is distributed from this account and the remaining balance is transferred to the Pension Reserve Fund.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 3 - SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS

The Berkshire County Retirement System submitted the following supplementary membership regulations, which were approved by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission:

Membership:

February 10, 2011

Any employee, whether hired, appointed or an elected official whose annual salary for the position is less than \$5,000 shall not be eligible for membership in the Berkshire County Retirement Board.

April 8, 2010

Any employee of a member town or District employed for 20 hours a week or more, on a temporary, provisional, temporary provisional or similar basis shall, upon completion of six consecutive months of service become a member in service of the system

March 16, 1993

All employees including elected officials, requesting membership in the retirement system are required to submit a pre-employment physical examination report which shall be filed as a permanent record with the retirement board. The cost of the physical examination will be the responsibility of the employee. (Revises rule #3 which had been approved December 21, 1984).

February 1, 1989

All employees, including police officers and fire fighters, must work 20 hours per week to meet the requirements for membership. (Replaces former rule #4, which was repealed by this same letter).

December 21, 1984

Elected officials who are not members of the retirement system before their election by popular vote do not have to join the system; but may join by applying for membership, in writing, within 90 days after assuming office.

No Group 4 employee who seeks to join the retirement system will be accepted without a complete up-to-date medical and physical report filed as a permanent record with the retirement board. (**REVISION** approved by letter dated March 16, 1993)

Creditable Service:

May 29, 2008

School employees who work the entire 10 month school year and return the following September will be granted a full-year of creditable service (12 months). Employees who leave employment at the end of the school year (June 30th) will be granted creditable service through their date of resignation, termination or retirement.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 3 - SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS (Continued)

July 25, 2007

If a member is reduced to less than 20 hours per week and the reduction in hours is permanent or reduction last more than 90 days creditable service will be prorated. Creditable service will be prorated based on a 35 hour work week and proration will begin on the date hours were reduced to less than 20 per week. Proration will continue until the member is reinstated or rehired permanently to a position of 20 hours or more per week.

Buybacks of prior ineligible service by members of the Berkshire Regional Retirement System will be prorated based on 35 hours. (Amended from 40 hours)

A stipend by itself does not meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment in the retirement system.

A current member in the Berkshire County Retirement System, whose only employment is a stipend position, shall accrue creditable service of 1 month for each year (12 months) in that position.

Definition of a stipend:

A definite amount paid at stated periods in compensation for services or as an allowance, with no stated or fixed amount of hours required for payment of stipend. Stipends are usually lower than what would be expected as a permanent salary for similar work.

The above noted regulation can only be applicable to service before July 1, 2009 or for service after July 1, 2009, if such service is subject to a specified term as a result of an election, appointment or contract and the election, appointment or contract occurred or was executed prior to July 1, 2009, and if the service is otherwise eligible for creditable service under Chapter 32 of the General Laws; and provided further, that such creditable service shall be granted until the expiration of the term, appointment or contract or July 1, 2012, whichever first occurs.

November 8, 2002

The Berkshire Regional Retirement Board will not accept liability for non-members of the Berkshire Regional Retirement System for buybacks of non-eligible service and/or service in which the non-member had the right to join the retirement system but did not join.

May 16, 2002

Payments for approved buybacks will be accepted on an annual basis, one payment annually in the month of December, until the buyback is complete.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 3 - SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS (Continued)

February 16, 1996

A member will be allowed to make a buyback or repayment of a refund over a period of time, not to exceed 5 years provided, that the member files with the board a formal application form which the board will provide.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 3 - SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS (Continued)

December 21, 1984

Full time employees to receive 1 year of creditable service for each year employed. Part time employee whose position has always been part time is granted full creditable service. **A part time employee who becomes full time has the part time service prorated.** (Underscored language repealed by regulation approved 3/19/97.)

Miscellaneous:

April 25, 2017

Permissible Reasons for Remote Participation.

If remote participation has been adopted in accordance with 940 CMR 29.10(2), a member of a public body shall be permitted to participate remotely in a meeting, in accordance with the procedures described in 940 CMR 29.10(7), if the chair or, in the chair's absence, the person chairing the meeting, determines that one or more of the following factors makes the member's physical attendance unreasonably difficult:

- (a) Personal illness;
- (b) Personal disability;
- (c) Emergency;
- (d) Military service; or
- (e) Geographic distance. Vacation.

December 21, 1984

Board staff who are applying for disability retirement allowances shall be precluded from access to such disability application, other than that in which any other applicant would have. Board may appoint an Executive Secretary who is to be in full charge of all retirement board employees. Such executive secretary's responsibilities may include, but not be limited to, directing coordinating and supervising the retirement board staff.

Public Records: The financial and medical records of members of the retirement system are not public records.

Injury Reports: All major injuries incurred due to employment must be reported in writing to the retirement board within 90 days of the accident.

Travel Regulations

September 10, 2002

The Berkshire County Retirement System has adopted Travel Supplemental Regulations under the provisions of G.L. c. 7, § 50 and G.L. c. 32, § 21(4). Regulations available upon written request, and are also available on the PERAC website <http://www.mass.gov/perac/Berkshire County>.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 4 - ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM

The System is administered by a five-person Board of Retirement consisting of the Chairman who shall be appointed by the other four board members, a second member appointed by the Advisory Council, a third and fourth member who shall be elected by the members in or retired from the service of such system, and a fifth member appointed by the other four board members.

Chairman:	Michael Ovitt	Term Expires:	12/31/20
Appointed Member:	Paul Lisi	Term Expires:	12/31/18
Elected Member:	Mark Bashara	Term Expires:	12/31/19
Elected Member:	Karen Williams	Term Expires:	12/31/20
Appointed Member:	Gerald Doyle, Jr.	Term Expires:	12/31/20

The Board members are required to meet at least once a month. The Board must keep a record of all of its proceedings. The Board must annually submit to the appropriate authority an estimate of the expenses of administration and cost of operation of the system. The board must annually file a financial statement of condition for the system with the Executive Director of PERAC.

The investment of the system's funds is the responsibility of the Board. All retirement allowances must be approved by the Retirement Board. The PERAC Actuary performs verification prior to payment, unless the system has obtained a waiver for superannuation calculations allowing them to bypass this requirement. All expenses incurred by the System must be approved by a majority vote of the Board. Payments shall be made only upon vouchers signed by two persons designated by the Board.

Retirement board members and employees are bonded by an authorized agent representing a company licensed to do business in Massachusetts. Fidelity insurance is the only required policy coverage under Ch. 32 §21 and §23 as well as 840 CMR 17.01. The policy is designed to cover specific intentional acts such as theft, fraud or embezzlement and also specify who commits such acts, most commonly employees of the system. This coverage reimburses the system for the losses it suffers as a result of its employees' actions. It does not insure the employees for their illegal acts. Statutorily required coverage is provided by the current fidelity insurance policy to a limit of \$1,000,000 with a \$10,000 deductible issued through Travelers Casualty and Surety Company. The system also has Fiduciary coverage to a limit of \$50,000,000 under a blanket policy issued through the Massachusetts Association of Contributory Retirement Systems.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 5 - ACTUARIAL VALUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

The most recent actuarial valuation of the System was prepared by The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission as of January 1, 2017.

The actuarial liability for active members was	\$120,123,234
The actuarial liability for vested terminated members was	4,143,935
The actuarial liability for non-vested terminated members was	1,159,367
The actuarial liability for retired members was	<u>133,182,429</u>
The total actuarial liability was	\$258,608,965
System assets as of that date were (actuarial value)	<u>214,133,210</u>
The unfunded actuarial liability was	<u>\$44,475,755</u>
The ratio of system's assets to total actuarial liability was	82.8%
As of that date the total covered employee payroll was	\$43,687,436

The normal cost for employees on that date was 8.62% of payroll
 The normal cost for the employer was 6.94% of payroll

The principal actuarial assumptions used in the valuation are as follows:

Investment Return: 7.25% per annum
 Rate of Salary Increase: Varies by group and service

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2017

Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Accrued Liability (b)	Unfunded AAL (UAAL) (b-a)	Funded Ratio (a/b)	Covered Payroll (c)	UAAL as a % of Cov. Payroll ((b-a)/c)
1/1/2017	\$214,133,210	\$258,608,965	\$44,475,755	82.8%	\$43,687,436	101.8%
1/1/2015	\$186,822,143	\$227,361,343	\$40,539,200	82.2%	\$42,306,759	95.8%
1/1/2013	\$155,094,412	\$199,926,528	\$44,832,116	77.6%	\$40,294,434	111.3%
1/1/2011	\$150,244,994	\$179,954,870	\$29,709,876	83.5%	\$38,491,825	77.2%
1/1/2009	\$121,882,036	\$162,214,802	\$40,332,766	75.1%	\$37,674,392	107.1%

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 6 - MEMBERSHIP EXHIBIT

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Retirement in Past Years										
Superannuation	2	2	27	19	33	38	43	29	34	55
Ordinary Disability	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accidental Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total Retirements	2	2	28	20	33	38	44	29	34	55
 Total Retirees, Beneficiaries and Survivors	665	674	678	679	681	701	732	726	743	777
 Total Active Members	1,372	1,357	1,201	1,137	1,143	1,179	1,183	1,136	1,169	1,145
Pension Payments										
Superannuation	\$5,314,446	\$5,659,096	\$6,055,476	\$6,075,997	\$6,526,992	\$7,057,523	\$7,607,407	\$7,966,916	\$8,348,966	\$9,199,138
Survivor/Beneficiary Payments	282,770	279,609	289,896	287,265	307,730	357,727	421,056	463,620	467,403	489,353
Ordinary Disability	65,169	74,205	77,459	81,061	86,735	58,552	62,395	63,856	65,767	95,347
Accidental Disability	456,649	480,995	485,103	510,023	526,709	508,779	561,964	591,329	581,299	541,040
Other	775,152	699,063	614,320	823,020	996,140	236,354	568,718	842,993	698,398	647,398
Total Payments for Year	<u>\$6,894,186</u>	<u>\$7,192,968</u>	<u>\$7,522,254</u>	<u>\$7,777,366</u>	<u>\$8,444,306</u>	<u>\$8,218,935</u>	<u>\$9,221,540</u>	<u>\$9,928,715</u>	<u>\$10,161,833</u>	<u>\$10,972,276</u>

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

NOTE 7 – LEASED PREMISES

The Berkshire County Retirement Board leases approximately 1,800 square feet of space for its offices located at 100 North Street, Pittsfield, MA. The most recently signed lease will expire December 31, 2021. The landlord is Scarafoni Associates Nominee Trust.

The following schedule displays the minimum lease obligations on non-cancelable operating leases as of December 31, 2016:

For the year ending:	Annual Rent
2017	\$27,600
2018	\$27,600
2019	\$27,600
2020	\$27,600
2021	\$27,600
Total future minimum lease payments required	\$138,000

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