

**Commission Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2020**

Chairman Philip Y. Brown called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM. He then stated that the Commission meeting is being tape recorded and this will be so noted in the minutes.

Chairman Brown acknowledged the other Commissioners participating: Commissioners Timothy Dooling, Kathleen Fallon, Kate Fitzpatrick, James Machado, Robert McCarthy, and Jennifer Sullivan. All attendees participated remotely pursuant to Governor Charles Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020. Therefore, the Chairman announced, any votes in this meeting shall be taken by roll call vote.

PERAC Staff attending remotely: Executive Director John Parsons, Deputy Executive Director Caroline Carcia, General Counsel Judith Corrigan, Assistant Deputy Director Bill Keefe, Assistant Deputy Director Ken Hill, Director of Audits Caryn Shea, Compliance Director Tom O'Donnell, Communications Director Natacha Dunker, Project Manager Anthony Tse, Senior Associate General Counsel Patrick Charles, Associate General Counsel Katie Brady, Associate General Counsel Felicia McGinniss, Actuary John Boorack, and Senior Executive Assistant Kim Boisvert.

Guests participating remotely were: Nick Favorito representing the State Retirement System, Sean Neilon representing the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System, Tom Gibson representing the Middlesex and Belmont Retirement Systems, Kathleen Kiely-Becchetti representing the Norfolk County, Watertown Retirement Systems and MACRS, and John Brown representing the Middlesex Retirement System and MACRS.

Mr. Parsons spoke about the passing of Ms. Kate Hogan, Manager of Medical Services, who had been with PERAC for over 30 years and was like family. Ms. Hogan recently passed away after a short illness. He said that Kate was a great communicator, mediator, and problem solver. Kate had a great way of working with people, not only with retirement boards and vendors but also members going through the disability process. He continued that the outpouring of comments received through phone calls, emails and cards received demonstrated just how important Ms. Hogan was to so many people. He said that Kate's legacy included her assistance with the implementation of PROSPER and the TeleHealth Program. Mr. Parsons appreciated the comment from Kate's sister made in her tribute to Kate that "Kate gave great counsel in a great way". Mr. Parsons then asked for a moment of silence.

Chairman Brown thanked Mr. Parsons for the tribute to Ms. Hogan and commented how nice the article in the Pension News was about Ms. Hogan.

Chairman Brown then inquired if everyone had the opportunity to review the Commission minutes from November 18, 2020.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick made a motion to adopt the November 18, 2020 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Dooling seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Chairman Philip Brown YES, Commissioners Timothy Dooling YES, Kathy Fallon YES, Kate Fitzpatrick YES, James Machado YES, Robert McCarthy YES, and Jennifer Sullivan YES and the minutes were adopted.

Legislative Update

Mr. Keefe reported that, since the date of the memo included in the package, the House and Senate approved the FY 21 budget which was delivered to the Governor, who has until December 14, 2020 to respond. Included in the budget was the COLA for the State and Teachers' Systems, retroactive to July 1 and the amended language in Section 14 of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 extending the work waiver to end when the state of emergency is lifted or the end of calendar year 2021, whichever occurs first. He then noted that the Department of Revenue (DOR) reported that their November revenue figures have increased by 1.5% over this same time last year. Mr. Keefe then updated the Commission on a few bills H 2838, H 4815, and H 5147. He also stated that S 2914 is moving forward regarding an Everett police officer who passed away 33 days after retirement.

Chairman Brown inquired if there is any thought to allow retirement boards to make some use of electronic signatures. Mr. Keefe stated that legislation has been passed for electronic signatures on some forms during the pandemic. Mr. Parsons stated that the State Retirement Board filed legislation to allow for electronic signatures. It is PERAC's position that this would be acceptable for some forms but there are concerns regarding certain other forms. Mr. Favorito reported that the legislation has been refiled for next session, he would be more than happy to get together to create a group to study the opportunity while waiting for the Legislature to act. Chairman Brown suggested that PERAC come up with a list of acceptable and unacceptable forms with the possibility in mind that PERAC may weigh in when the Legislature does take this matter up. Ms. Corrigan stated that, in some matters, electronic signatures are acceptable. However, beneficiary forms are excluded from this because a person is deceased and can no longer speak for his/herself when questions about estates arise, it is doubtful that beneficiary forms could be signed electronically. Ms. Corrigan stated that she and Ms. Brady recently did a presentation regarding electronic filings if anyone is interested in reviewing it.

Audit Update

Ms. Shea reported that since the last Commission meeting, PERAC released the Maynard Retirement System Audit Report which was a limited scope audit as they have a private auditor, and stated that there were no findings. She also reported on the Attleboro Retirement System follow up report. Ms. Shea then reviewed the Audit Tracking Report noting that there are 16 audits in process. She explained that of those 16 audits, 2 audits are under final review, 2 are pending their exit conferences, 4 are under review pending revisions, 5 audits are under the field work phase, 1 is under internal review and 2 are in the planning phase. Ms. Shea attended a seminar *Fraud Mitigation and Management*, and she then stated that all of the auditors would be taking this seminar. Finally, she reported that the audit unit is currently working on the end of the year books and preparing to present a webinar on *Year End Closing of the Books and Preparing the Annual Statement*.

Compliance Update

Mr. O'Donnell reported that there have been 1047 various course completions at this time, and that we continue to look for additional educational offerings.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Parsons reported on the recent staff activities. He stated that Ms. Corrigan and Mr. Boorack presented a webinar on *Buybacks under Chapter 32*. He then reported that he attended the State Retiree Benefit Trust Fund (SBRTF) meeting where PRIM reported that they are up 2% this calendar year through the month of October.

Mr. Parsons reported that the 2021 Schedule of Commission meetings is included in the monthly package assuming that the second Wednesday of the month will continue to work for the Commissioners.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick made a motion to adopt the 2021 calendar year Commission meeting schedule. Commissioner Dooling seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Chairman Philip Brown YES, Commissioners Timothy Dooling YES, Kathy Fallon YES, Kate Fitzpatrick YES, James Machado YES, Robert McCarthy YES, and Jennifer Sullivan YES and the motion was adopted.

Mr. Parsons updated that the Commission regarding the Conflict of Interest Law and Mandatory Education. Every year there must be an acknowledgement on file, for receipt of the Conflict of Interest Law (which is included in the monthly package) and an on-line training program must be taken every two years. He requested that all Commissioners sign the acknowledgement form and forward to Ms. Boisvert or Ms. Carcia for filing. He further stated that Ms. Carcia would follow up with the Commissioners who would need to take the on-line training program.

Mr. Parsons stated that the 56th PERAC Pension News has been distributed for December 2020. Articles included in this issue include Commissioner McCarthy's retirement, PERAC legislative filings for 2021-2022, a tribute to Kate Hogan, and PERAC staff updates.

Other Business

Chairman Brown inquired if any changes in staffing would be done due to Governor Baker's new orders.

Mr. Parsons stated that on any given day there are 30% to 40% of the staff in the office. He continued that as the Commission knows additional lap tops and VPN have been provided to those working from home.

Chairman Brown wished a Happy Holiday to all and then reported that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 11:00 AM.

Commissioner Dooling made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fitzpatrick seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Chairman Philip Brown YES, Commissioners Timothy Dooling YES, Kathy Fallon YES, Kate Fitzpatrick YES, James Machado YES, Robert McCarthy YES, and Jennifer Sullivan YES and the motion was adopted. The Commission meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM.

Commission Meeting Documents

Commission Agenda for the meeting December 9, 2020

Commission Minutes from November 18, 2020

Legislative Update

Memorandum regarding Legislative updates

Audit Update

Cover page

Maynard Retirement System cover page

Attleboro Retirement System follow up letter

Audit Tracking Log

Compliance Update

Memorandum regarding Compliance updates

Course Completion Report

Executive Director's Report

Staff Activities

Draft 2021 Commission Meeting schedule

Memo regarding the Conflict of Interest Law & Mandatory Education

Conflict of Interest Law Acknowledgement Form

PERAC Pension News, Number 56

Approved:



Philip Y. Brown, Chairman
Public Employee Retirement
Administration Commission