

MINUTES FOR THE 1,273rd BOARD MEETING

STATE BOARD OF RETIREMENT

DATE: February 29, 2024

TIME: 10:00 A.M.

PLACE: One Winter Street – 8th Floor, Boston, MA/Remote

There being a quorum, the February 29, 2024, meeting of the State Retirement Board (“Board”) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Treasurer & Receiver General Deborah B. Goldberg, Chair.

Treasurer Goldberg announced pursuant to the Commonwealth’s Open Meeting Law Massachusetts General Law chapter 30A, §20, as amended recently by Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2023, that the meeting of the Board was being held via the Internet and was being called to order with the following Members who would be participating remotely for all or part of the meeting and who were identified at this time: Deborah B. Goldberg, Treasurer & Receiver General, Chair; Francis Valeri, Elected Member; Theresa McGoldrick, Elected Member; Joanne Goldstein, Appointed Member; Archie Gormley, Chosen Member. Unless otherwise noted, all votes taken at the meeting were taken by roll call vote.

On January 26, 2024, Ralph W. White passed away at the age of 92. Ralph was a Board Member for 20 years and a dedicated public employee. He also was the founder of Mass Retirees and served as its President. At today’s meeting, Treasurer Goldberg spoke about the warm relationship she had with Ralph and how much he contributed during his career as a public employee. Their relationship began when she was a select person in Brookline. The Treasurer expressed appreciation for their loving friendship, kindness, and his loyalty to public employees. She will continue to keep Ralph and his family in her heart. Mr. Valeri worked with Ralph over the years, and he commented, “Ralph was dedicated to making people’s lives better.” He appreciates all he learned from Ralph and honored to follow in his footsteps at Mass Retirees. Board Members McGoldrick and Gormley expressed their appreciation and affirmed Ralph’s dedicated public service.

Board staff that were present or participated remotely for all or part of the meeting were: Kathryn Kougias, Executive Director; Sandor Zapolin, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Operating Officer; Micalie Baptiste-Merisier, Office Manager/Executive Assistant; Lisa Zale, Disability Unit Manager; Jasmine Chasse, Disability Retirement Case Counselor; Joisei Horton, Senior Disability Retirement Counselor; Yande Lombe, Associate Board Counsel; Robin Chu, Andrew Dickey, Paralegal; Athila Soares-Nunes, Paralegal; Pamela Diggs, Paralegal; Paula Daddona, Director of Member Experience, Communications & Operations; Zachary Pierce, Communications Coordinator, II; Ebenezer Shim, Communications Specialist; Diana Reyes, Director of Benefits; Sharon L. Sullivan, Budget & Finance Manager; Brendan McGough, Associate General Counsel; Jennifer Hunt, Associate General Counsel; Kimberly Griffin, Director of Information Systems & Technology; Stephanie Sicard, Assistant Director of Benefit Services; Joseph MacInnis, Assistant Director of Benefit Services; Tyler Williams, Constituent Service Liaison; Robin Chu, Associate

Board Counsel; John Durgin, Associate General Counsel; John McDonough, Benefits Administration Analyst.

Treasury staff that participated remotely for all or part of the meeting were: Sarah Kim, Deputy Treasurer/General Counsel; Rachel Healey, Hearing Officer; Chandra Bork, Chief of Staff; Lizandra Gomes, Deputy Chief of Staff, DE&I Program Manager; Andrew Napolitano, Deputy Communications Director; Emily Kowtoniuk, Legislative Director; Kathleen McNamara, Internal Auditor; Elizabeth Morrocco, Associate General Counsel/Procurement Director; Mikaela Cole, Deputy Communications Director.

Members of the public were provided access to the meeting via a call-in number. Those registered as attending were as follows: Jeffrey Black – HSC A/B, DDS; Emmett Holland; SaraKate Matthews; Department of Correction, Personnel Officer I; Matt Smith; Juliane Sprano, Attorney; James O’Leary, Attorney.

Treasurer Goldberg announced in accordance with the Commonwealth’s Open Meeting Law that any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of a public body, and she was obligated to inform participants of any recording at the beginning of the meeting. She then asked that anyone who is making any recording identify themselves as doing so to Treasury staff monitoring the public access platform.

Ms. Goldstein joined the meeting at 10:03 am

Treasurer Goldberg also announced that for those members of the public accessing the open portion of the Board meeting, that access will conclude when the Board enters Executive Session and resume when the Board returns from Executive Session.

MINUTES OF THE January 25, 2024 1,272nd BOARD MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Gormley and seconded by Mr. Valeri the Board voted unanimously to approve the Open Session and Executive minutes of the 1,272nd Board Meeting, held on January 25th, 2024.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

THE BOARD ENTERS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 10:13 a.m. the Board entered Executive Session to review applications for disability retirement, associated benefits, litigation strategy, and to also consider the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health of individuals with business before the Board. Treasurer Goldberg indicated the Board would reconvene in Open Session after the Executive Session.

Ms. McGoldrick made a motion to enter Executive Session, Mr. Gormley seconded the motion.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

THE BOARD RECONVENES IN OPEN SESSION

TAB 2- GROUP CLASSIFICATIONS

GROUP 2

Pursuant to the Board’s Classification Policy the following are reported as approved for Group 2 Classification:

1. **Wendy Feeney** – SW II, DCF -
2. **Mark Horan** – Chief Court Officer, MA Trial Court
3. **Judith Lawler** – Assistant Chief Probation Officer, MA Trial Court
4. **Jill Mckeen** – Social Worker II, DCF
5. **Sean Rafferty** – Court Officer, MA Trial Court
6. **Marc Segalla** – Probation Officer II, MA Trial Court
7. **Christopher Tamborra** – Group Worker I, Department of Youth Services
8. **Laura-Ann Taylor** – LPN II, Holyoke Veteran’s Home

GROUP 2 (Board Review)

1. **Carolyn Daly** – Clinical Social Worker C, DMH

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Valeri seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

2. **Francine Kapinos** – LPN II, Holyoke Soldiers Home

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Gormley seconded by Ms. McGoldrick voted to deny this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

3. **Nicholas Lahage** – Reintegration Supervisor, Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Valeri seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

4. **Maureen Laughnane** – RN II, DDS

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Valeri voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

5. **Michael Nappo** – Director of Social Worker, Chelsea Veteran’s Home

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to deny this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 2 (HSC A/B) (Board Review)

1. **Niva Aponte** – HSC I, DDS

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to deny this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

2. **Sarah Jolliffe** – HSC I, DDS

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to deny this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 2 (Reconsideration) (Board Review)

1. **Russell Wright** – Physical Therapist Assistant, Lemuel Shattuck Hospital

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Valeri voted to approve the reconsideration.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

On a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 2 PRO-RATE (Board Review)

1. **Lisa Hackett**

UMass Chan Medical School

Case Manager – 01/16/2007 - 09/13/2008
Case Manager – 09/14/2008 - 03/07/2009
Senior Case Manager – 03/08/2009
- 10/28/2009
Team Leader – 10/29/2009 - 01/11/2014

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Gormley and seconded by Ms. McGoldrick voted to deny the request for the Case Manager-01/16/2007-09/13/2008 and Case Manager 09/14/2008-03/17/2009.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

On a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick and seconded by Mr. Valeri voted to deny the request for Senior Case Manager- 03/08/2009-10/28/2009.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

Further, on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick and seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to deny the request for Team Leader- 1-29-2009-01/11/2014.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 2 PRO-RATE (Reconsideration) (Board Review)

1. Anthony Gerniglia

Department of Youth Services

Group Worker 3 – 08/01/1983 –
11/28/1987

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Mr. Gormley voted to approve the reconsideration.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

On a motion made by Mr. Gormley seconded by Ms. Goldstein voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 4

Pursuant to the Board’s Classification Policy the following are reported as approved for Group 4 Classification:

- 1. Tina Baccaire** – Correction Officer, Bristol County Sheriff’s Department
- 2. James Brown** – Primary Captain, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department

3. **James Cannone** – Correction Officer I, DOC
4. **Gerald Deangelis** – Correction Officer, Norfolk County Sheriff’s Office
5. **Gary Dupuis** – Institutional Parole Officer C, MA Parole Board
6. **Lisa DeFrancesco** – Correction Officer I, DOC
7. **Andrew Ford** – Captain, Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (MA Environmental Police)
8. **Elizabeth Katz** – Assistant District Attorney, Northwestern District Attorney’s Office
9. **John Keefe** – Outreach Correction Officer, Norfolk County Sheriff’s Office
10. **Keith Leroy** – Correction Officer II, DOC
11. **Joshua Macy** – Recreation Officer II, DOC
12. **Walter Marcinkewich** – Corrections Officer, Middlesex County Sheriff’s Department
13. **James Pepper** – Correction Officer, Worcester County Sheriff’s Department
14. **Patricia Reilly** – Assistant District Attorney, Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office
15. **Timothy Riggins** – Correction Officer II, DOC
16. **Jose Santiago** – Lieutenant, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department
17. **Joseph Sciartelli** – Residential Supervisor IX/Correction Officer, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department
18. **Daniel Sullivan** – Correction Officer, Worcester County Sheriff’s Department
19. **James Wilder** – Correction Officer II, DOC
20. **William Wolski** – Correction Officer II, DOC

GROUP 4 (Board Review)

1. **Donald Buckley** – Lieutenant, Plymouth County Sheriff’s Department

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Gormley and seconded by Ms. McGoldrick voted to deny this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

GROUP 4 PRO-RATE

Pursuant to the Board’s Classification Policy the following are reported as approved for Group 4 Pro-Rate Classification:

1. **Joseph Gordon** **Barnstable County Sheriff’s Department**

Correction Officer – 03/29/2004 -
02/22/2014

- 2. Edward Moriarty

Hampden County Sheriff’s Department

Correction Officer – 06/04/1990 -
04/14/1992

- 3. Sean Rafferty

Worcester County Sheriff’s Department

Correction Officer – 07/07/1992 -
07/23/1997

20/50 GROUP CLASSIFICATION

Pursuant to the Board’s Classification Policy the following are reported as approved for Group 20/50 Classification:

- 1. Daneka Barbour – Corporal, Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department
- 2. Jason Brouillard – Corporal, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department
- 3. Jason Fay – Corporal, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department
- 4. David Kearney – Correction Officer III, DOC
- 5. Anthony Lee – Lieutenant, Essex County Sheriff’s Department

20/50 (Board Review)

- 1. Drew Powell – Captain, Franklin County Sheriff’s Office

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick and seconded by Ms. Goldstein voted to approve this request.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

TAB 3: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Business Operations Report

Ms. Kougias was pleased to inform the Board of the **Estimated Initial Benefit Payments** (“EIPB”) results included in the February 2024 payroll. Estimated Payments were issued to seventy-four new retirees, with a Group 1 classification and only one calculation with a retirement date from September 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. Phase 1 milestones were achieved; Phases 2 through 4 will focus on calculations with differentials, other exceptions, and multiple calculations. Ms. Kougias will continue to keep the Board informed of the progress. Ms. Kougias praised the staff for their hard work over the years and specifically the last few months to get to this moment. She also thanked Mr. Valeri for suggesting the project and the Board for its support.

A memorandum was presented to the Board informing them of **Section 91A compliance** matters. It noted two cases where members failed to file the 2022 annual earnings statement and an accidental disability member who failed to file the annual earnings statement for 2020.

Based on the information presented, on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick to suspend the members’ benefits if compliance is not met by March 21, 2024, seconded by Ms. Goldstein.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

The **Section 91A Board Policy** was reviewed by Board staff. Based on the review, Ms. Kougias proposed amended language to change the notification process when members have been deemed by PERAC to have not complied with the Annual Statement Earnings Statement reporting. The proposed amendment specifically reduces the number of letters/notifications sent to members who have not complied from four to two before recommending to the Board suspension of benefit payments. Board staff will continue with good faith efforts through telephone calls to the members as needed. This reasonable change improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the process.

After discussion, a motion made by Mr. Valeri to change the notifications required from four to two, seconded by Ms. Goldstein.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

A memorandum was reviewed by the Board with the recommendation to award the **bi-annual Benefit Verification Process** to Fowler Printing and Graphics. Ms. Kougias informed the Board that Fowler Printing and Graphics was the lone bidder and submitted an estimated cost of \$160,108.

Proposed PERAC Regulation 840 CMR 15.01, Attestation of Retired Members and Beneficiaries will relieve retirement boards from the bi-annual process. Ms. Kougias will update the Board of on these matters.

After discussion, a motion by Ms. McGoldrick to approve the recommendation of selecting Fowler Printing and Graphics at an estimated cost of \$160,108, seconded by Mr. Valeri.

ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

The **workforce efforts** are ongoing and over the past month, five new hires joined the SRB team within benefit calculation, legal, member account management, benefit support, and constituent services. Ms. Kougias and Mr. Zapolin are focusing efforts on the management structure.

In March, a mandatory management training program offered by TRE HR will commence and will be conducted for a six-month period.

The **monthly warrant production** numbers were highlighted noting 274 first pays that included the 74 estimated payments. Benefit adjustments completed were 128 and distributions for the month were 454. Telephone calls for the month remain consistent with over 10,000 inbound calls to the member services call center. Other details included monthly on-site visits and outreach results.

The **January expense reports** were reviewed for the Board by Ms. Kougias. Operating spending compared to the budget was reported at 41.63% and capital spending compared to the budget was reported at 10.73%.

Ms. Kougias highlighted the total **assets of the PRIT Fund** of over \$100b with specifics on SERS and MTAERS, \$36b and \$160m respectively. **Rates of return** were reported as follows: one-year, 7.0; 3-year, 6.24; five-year, 8.60%.

The monthly **Legal Update Memorandum** six cases were summarized by Ms. Kougias as follows:

DALA affirmed the Board’s denial of James Fletcher v. State Board of Retirement, Group 2 classification. In the case of John Ahern v. State Board of Retirement, DALA upheld the Board’s decision in the Group 2 classification case. DALA affirmed the Board’s decision of Edith Smith v State Board of Retirement in the anti-spiking retirement case. The Accidental Disability Retirement matter of Becky Griffin v State Board of Retirement, Contributory Retirement Appeal Board established that the member met her burden establishing a causal connection between her injuries and the resultant disability. In the membership case of Lisa Duprey v State Board of Retirement DALA reversed the Board’s decision and determined that membership started on April 5, 2012. The Group 2 classification case of Mary Zelten v. State Board of Retirement DALA found that the member’s position required that the patients’ care was driven by the “interrelated demands of their physical, psychiatric, and developmental issues.”

The **MSRB February Retiree eNews Bulletin** was distributed to retirees via email. The newsletter featured New Board Member Joanne Goldstein’s appointment to serve the State Retirement Board effective January 25, 2024, for a three-year term and highlighted other details of her public service career.

A tribute to Ralph W. White was presented to inform retirees of Mr. White’s recent passing. It included the highlights of his remarkable public service career.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Valeri and seconded by Mr. Gormley the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

On the Roll Call the Vote was as follows:

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes

Ms. Goldstein	Yes
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	Yes

The next meeting of the State Board of Retirement is scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2024.