

## MINUTES FOR THE 1,278<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING

### STATE BOARD OF RETIREMENT

**DATE:** July 25, 2024

**TIME:** 10:05 A.M.

**PLACE:** One Winter Street – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA/Remote

There being a quorum, the July 25, 2024, meeting of the State Retirement Board (“Board”) was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Treasurer & Receiver General Deborah B. Goldberg, Chair.

Treasurer Goldberg announced under the Commonwealth’s Open Meeting Law under Massachusetts General Law chapter 30A, §20, as amended 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; Archie Gormley, Chosen Member; Joanne Goldstein, Appointed Member. Unless otherwise noted, all votes taken at the meeting were taken by roll call vote.

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; Jasmine Chasse, Disability Retirement Case Counselor; Joisei Horton, Disability Benefits Manager; Lisa Zale, Assistant Director, Disability Benefits; Yande Lombe, Associate Board Counsel; Athila Soares-Nunes, Paralegal; Pamela Diggs, Senior Paralegal; Robin Chu, Associate Board Counsel; John Durgin, Associate General Counsel; Jennifer Hunt, Associate General Counsel; Matthew Szafranski, Associate Board Counsel; Paula Daddona, Director of Member Experience, Communications & Operations; Zachary Pierce, Communications Coordinator, II; Stephanie Sicard, Assistant Director of Benefits Services; Tyler Williams, Constituent Service Liaison; Hana Hershey, MSRB Legal Summer Intern; Jessica Ashe, MSRB Legal Summer Intern; Marsha Knight, Disbursement Unit Manager; Angela Olszewski, Director of Business Support; Drenna Barrett, Assistant Director of Member Account Management.

Treasury staff that participated remotely for all or part of the meeting were: Chandra Bork, Chief of Staff; Sarah Kim, Deputy Treasurer/General Counsel; Elizabeth Morrocco, Associate General Counsel/Procurement Director; Andrew Napolitano, Deputy Communications Director; Alexa Michon, Policy Associate; Rachel Healey, Contract Emp – Constitutional.

Members of the public were provided access to the meeting via a call-in number. Those registered as attending were as follows: Jeffrey Black; Stephen Cammarata; Cassandra Evans, Procurement Manager, Essex County Sheriff’s Department; Renee C. Hamilton; Lynda Kelly; SaraKate Matthews, Personnel Officer I, Department of Correction; Anthony Turco, Assistant

Superintendent, Essex County Sheriff's Department; Attorney Joseph McGowan and Aaron Eastman; Marie Laine Sylvestre; Lauren Iannelli and Attorney Matthew Feeney

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.

Treasurer Goldberg 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 JUNE 27, 2024, 1,277<sup>th</sup> 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 1,277<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, held on June 27, 2024.

**ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS**

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

**THE BOARD ENTERS EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 10:12 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. Goldstein made a motion to enter Executive Session, Mr. Valeri seconded the motion.

**ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:**

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

**THE BOARD RECONVENES IN OPEN SESSION**

*Ms. McGoldrick Joined the meeting at 10:16 am.*

**TAB 2- GROUP CLASSIFICATIONS**

**GROUP 2**

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

1. **Ado Barnes** – Court Officer II, MA Trial Court
2. **Daniel Brennan** – Instructional Aide, SEEM Collaborative
3. **Viki Briggs** – Residential Supervisor II, Southeastern Residential Services, DDS
4. **Colleen Cavanaugh** – Social Worker, DCF
5. **Mary Degrenier** – Program Coordinator III, Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital, DPH
6. **Rosemerry Dillon-Yorke** – RN III, Tewksbury Hospital, DMH
7. **Patricia Evangelista-Stoute** – Probation Officer, MA Trial Court
8. **Sandra Fontecchio** – Social Worker II, DCF
9. **Jennifer Larson** – Social Worker III, DCF
10. **Dorothy Oliveira-Soares** – Social Worker II, DCF
11. **Pam Ryan** – Teacher Assistant, LABBB Collaborative
12. **Douglas Theodore** – Social Worker III, DCF
13. **Christine Thomas** – Associate Probation Officer, MA Trial Court

**GROUP 2 (Board Review)**

1. **Avelino Alves** – Director of Food and Commissary, Bristol County Sheriff’s Department

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Valeri 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

**2. Leonie Forbes-Sanderson – RN V, DMH**

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. McGoldrick seconded by Ms. Goldstein voted to table 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. Karen Lightner – RN IV, DDS**

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Ms. Goldstein 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 2 HSC I (Board Review)**

**1. Kimberly Urquiola – HSC I, DMH**

After discussion of the available information, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Gormley seconded by Mr. Valeri voted to approve the 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 II (Board Review)**

1. **Jeffrey Schwartz** – HSC II, DMH

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

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

1. **Nichelle Brooks**

**Department of Children and Families**

SW I – 07/02/1989 - 04/29/1995  
SW II – 04/30/1995 - 12/15/2001  
SW C – 12/16/2001 - 09/25/2004  
SW D – 09/26/2004 - 01/23/2016  
SW III – 01/24/2016 - 04/15/2017

**GROUP 4**

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

1. **Nicholas Bevilacqua** – Correction Officer I, Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office
2. **Thomas Bianco** – Correction Officer, Norfolk County Sheriff’s Department
3. **Angelo Desantis** – Correction Officer, Worcester County Sheriff’s Office
4. **Eric Iverson** – Deputy Sheriff Correctional Officer, Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office
5. **Kathleen McBride** – Security Director/C.O., Hampden County Sheriff Department
6. **Edwin Sepulveda** – Correction Officer I, DOC
7. **Bruce Stratford** – Correctional Officer III, DOC
8. **Anthony Turco** – Assistant Superintendent V, Essex Courts Sheriff Department

**GROUP 4 PRO-RATE**

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

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. <b><u>Timothy Connolly</u></b>  | <b><u>Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office</u></b><br>Correction Officer* – 04/09/2012 - 09/11/2024 |
| 2. <b><u>Anthony Montonari</u></b> | <b><u>Department of Corrections</u></b><br>Industrial Instructor II – 07/22/2012 - 10/22/2022     |

\*Member established membership after April 2, 2012, and so is required to pro-rate any position that they wish to classify, including the position that they currently hold.

**20/50**

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

1. **Thomas Francesconi** – Correction Officer, Essex County Sheriff’s Department
2. **Stephen MacAleese** – Correction Officer, Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office
3. **Corey Peabody** – Captain, Essex County Sheriff’s Department

**20/50 (Board Review)**

1. **Lauren Iannelli** – Assistant Superintendent II, Essex County Sheriff’s Department. In attendance were Lauren Iannelli, Attorney Matt Feeney, Aaron Eastman, Superintendent Middleton House of Corrections, and Attorney Joseph McGowan, Essex Sheriff’s Department.

Sarah Kim, General Counsel for the Office of the State Treasurer, presented the facts of Ms. Iannelli's case and her request to be approved for the 20/50 benefit. She noted her position as Assistant Superintendent II and the job responsibilities as presented in the job description. The general statement of duties reads, "This is a management position in the Essex County Sheriff's Department with broad management responsibilities for the development and implementation of policies, programs and practices for the management and administration of all matters pertaining to the operation of the Internal Affairs Division." Ms. Kim contrasted the position to the Correctional Officer II job description. Other applications were cited showing where the language of care, custody, and control was included in the job descriptions. The Hollum case was discussed and the significance of Section 28N and its application when employed in the capacity of Corrections Officer. Ms. Kim commented that 28N does not include senior positions such as the Assistant Superintendent II position. A robust discussion involved the Board Members and other stakeholders in attendance. Attorney Feeney argued strongly that the Hollum case is the law that applies. Through a series of questions, Attorney Feeney had Ms. Iannelli explain her experience, her licenses, training, and advancement with Essex Sheriff's Department. Attorney McGowan referenced Sheriff Coppinger's affidavit dated May 28, 2025, and his remarks at the May meeting underscoring his strong support of Ms. Iannelli's request to be granted the 20/50 benefit. Aaron Eastman advocated on Ms. Iannelli's behalf. He writes and reviews all job descriptions to ensure that the care and custody is included. The essential functions bullet No. 1 states, "To perform and be responsible for all the essential functions of correctional officer with the rank of officer (See Correctional Officer Position Description.)"

Treasurer Goldberg was complimentary of Attorney Feeney's advocacy of his client. She further clearly stated that the Board relies on the statute as stated.

Frank Valeri reiterated Attorney Feeney's points regarding the Hollum case. He noted that each case is different. Mr. Valeri suggested that the Board staff seems to have taken a different direction in its analysis of these cases. Ms. Kim responded to all questions and comments thoroughly. The Board was appreciative of the time Ms. Kim dedicated to the case.

After discussion of all available information presented today in addition to the May and June 2024 meeting discussions, the Board on a motion made by Mr. Valeri seconded by Ms. McGoldrick voted to approve this request.

**ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:**

Mr. Valeri	Yes
Ms. McGoldrick	Yes
Ms. Goldstein	No
Mr. Gormley	Yes
Treasurer Goldberg	No

## **TAB 3: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### **Business Operations Memorandum, July 2024**

- Ms. Kougias informed the Board that the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (“COLA”) will be paid to the retirees in the July 2024 retirement allowance. The Governor has until Monday, July 29, 2024, to sign the legislation into law.
- At the time of the July 25, 2024, meeting, PERAC notified the State Retirement Board of 333 members who had not complied with 2023 Section 91A reporting requirements. By July 29, 2024, a letter will go to these members to remind them of the requirements that must be met on an annual basis. The information must be filed with PERAC. A second letter will be sent later in the year to any member that remains outstanding and has not met Section 91A requirements. Ultimately, the Board is authorized to suspend the disability retirement allowance if compliance is not met. Staff will keep the Board up to date for the remainder of the year.
- Angela Olszewski, Director of Business Support, presented the Proposed Supplemental Regulation 941 CMR 2.11: Use of electronic signature. This regulation is to clarify the use of the electronic signature in lieu of a “wet signature.” Ms. Olszewski reminded the Board of its prior action to authorize electronic signatures. She explained the efforts she, Drenna Barrett, and Attorney Brendan McGough have undertaken to prepare the regulation: examination of SRB’s forms to accommodate the e-signature, discussion with PERAC, and initiatives with IT to employ software. Board Members expressed support for this initiative and were pleased with this process improvement.

With the Board’s approval, the proposed regulation will go through the process to be codified into 941 CMR.

On a motion by Mr. Valeri seconded by Mr. Gormley the Board voted unanimously to approve the Proposed Supplemental Regulation 941 CMR 2.11: Use of electronic signature.

#### **ON THE ROLL CALL THE VOTE WAS AS FOLLOWS:**

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



- Ms. Kougias provided a summary of the SRB workforce update over the last month. There were two terminations and five new hires representing staff and management positions across several business units.
- Monthly warrants estimated initial benefit payments, accelerated payments, benefit adjustments and distribution warrant data were reviewed through June 30, 2024 and as presented on Page 274 of the Board materials. The July 2024 warrant was generated last evening. It totaled approximately \$251 million and will be distributed on July 31 to 71,269 members. It included 205 first payments and 35 estimated payments who were paid within 60 days of their retirement date.
- Inbound telephone calls remained consistent with May 2024 and as of June 30, 2024 SRB has received 47,270 calls. In June, we serviced 116 members who visited the One Winter Street office. The data for the online Outreach was inconclusive due to technical issues.
- Ms. Kougias reported that as of June 30, 2024, Operational Expenses totaled \$15,869,676.96 or 72.54% of the FY24 budget of \$21,876,467. June spending will be updated, since there are accounts payable that have not been recorded. FY24 Capital Expenses were \$650,549.72 although there are accounts receivable that have not been recorded. When compared to the budget, expenses were 20.39%.
- Summary of Plan Assets and Performance were presented as of June 30, 2024. A full copy of the PRIT Fund Performance Summary was included in the Board materials on pages 278-289.

**Legal Update Memorandum** included in the Board materials was summarized by Ms. Kougias as follows:

- David Gingerella v. State Board of Retirement, creditable service purchase case. DALA affirmed the Board's decision. It was a matter of the appropriate interest rate used to purchase the service. There are two options available: 1) interest at half the actuarial rate or 2) interest at the full actuarial rate. Since Mr. Gingerella did not comply with the deadline imposed to purchase the service, he was not entitled to the lower rate or interest at half the actuarial rate.
- Dawnmarie Greenwood v. State Board of Retirement, Group 2 classification case. DALA reversed the Board's decision. The magistrate broke down Ms. Greenwood's tenure into three time periods. In each period, the magistrate ruled she was entitled to Group 2. The magistrate credited Ms. Greenwood's testimony; it explained that her actual duties exceeded what was written. The Board appealed the decision to CRAB to preserve its rights.
- Sherrill Hayter v. State Board of Retirement, Group 2 classification case. DALA affirmed the Board's decision to deny Group 2 classification for the Area Office Nurse position but reversed the Board's decision to deny Group 2 for the On-Site Nursing Supervisor. The magistrate found Ms. Hayter's testimony to be reliable.

- Josh Bowdridge v. State Board of Retirement, 20/50 benefit. DALA affirmed the Board’s decision, and that Mr. Bowdridge was not entitled to retire under the 20/50 provision. The magistrate found that Mr. Bowdridge does not satisfy the requirements to retire under the 20/50 Bill. Ms. Bowdridge held the position of corrections officer for less than 20 years.

The **MSRB Retiree eNews Bulletin, July 2024** was presented to the Board. The Bulletin is being distributed to the members today. It includes the retiree COLA information for fiscal year 2025.

On a motion by Mr. Valeri and seconded by Mr. Gormley the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 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, August 29, 2024.**