

WESTFIELD
RETIREMENT SYSTEM
AUDIT REPORT
JAN. 1, 2016 - DEC. 31, 2019



PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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PERAC

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS | PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION

PHILIP Y. BROWN, ESQ., *Chair*

JOHN W. PARSONS, ESQ., *Executive Director*

Auditor DIANA DIZOGLIO | KATHLEEN M. FALLON | KATE FITZPATRICK | JAMES J. GUIDO | RICHARD MACKINNON, JR. | JENNIFER F. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

January 27, 2023

The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission has completed an examination of certain activities of the Westfield Retirement System pursuant to G.L. c. 32, § 21. The examination covered the period from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019. Based on an assessment in accordance with the policy outlined in PERAC Memo #18/2019, the scope of this audit was modified as noted below and was conducted in accordance with the accounting and management standards established by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission in regulation 840 CMR 25.00.

The specific objectives of our audit were to determine: 1) that the Board is exercising appropriate fiduciary oversight, 2) that cash balances are accurately stated, 3) that investment balances are accurately stated, 4) that procurements of investment related contracts complied with 23B and that management fees paid were in accordance with contracts, 5) that travel expenses were properly documented and accounted for, 6) that retirement contributions are accurately deducted, 7) that retirement allowances were correctly calculated, 8) that required member documentation is maintained, 9) that appropriations certified by PERAC have been paid to the retirement system, and 10) that refunds issued by the system were correctly calculated.

To achieve these objectives, we inspected certain records of the Westfield Retirement Board in the above areas. Specifically, we reviewed the minutes of the Board meetings for compliance with fiduciary oversight, verified cash and investment balances, and tested a sample of travel expenses for Board approvals, supporting documentation, and proper accounting. We reviewed a sample of procurement files for contracts awarded, recalculated certain management fees charged, and confirmed that all required documents were maintained. We tested the payroll records of a sample of active members to confirm that the correct percentage of regular compensation is being deducted, including the additional two percent over \$30,000. We also tested a sample of members who retired during our audit period to verify that their retirement allowance was calculated in accordance with the statute. We also reviewed a sample of member files for accuracy and completeness. We reviewed appropriations received and compared to PERAC appropriation letters for the fiscal years during the audit period. We also tested refunds issued during the audit period and recalculated the interest portion of the refunds tested.

In our opinion, for those areas tested, the financial records are being maintained and the management functions are being performed in conformity with the standards established by PERAC with the exceptions noted in the findings presented in this report.

In closing, I acknowledge the work of the auditors who conducted this examination, and express appreciation to the Board and staff for their courtesy and cooperation.

Sincerely,


John W. Parsons, Esq.
Executive Director

EXPLANATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. New Retirees:

Twenty members who retired during the audit period were reviewed. The following errors were found:

- The 3-year average salary for two retirees was lower than what we computed because summer school wages were not included. The summer school wages were incorrectly, not considered to be regular compensation, so no retirement deductions were made on those wages, and they were not included in determining average compensation for retirement purposes.
- The 3-year average salary for one retiree covered a period of time that the member was on leave without pay. The Board did not apply MGL c. 32, § 5(3)(b), which provides that the compensation to be used for the time on leave shall be the rate in effect prior to the leave.
- One accidental disability retiree is being paid the \$15 per year of creditable service veterans' benefit twice.

Recommendation: The cited retirees should be corrected. For the summer school wages, the members' retirement benefits should be recomputed, with a reduction in the retroactive payment for deductions that should have originally been withheld. The member with the leave without pay should be recomputed and the difference paid to the member. For the accidental disability retiree, the extra veterans' benefit should be stopped. All allowance amounts owed to or by these retirees need to be adjusted using the Board's correction of errors interest rate.

Board Response:

The Board has discussed the audit finding at the December 22, 2022 Board Meeting and will make the corrections as recommended by the Audit Team.

2. Service Purchases:

Of the 11 service purchases that were included in our sample of active members, four had errors.

- Two members were overcharged because the interest during the payment plan was not computed on the outstanding balance. The original amount owed was used instead.
- One member whose service purchase should have been at buyback interest was charged the higher actuarial interest rate instead.
- One member took a refund and was subsequently rehired by the same unit within 2 years. According to c. 32, § 3(6)(c) he should have only been charged interest until the time he was rehired.

Recommendation: These errors should be corrected by the board refunding the overpayments.

Board Response:

The Board has discussed the audit finding at the December 22, 2022 Board Meeting and will make the corrections as recommended by the Audit Team.

FINAL DETERMINATION:

PERAC Audit staff will follow up in six (6) months to ensure appropriate actions have been taken regarding all findings.

ANNUAL STATEMENTS (as submitted)

STATEMENT OF LEDGER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	AS OF DECEMBER 31,			
	2019	2018	2017	2016
Net Assets Available For Benefits:				
Cash	\$3,691,981	\$8,548,622	\$5,619,243	\$4,303,999
Pooled Short Term Funds	85,506,501	80,583,754	102,771,089	98,563,544
Pooled International Equity Funds	48,791,840	46,813,895	52,637,092	35,359,988
Pooled Domestic Fixed Income Funds	34,888,301	37,591,019	27,558,782	20,867,518
Pooled Alternative Investment Funds	31,285,187	23,443,854	24,550,722	24,299,359
Pooled Real Estate Funds	28,068,929	23,234,368	23,838,909	23,848,241
Hedge Funds	24,051,551	205,167	208,410	192,687
Accounts Receivable	91,497	76,816	139,803	83,435
Accounts Payable	(100,145)	(100,719)	(119,835)	(105,431)
Total	<u>\$256,275,641</u>	<u>\$220,396,775</u>	<u>\$237,204,216</u>	<u>\$207,413,340</u>
Fund Balances:				
Annuity Savings Fund	\$ 41,635,739	\$ 41,916,908	\$ 41,101,720	\$ 39,235,494
Annuity Reserve Fund	17,606,509	16,610,610	16,153,432	16,697,212
Pension Fund	810,451	1,165,040	1,406,927	1,975,284
Military Service Fund	22,698	22,675	23,451	23,428
Expense Fund	0	0	0	0
Pension Reserve Fund	<u>196,200,244</u>	<u>160,681,542</u>	<u>178,518,686</u>	<u>149,481,922</u>
Total	<u>\$256,275,641</u>	<u>\$220,396,775</u>	<u>\$237,204,216</u>	<u>\$207,413,340</u>

ANNUAL STATEMENTS (as submitted) (Continued)

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 2016	\$38,656,333	\$16,037,854	\$1,825,180	\$29,841	\$0	\$141,222,276	\$197,771,483
Receipts	4,238,625	487,755	9,844,812	1,417	3,176,245	13,039,080	30,787,934
Interfund Transfers	(2,998,957)	3,006,585	4,779,636	(7,830)	0	(4,779,434)	0
Disbursements	(660,507)	(2,834,982)	(14,474,343)	0	(3,176,245)	0	(21,146,077)
Ending Balance 2016	39,235,494	16,697,212	1,975,284	23,428	0	149,481,922	207,413,340
Receipts	4,433,294	490,096	10,307,218	23	2,045,813	33,586,495	50,862,939
Interfund Transfers	(1,870,436)	1,868,245	4,551,921	0	0	(4,549,730)	0
Disbursements	(696,633)	(2,902,121)	(15,427,497)	0	(2,045,813)	0	(21,072,063)
Ending Balance 2017	41,101,720	16,153,432	1,406,927	23,451	0	178,518,686	237,204,216
Receipts	4,543,616	474,340	10,868,127	23	1,866,704	(13,078,777)	4,674,033
Interfund Transfers	(3,095,528)	3,050,086	4,804,609	(800)	0	(4,758,368)	0
Disbursements	(632,900)	(3,067,248)	(15,914,622)	0	(1,866,704)	0	(21,481,474)
Ending Balance 2018	41,916,908	16,610,610	1,165,040	22,675	0	160,681,542	220,396,775
Receipts	4,590,591	509,844	11,462,671	23	1,917,614	40,625,335	59,106,077
Interfund Transfers	(3,818,844)	3,810,780	5,114,696	0	0	(5,106,632)	0
Disbursements	(1,052,917)	(3,324,724)	(16,931,957)	0	(1,917,614)	0	(23,227,211)
Ending Balance 2019	\$41,635,739	\$17,606,509	\$810,451	\$22,698	\$0	\$196,200,244	\$256,275,641

ANNUAL STATEMENTS (as submitted) (Continued)

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS

	FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,			
	2019	2018	2017	2016
Annuity Savings Fund:				
Members Deductions	\$4,156,326	\$4,161,571	\$4,022,949	\$3,915,464
Transfers from Other Systems	337,356	311,774	338,142	225,165
Member Make Up Payments and Re-deposits	30,631	(2,109)	14,029	34,835
Investment Income Credited to Member Accounts	<u>66,279</u>	<u>72,379</u>	<u>58,175</u>	<u>63,162</u>
Sub Total	<u>4,590,591</u>	<u>4,543,616</u>	<u>4,433,294</u>	<u>4,238,625</u>
Annuity Reserve Fund:				
Investment Income Credited to the Annuity Reserve Fund	<u>509,844</u>	<u>474,340</u>	<u>490,096</u>	<u>487,755</u>
Pension Fund:				
3 (B) (c) Reimbursements from Other Systems Received from Commonwealth for COLA and Survivor Benefits	298,207	300,104	306,645	294,810
Pension Fund Appropriation	100,333	110,433	116,272	129,581
Pension Fund Appropriation	11,064,131	10,457,590	9,884,301	9,413,620
Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claims	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,800</u>
Sub Total	<u>11,462,671</u>	<u>10,868,127</u>	<u>10,307,218</u>	<u>9,844,812</u>
Military Service Fund:				
Contribution Received from Municipality on Account of Military Service	0	0	0	1,387
Investment Income Credited to the Military Service Fund	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>30</u>
Sub Total	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>1,417</u>
Expense Fund:				
Investment Income Credited to the Expense Fund	<u>1,917,614</u>	<u>1,866,704</u>	<u>2,045,813</u>	<u>3,176,245</u>
Pension Reserve Fund:				
Federal Grant Reimbursement	10,715	15,719	40,804	32,753
Interest Not Refunded	7,148	5,628	3,387	3,065
Miscellaneous Income	2,178	3,541	2,397	4,961
Excess Investment Income	<u>40,605,295</u>	<u>(13,103,663)</u>	<u>33,539,906</u>	<u>12,998,302</u>
Sub Total	<u>40,625,335</u>	<u>(13,078,777)</u>	<u>33,586,495</u>	<u>13,039,080</u>
Total Receipts, Net	<u>\$59,106,077</u>	<u>\$4,674,033</u>	<u>\$50,862,939</u>	<u>\$30,787,934</u>

ANNUAL STATEMENTS (as submitted) (Continued)

STATEMENT OF DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,				
	2019	2018	2017	2016
Annuity Savings Fund:				
Refunds to Members	\$468,207	\$403,318	\$232,565	\$282,783
Transfers to Other Systems	<u>584,709</u>	<u>229,582</u>	<u>464,068</u>	<u>377,724</u>
Sub Total	<u>1,052,917</u>	<u>632,900</u>	<u>696,633</u>	<u>660,507</u>
Annuity Reserve Fund:				
Annuities Paid	3,314,662	3,021,397	2,896,345	2,728,606
Option B Refunds	<u>10,062</u>	<u>45,851</u>	<u>5,776</u>	<u>106,375</u>
Sub Total	<u>3,324,724</u>	<u>3,067,248</u>	<u>2,902,121</u>	<u>2,834,982</u>
Pension Fund:				
Pensions Paid:				
Regular Pension Payments	13,288,243	12,263,584	11,801,429	11,247,175
Survivorship Payments	924,768	934,057	884,554	868,032
Ordinary Disability Payments	107,691	125,513	123,956	118,950
Accidental Disability Payments	1,775,962	1,804,167	1,702,265	1,683,514
Accidental Death Payments	293,852	268,915	264,932	261,459
Section 101 Benefits	50,429	52,034	50,518	49,047
3 (8) (c) Reimbursements to Other Systems	<u>491,012</u>	<u>466,353</u>	<u>599,842</u>	<u>246,167</u>
Sub Total	<u>16,931,957</u>	<u>15,914,622</u>	<u>15,427,497</u>	<u>14,474,343</u>
Expense Fund:				
Board Member Stipend	11,395	12,750	15,000	15,000
Salaries	280,505	242,588	211,811	208,474
Legal Expenses	15,297	14,508	20,435	18,717
Travel Expenses	5,265	7,717	3,904	4,230
Administrative Expenses	15,162	11,794	12,167	15,672
Education and Training	1,629	0	0	0
Management Fees	1,547,318	1,542,182	1,748,624	2,881,314
Service Contracts	28,500	23,418	22,410	21,445
Fiduciary Insurance	<u>12,542</u>	<u>11,746</u>	<u>11,462</u>	<u>11,393</u>
Sub Total	<u>1,917,614</u>	<u>1,866,704</u>	<u>2,045,813</u>	<u>3,176,245</u>
Total Disbursements	<u>\$23,227,211</u>	<u>\$21,481,474</u>	<u>\$21,072,063</u>	<u>\$21,146,077</u>

ANNUAL STATEMENTS (as submitted) (Continued)

INVESTMENT INCOME

	FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31,			
	2019	2018	2017	2016
Investment Income Received From:				
Cash	\$14,767	\$14,799	\$10,088	\$6,424
Pooled or Mutual Funds	<u>6,120,212</u>	<u>5,129,891</u>	<u>4,005,763</u>	<u>2,665,781</u>
Total Investment Income	<u>6,134,979</u>	<u>5,144,690</u>	<u>4,015,851</u>	<u>2,672,205</u>
Plus:				
Realized Gains	10,761,707	12,323,725	9,097,909	6,066,777
Unrealized Gains	<u>52,838,767</u>	<u>22,890,744</u>	<u>33,046,086</u>	<u>25,572,186</u>
Sub Total	<u>63,600,474</u>	<u>35,214,469</u>	<u>42,143,996</u>	<u>31,638,963</u>
Less:				
Realized Loss	(2,467,351)	(1,280,574)	(942,895)	(1,242,414)
Unrealized Loss	<u>(22,334,623)</u>	<u>(48,774,580)</u>	<u>(8,856,479)</u>	<u>(16,343,262)</u>
Sub Total	<u>(24,801,974)</u>	<u>(50,055,154)</u>	<u>(9,799,374)</u>	<u>(17,585,676)</u>
Additional Adjustments:				
Carried Interest Expense	(1,151,454)	(342,437)	(226,460)	0
Miscellaneous Investment Expenses	<u>(682,972)</u>	<u>(651,786)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Sub Total	<u>(1,834,425)</u>	<u>(994,223)</u>	<u>(226,460)</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Investment Income	<u>43,099,054</u>	<u>(10,690,217)</u>	<u>36,134,013</u>	<u>16,725,493</u>
Income Required:				
Annuity Savings Fund	66,279	72,379	58,175	63,162
Annuity Reserve Fund	509,844	474,340	490,096	487,755
Military Service Fund	23	23	23	30
Expense Fund	<u>1,917,614</u>	<u>1,866,704</u>	<u>2,045,813</u>	<u>3,176,245</u>
Total Income Required	<u>2,493,759</u>	<u>2,413,446</u>	<u>2,594,107</u>	<u>3,727,191</u>
Net Investment Income	<u>43,099,054</u>	<u>(10,690,217)</u>	<u>36,134,013</u>	<u>16,725,493</u>
Less: Total Income Required	<u>2,493,759</u>	<u>2,413,446</u>	<u>2,594,107</u>	<u>3,727,191</u>
Excess Income (Loss) To The Pension Reserve Fund	<u>\$40,605,295</u>	<u>(\$13,103,663)</u>	<u>\$33,539,906</u>	<u>\$12,998,302</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

SCHEDULE OF ALLOCATION OF INVESTMENTS OWNED

(percentages by category)

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019		
	MARKET VALUE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ASSETS
Cash	\$3,691,981	1.4%
Pooled Short Term Funds	85,506,501	33.4%
Pooled International Equity Funds	48,791,840	19.0%
Pooled Domestic Fixed Income Funds	34,888,301	13.6%
Pooled Alternative Investment Funds	31,285,187	12.2%
Pooled Real Estate Funds	28,068,929	11.0%
Hedge Funds	<u>24,051,551</u>	<u>9.4%</u>
Grand Total	<u>\$256,284,289</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

For the year ending December 31, 2019, the rate of return for the investments of the Westfield Retirement System was 18.45%. For the five-year period ending December 31, 2019, the rate of return for the investments of the Westfield Retirement System averaged 8.30%. For the 35-year period ending December 31, 2019, since PERAC began evaluating the returns of the retirement systems, the rate of return on the investments of the Westfield Retirement System was 8.86%.

The composite rate of return for all retirement systems for the year ending December 31, 2019 was 16.90%. For the five-year period ending December 31, 2019, the composite rate of return for the investments of all retirement systems averaged 7.95%. For the 35-year period ending December 31, 2019, since PERAC began evaluating the returns of the retirement systems, the composite rate of return on the investments of all retirement systems averaged 9.22%.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)

SUMMARY OF PLAN PROVISIONS

The plan is a contributory defined benefit plan covering all Westfield 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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 72.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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 \$952.32 per year (or \$312 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 \$952.32 per year, per child (or \$312 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 \$300,000 from the State Retirement Board. This lump sum payment is also available to the family of a public prosecutor in certain, limited circumstances.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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 (OPTION D)

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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)

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 retains a Chief Information Officer to closely monitor the implementation and performance of their investment strategy and advise them of the 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM

The System is administered by a five-person Board of Retirement consisting of the City Auditor who shall be a member ex-officio, a second member appointed by the governing authority, 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.

Ex-officio Member: Vicki Leigh Moro

Appointed Member: Edward Murphy Serves until a successor is appointed

Elected Member: Mark Devine, Chairperson Term Expires: 12/30/23

Elected Member: Christopher Kane Term Expires: 05/05/24

Appointed Member: Michael Powers Term Expires: 12/17/24

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.

BOARD REGULATIONS

The Westfield Retirement Board has adopted Supplemental Regulations which are available on the PERAC website at <https://www.mass.gov/westfield-retirement-board-regulations>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)

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, 2021.

The actuarial liability for active members was	\$134,636,437
The actuarial liability for vested terminated members was	2,856,556
The actuarial liability for non-vested terminated members was	1,108,767
The actuarial liability for retired members was	<u>218,667,517</u>
The total actuarial liability was	<u>\$357,269,277</u>
System assets as of that date were (actuarial value)	<u>262,593,137</u>
The unfunded actuarial liability was	<u>\$94,676,140</u>
The ratio of system's assets to total actuarial liability was	73.5%
As of that date the total covered employee payroll was	\$43,823,328

The normal cost for employees on that date was 9.2% of payroll

The normal cost for the employer including administrative expenses was 10.3% of payroll

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

Investment Return: 7.0% per annum
 Rate of Salary Increase: Varies by group and service

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2021

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)
1/1/2021	\$262,593,137	\$357,269,277	\$94,676,140	73.5%	\$43,823,328	216.0%
1/1/2019	\$231,494,397	\$328,738,284	\$97,243,887	70.4%	\$42,280,364	230.0%
1/1/2017	\$206,933,523	\$297,883,348	\$90,949,825	69.5%	\$40,756,841	223.2%
1/1/2015	\$182,287,019	\$266,577,493	\$84,290,474	68.4%	\$37,863,972	222.6%
1/1/2013	\$152,038,889	\$240,778,484	\$88,739,595	63.1%	\$35,589,538	249.3%

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (Continued)

MEMBERSHIP EXHIBIT

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Retirement in Past Years										
Superannuation	26	31	48	26	34	35	31	28	32	40
Ordinary Disability	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Accidental Disability	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	1
Total Retirements	27	33	48	28	34	36	33	29	34	41
Total Retirees, Beneficiaries and Survivors	554	570	605	613	622	649	662	671	683	712
Total Active Members	902	893	865	881	895	924	894	906	881	869
Pension Payments										
Superannuation	\$7,338,142	\$7,829,846	\$8,562,340	\$9,211,299	\$9,753,820	\$10,422,436	\$11,247,175	\$11,801,429	\$12,263,584	\$13,288,243
Survivor/Beneficiary Payments	720,088	726,458	820,270	816,674	802,856	859,187	868,032	884,554	934,057	924,768
Ordinary Disability	113,668	115,602	98,481	101,094	103,410	102,478	118,950	123,956	125,513	107,691
Accidental Disability	1,278,408	1,404,796	1,487,924	1,502,472	1,581,648	1,602,575	1,683,514	1,702,265	1,804,167	1,775,962
Other	<u>449,200</u>	<u>431,542</u>	<u>466,687</u>	<u>520,378</u>	<u>600,542</u>	<u>548,689</u>	<u>556,672</u>	<u>915,293</u>	<u>787,302</u>	<u>835,293</u>
Total Payments for Year	<u>\$9,899,506</u>	<u>\$10,508,244</u>	<u>\$11,435,702</u>	<u>\$12,151,917</u>	<u>\$12,842,276</u>	<u>\$13,535,365</u>	<u>\$14,474,343</u>	<u>\$15,427,497</u>	<u>\$15,914,622</u>	<u>\$16,931,957</u>



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission

Five Middlesex Avenue, Suite 304 | Somerville, MA 02145

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PERAC

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS | PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION

PHILIP Y. BROWN, ESQ., *Chair*

JOHN W. PARSONS, ESQ., *Executive Director*

Auditor DIANA DIZOGLIO | KATHLEEN M. FALLON | KATE FITZPATRICK | JAMES J. GUIDO | RICHARD MACKINNON, JR. | JENNIFER F. SULLIVAN, ESQ.

February 5, 2024

Mark Devine, Chairperson
Westfield Retirement Board
City Hall, Room B13
59 Court Street
Westfield, MA 01085

REFERENCE: Report of the Examination of the Westfield Retirement Board for the four-year period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2019.

Dear Chairperson Devine:

The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission has completed a follow-up review of the findings and recommendations contained in its audit report of the Westfield Retirement Board for the period referenced above. We conduct these visits as a regular part of the oversight process to ensure the timely implementation of the recommendations contained in that report. The examination also addressed the other matters discussed at the completion of the audit. The results are as follows:

1. The Audit Report cited a finding that three members who retired during the audit period were underpaid and one was overpaid.

Follow-up Result: The member allowances identified during the audit were recalculated and adjustments made to the retirees. This issue is resolved.

2. The Audit Report cited a finding that four members were overcharged interest on the purchase of service time.

Follow-up Result: The identified members with the incorrect interest charged on the purchase of service time were reviewed and had been recomputed. Refunds are in the process of being paid. This issue is resolved.



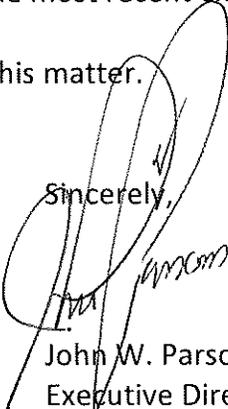
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The additional matters discussed have been reviewed and have been resolved.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge the effort demonstrated by the staff of the Westfield Retirement Board to correct the issues from the most recent examination of the system.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Parsons", written over the word "Sincerely,".

John W. Parsons, Esq.
Executive Director

JWP/cms
cc: Westfield Retirement Board Members