

Regular Meeting – November 20, 2024

The Taunton Retirement Board (the “Board”) met at 1:00 p.m. today at the retirement board offices, 104 Dean St., Suite 203, Taunton, MA with Chairman Dennis M. Smith presiding and board members Barry J. Amaral, Thomas A. Bernier, Gill E. Enos in attendance and Ian D. Fortes attended via Zoom.

Roll Call

All members were present at the 1:00 p.m. roll call.

Also present were:

Paul J. Slivinski, Executive Director

Karen Medeiros, Asst. Executive Director

Kevin Condy, Dahab

PRIM Private Equity – Manager Review:

The board met with Francesco Daniele from PRIM. He updated the board on current activities at both PRIM and more specifically the Private Equity program at PRIM.

Preliminary Q4 performance:

Portfolio performance was flat during the first half of the quarter, with significant equity market volatility. However, positive trends emerged toward the end of the quarter. Rising yields across the Treasury curve led to a decline in bond prices.

Q3 Performance Update:

The fund returned +5.4% in Q3, ranking in the 51st percentile. Long-term performance remains robust, with a 10-year return of 8.0%, ranking in the 28th percentile. Small-cap equities were particularly strong contributors. Active management detracted from overall portfolio performance, with four out of five active equity managers underperforming their respective benchmarks.

PRIM Private Equity Commitment for Fiscal Year 2025:

Reviewed the PRIM Private Equity (PE) Program commitment for 2025. He outlined factors including Recent PRIM PE performance, current value of system assets, likelihood of PRIM calling the full commitment, current pace of distributions, and the System’s allocation to private equity relative to the target.

Based on these considerations, Dahab recommended a commitment of \$7 million to the PRIM VY 2025 program.

On the motion by Enos seconded by Bernier the board voted to approve a \$7 million commitment to the PRIM VY 2025 program.

VOTED: to invest \$7mm in the next vintage year 2025.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Asset Allocation Study:

Presentation on the findings from an asset allocation study conducted by Dahab Associates. The study included: overview of Dahab’s asset allocation process, historical perspective on portfolio structure, current market outlook, and potential allocations for consideration.

Discussion focused on appropriate portfolio illiquidity levels and strategies for increasing allocations to private markets in the near term. The board deliberated on proposed adjustments to enhance risk-adjusted returns which included increasing allocations to private assets or farmland.

Global Fixed Income Allocation:

Following the asset allocation review, it was determined that diversification benefits, and risk/return characteristics of global fixed income allocation no longer met its investment objectives.

On the motion by Enos seconded by Bernier, the board voted to eliminate the global fixed income allocation and terminate PIMCO as the manager the funds were reallocated to current manager, Manulife.

VOTED: to eliminate the global fixed income allocation and terminate PIMCO as the manager the fund were reallocated to current manager, Manulife.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

It was then decided that Dahab would provide additional information at the December meeting to finalize a revised target allocation.

Regular Business:

Minutes – from the October 23, 2024 regular meeting.

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Amaral, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Warrants – #93 thru #101 for 2024.

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the warrants.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

New members of the system to date:

- Caroline DeCosta, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Kaitlyn Murphy, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Zuleica Rodrigues Monteiro, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Effie Egan, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Alexandra Miranda, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Marilyn Buzzell, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Elisa Mendez, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Selena DeFaria, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Renee Brown, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Cody Pittides, GATRA, Group 1, 9+2%
- Shabnam Khan, City of Taunton Finance Dept., Group 1, 8+2%
- Rachel Connell, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the new members.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Refunds/transfers subject to D.O.R. liens:

- Kathryn Fyfe, Taunton Public Schools, Refund, 1/09/2023-8/19/24

- Peter Winters, City of Taunton Law Department, Transfer to New Bedford 9/13/2021-9/15/2023. *Taunton will accept 2 years of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12-month basis.*
- Kirstin Dawson, Taunton Public School, Transfer to MTRS, 02/07/2018-10/25/2021 & 04/11/2022-8/22/2022. *Taunton will accept 4 years of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12-month basis.*
- Zachary Bentley, Taunton Public School, Refund-Rollover to Jett Foundation, 12/10/2020-06/24/2021-09/10/2021-02/11/2022.
- Rachel Thomas, Taunton Nursing Home, Refund-Rollover to Nationwide Financial, 09/16/2016-12/14/2017.

On the motion by Amaral, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve all of the refunds/transfers

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Retirement/survivorship applications:

- Zenalia Chaves (School) Superannuation, Group 1, DOR: 12/31/2024
- Leonard J. Williams (Fire) Superannuation, Group 4, DOR: 1/18/2025
- Joseph D. Laranjo (TMLP) Superannuation, Group 4, DOR: 1/7/2025
- Elizabeth J. Buckley (TMLP) Superannuation, Group 1, DOR: 1/14/2025
- Elizabeth Mitchell (TMLP) Superannuation, Group 1, DOR: 12/26/2024
- Robert P. Ferreira (DPW) Accidental Disability, Group 1, DOR: 08/12/2023

On the motion by Amaral, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the retirements & survivorships.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Deaths

- Robert J. Merola, DOD: 5/13/23, overpayment \$17,818.24 (recently discovered via new death portal program thru ABL technologies)

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Amaral, it was unanimously

VOTED: to acknowledge the death and to have Attorney Sacco send a subpoena for the records to Webster Bank.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Make-up/redeposits and liability for creditable service:

- James Higgins, TMLP, Veteran service, m/u 2 years & 10 months
- Zachary Strojny, Fire, Veteran service, m/u 4 years
- Roberto Gonzalez, Fire, Veteran service, m/u 4 years
- Michael Boulay, TMLP, Veteran service, m/u 3 years & 11 months

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously

VOTED: to add and approve liability for service upon proper makeup payment.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

PERAC Memo’s and correspondence:

- Memo #26/2024 – The Application of the Anti-Spiking Provision G.L. c. 32, S 5(2)(a) in the wake of the *Hartnett* Decision
- Memo #27/2024 – Changes to Return to Service under G.L. c. 32, S 8
- Memo #28/2024 – Violent Assault Disability: Chapter 149 the Acts of 2024
- Memo #29/2024 – FY26 Appropriation Questionnaire in PROSPER
- PERAC approval of the Funding Schedule from the 01/01/2024 actuarial valuation

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously

VOTED: to receive and place all memo’s and correspondence on file.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Investments & accounting:

- Accounting reports for m/e 09/30/2024 – Trial Balance, Cash Receipts & Disbursements, Journal Entries and General Ledger. Bristol County Savings Bank Checking & IntraFi account statement and reconciliation as of m/e 09/30/2024. After full review of all reports, the Board voted as follows:

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Amaral, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Bristol County Savings Bank Checking & IntraFi account statement and reconciliation as of 09/30/2024 and all accounting reports for m/e 09/30/2024.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

- Investment Purchases (\$6,898,966.54) and Sales \$6,898,966.54 for m/e 09/30/2024 from the Wilmington Trust statements.

On the motion by Amaral, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the purchases & sales as of 09/30/2024.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Funding & Budget requests:

- The Board reviewed budget expenditures and account balances thru m/e 10/31/2024.

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve expenditures & balances and place on file.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

- Review draft 2025 administrative expense budget

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Fortes, it was unanimously

VOTED: to review and take under advisement.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

Travel, Education & Conferences:

- PERAC new administrator/staff training session – November 19, 2024, Danvers, MA.

Ex. Director Slivinski informed the board that he encourages staff to attend these sessions as formal trainings by PERAC are advantageous.

Legal matters:

- The Board reviewed legal expenses of \$2,967.18 for m/e 10/31/2024 for Atty. Michael Sacco.

On the motion by Amaral, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the legal expenses for m/e 10/31/2024.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

- Domestic Relations Order – James Araujo v. Debra Araujo – certified by court 10/22/2024

VOTED: to accept the court certified DRO for James Araujo v. Debra Araujo.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call vote was taken and recorded as follows: Member Fortes “YES”, Member Amaral “YES”; Member Bernier “YES”; Member Enos “YES”; Member Smith “YES”

- Scott Wentworth – appeal notice to DALA

Ex. Director Slivinski provided an update to the board. Scott Wentworth has filed an appeal. The board has received this and placed it on file.

Executive Director’s report

- Strategic Plan – Improving Retirement System Operations (draft)

Ex. Director Slivinski updated the board on the strategic plan that he has created and continues to create pertaining to the staff, succession planning, training etc.

- Update – Legal Services RFP (due 12/05/2024)

Ex. Director Slivinski updated the board that the RFP for legal services has been posted on the PERAC website as well as the Good and Services Bulletin.

OLD BUSINESS: There was none.

NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

There being no further business to come before the board, it was voted to adjourn at 2:30pm.

APPROVED BOARD OF RETIREMENT

Ian D. Fortes, Ex-Officio Member

Paul J. Slivinski, Executive Director

Dennis M. Smith, Elected Member

Barry J. Amaral, Appointed Member

Thomas A. Bernier, Elected Member

Gill E. Enos, Appointed Member

Karen Medeiros, Asst. Ex. Director