

Regular Meeting – February 28, 2024

The Taunton Retirement Board (the “Board”) met at 1:05 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, Ian D. Fortes, Thomas A. Bernier, and Gill E. Enos were in attendance.

Roll Call

All members were present at the 1:05 p.m. roll call.

Also present were:

Paul J. Slivinski, Executive Director

Kevin Condy & David Lee of Dahab Associates

Roberta Newcomb – disability retiree

Reps. of Constitution Capital Partners Tim Asselin & Dan Clare

Reps. of EnTrust Warren Tolman, Brian Schneider & George Fikaris

Reps. of Churchill-Nuveen Gregg Gosch & Laura Stolfi

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Minutes – from the January 24, 2024 regular & executive session meeting.

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

VOTED: to approve the minutes.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Warrants – #7 thru #17 for 2024.

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

VOTED: to approve the warrants.

VOTE: 5-0-0

New members of the system to date:

- Josephine Dwuye, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Alanna Glass, Board Of Health, Group 1, 9+2%
- Garrett Amaral, City Hall, Group 1, 9+2%
- Ashley Micciche, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Joshua Alves, DPW, Group 1, 9+2%
- Steven DaSilva, TMLP, Group 1, 9+2%
- Manuel Franco, DPW, Group 1, 9+2%
- Joshua Banks, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Kendra Aubun, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Krista Johnson, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Emma McFadden, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Benedict Afolayan, Taunton Housing, Group 1, 9+2%
- Henry Young, City Hall-Economic Development, Group 1, 9+2%
- Tristan Todd, DPW, Group 1, 9+2%
- Angellica Reyes, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Amy Maldonado, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Cristiane Freitas, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Brendan Chambers, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Johnnie Dexter, 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

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

- Caitlyn Butler, School, Refund, 9/12/2022 to 12/22/2023
- Karin Cyr, School, Refund, 11/2/1998 to 4/13/2002
- Janine Felix, School, Refund, (12/21/2012-3/25/2017 buyback PT service) 3/24/2017 to 4/21/2023
- Melanie Rosado, School 5/24/2021 to 12/8/2023, Transfer to Town of Needham, *Taunton will accept 2 years and 6 months of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12-month basis.*
- Erica Emond, Housing Authority 6/14/2004 to 1/12/2024, Transfer to State Retirement Board, *Taunton will accept 19 years and 6 months of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12-month basis.*

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

VOTED: to approve all of the refunds/transfers.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Retirement/survivorship applications: There were none.

Deaths

- Jeannette Machnik , DOD 12/30/23, Superannuation Opt C (Survivor to Peter Machnik), Overpayment due is \$1,716.61 (1 day December 2023 & January 2024 – late notice of death received)
- Florence Collins, DOD 01/28/24, Superannuation Opt A, Overpayment due is \$58.87.
- Manuel Spencer, DOD: 2/15/24, Superannuation Opt C survivorship to widow Maria Spencer
- Diana Beauvais, DOD: 2/20/24, Superannuation Oct C survivorship to Lee Beauvais, Overpayment due is \$224.06.

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

VOTED: to acknowledge deaths and place on file.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Make-up/redeposits and liability for creditable service:

- Candace Oldfield, Makeup, School Dept., p.t.-prorated 1 year, 5 months, 11 days, 05/15/2021 to 09/30/2023

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

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

VOTE: 5-0-0

PERAC Memo's and correspondence:

- Memo #7/2024-Buyback and Make-up Repayment Worksheets
- Memo #8/2024-PROSPER COLA Submission is almost here
- Memo #9/2024- Actuarial Data
- 2021 Statement of Earned Income – 91A over-earnings for Andrew Mirka & Roberta Newcomb. Ex. Director informed the Board that Mr. Mirka previously contacted the office and wishes to have the overearnings withheld from his monthly retirement allowance. Ms. Newcomb appeared before the Board. She was informed that she had overearnings for 2021 and has the option of reimbursing the retirement system via check or by having this withheld from her monthly retirement allowance. Ms. Newcomb felt this was unfair but understands that PERAC does require repayment of overearnings. She informed the board that she reduced her working hours for 2023 so there should not be any overearnings for 2023 (stay tuned). Ms. Newcomb agreed to continue to have her allowance withheld to re-pay overearnings for 2021. (note: allowance is currently being withheld to recover 2022 overearnings)

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Fortes, it was unanimously
VOTED: to place all memo's and correspondence on file.
VOTE: 5-0-0

Investments & accounting:

- Accounting reports for m/e 12/31/2023 – (Before-closing) Trial Balance, Cash Receipts & Disbursements, Journal Entries and General Ledger. Bristol County Savings Bank Checking account statement and reconciliation as of m/e 12/31/2023. After full review of all reports, the Board voted as follows:

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously
VOTED: to approve the Bristol County Savings Bank Checking account statement and reconciliation as of 12/31/2023 and all accounting reports for m/e 12/31/23.
VOTE: 5-0-0

- Investment Purchases (\$9,540,234.32) and Sales \$9,540,234.32 for m/e 12/31/2023.

On the motion by Amaral, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously
VOTED: to approve the purchases & sales as of 12/31/2023.
VOTE: 5-0-0

- TA Realty – notice dated 2/23/2024 – reduction of mgmt. fees for assets over \$250mm.

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Bernier, it was unanimously
VOTED: to receive and place on file.
VOTE: 5-0-0

Funding & Budget requests:

- Review budget expenditures and account balances thru m/e 01/31/2024.

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously
VOTED: to approve expenditures & balances and place on file.
VOTE: 5-0-0

Travel, Education & Conferences:

- NCPERS Annual Conference & Exhibition – May 19-22, 2024 in Seattle, WA.
- MACRS Spring Conference – June 1-5, 2024 in Hyannis, MA
- Opal Investment Conference – July 22-24, 2024 in Newport, RI

On the motion by Enos, seconded by Amaral, it was unanimously
VOTED: to authorize all board members and staff to attend these three conferences.
VOTE: 5-0-0

Legal matters:

- The Board reviewed legal expenses of \$1,163.50 for m/e 01/31/2024 for Atty. Michael Sacco.

On the motion by Bernier, seconded by Enos, it was unanimously
VOTED: to approve the legal expenses for m/e 01/31/2024.
VOTE: 5-0-0

- Opinion from Atty. Sacco – inclusion/listing of documents/exhibits in minutes of executive Sessions - FYI
- Legal Staff announcement – promotion of atty. Chris Collins as principal. Name of firm updated to Sacco & Collins, P.C. – FYI – Board to send letter of congratulations to Atty. Collins.

Executive Director's report

- Update on Daniel Williams medical panel exam 02/01/2024 – to be put on the agenda for 03/27/2024 board meeting.

- RFP's received for Investment Consulting Services. Ex. Director reported five (5) firms submitted proposals. These will be evaluated & summarized for review by the board at a future meeting TBD.
- Update – RFP's for mid-cap value & growth equity – proposals due on 03/01/2024. Proposals to be evaluation & summarized by consultant Dahab for a future meeting.
- Update – actuarial valuation 01/01/2024. Ex. Director reported that all data for actives & retirees has been submitted to Buck Consultants for review. The final item to be sent will be the 2023 Annual Statement which is a work in process.
- The Board discussed granting a COLA for FY2025 effective July 1, 2024 of 3% on base of \$16,000.

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

VOTED: to approve a 3% COLA on a base of \$16,000 effective July 1, 2024 to all eligible retirees and survivors and notify PERAC of same.

VOTE: 5-0-0

- Update – cybersecurity training. Ex. Director reported that the Asst. Director received notice that the City has been approved for another grant to participate in further cyber security training – FYI.
- Constant Contact email blasting program – Ex. Director reported that the Asst. Director looked into this program to obtain the ability to send newsflashes and important notices to membership. Ex. Director noted that there may be an option to accomplish this via the pension software with PTG and is exploring this as an alternate option before asking the board to commit to purchasing a separate program.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: There was none.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Update on staff training/succession planning. The Ex. Director updated the Board on training of staff. The new Office Clerk has been training for the last 5 months and is coming along but it will take time to acclimate to the many duties & responsibilities of our Chapter 32 retirement benefits. The Ex. Director provided an outline summarizing many of the job duties in the office and will work with each staff member to assess what they are already proficient with and where they may need additional training or new training. This assessment will assist the Ex. Director with developing a training plan and system.

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

VOTED: to check back in six (6) months for an update from the Ex. Director on the progress made with training the staff.

VOTE: 5-0-0

NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

Interviews for Private Credit finalists

The Board met with Dahab consultants Kevin Condy & David Lee for a pre-review of the three (3) finalists for private credit investment management services. Dahab outlined the different types of products that each of these managers offer and that the board would later need to update its investment policy statement should it decide to approve any of these managers etc.

The board met with three firms as follows:

- Constitution Capital Partners – Ironsides Opportunities Fund II
- EnTrust Global – Blue Ocean Onshore Fund II LP
- Churchill Asset Management – Churchill Middle Market Senior Loan Fund V

After all presentations were made and numerous questions posed by the board and Dahab were addressed, the Board voted as follows:

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

VOTED: to select Constitution & EnTrust to provide Private Credit investment management services subject to final review & approval by PERAC.

VOTE: 5-0-0

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

Other investment matters

- Proposed update to Investment Policy Statement
- Investment performance q/e & y/e 12/31/2023

The Board decided to postpone review on these two items until the March 27, 2024 meeting.

There being no further business to come before the board, it was voted to adjourn at 3:45 p.m.

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