

Regular Meeting – August 26, 2026

The Taunton Retirement Board (the “Board”) met at 1:00 pm today at the retirement board offices, 104 Dean St., Suite 203, Taunton, MA with Chairman Dennis M. Smith presiding and board members Thomas A. Bernier, Ian D. Fortes, and Edward J. Spellman, Jr. were in attendance. Member Patrick DelloRusso remotely participated via Zoom.

Roll Call

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

Also present were:

Karen Medeiros, Assistant Executive Director

Jessica Gonsalves, Administrative Assistant

Kevin Condry, Dahab Associates

Dahab Associates – Investment matters

Kevin Condry from investment consultant Dahab Associates presented to the Board and began by reviewing second quarter 2026 performance, noting that the period was marked by significant geopolitical volatility, AI hardware bottlenecks, and sustained inflationary pressure.

Despite these challenges, the Fund experienced exceptional growth, successfully navigating the dynamic market environment. Overall, the portfolio performed extremely well, growing by 9.8% after all fees and expenses, which translated to portfolio growth of nearly \$45 million.

Equity strategies served as the primary driver of these results, with small cap and emerging market strategies acting as major standouts by rising 24.3% and 24.5%, respectively. While fixed income markets acted as a relative drag, the segment still grew by a solid 1.8%, well within expected parameters, with go-forward yields indicating that nominal returns will continue to improve. Inflation is the major risk to bonds here.

Long-term performance remains solid, with the portfolio ranking in at least the top half of the Public Fund Universe across all periods except the trailing 3-year period. Mr. Condry noted that the portfolio is still working through some relative underperformance in the large cap growth segment, driven by an underweight in Nvidia combined with an overweight to software. Nevertheless, the portfolio grew by 12.0% net of all fees and expenses over that timeframe, well in excess of the actuarially assumed rate of return, while ranking in the 54th percentile of the Public Fund Universe. Over the trailing 10-year period, the portfolio has compounded at 9.0%, net of fees and expenses, placing it in the 22nd percentile of the Public Fund Universe.

Turning to portfolio allocations, Mr. Condry reported that asset levels remain well within permitted ranges. However, to accommodate necessary cash flow requirements, he recommended sourcing those funds from overweight equity managers, which would simultaneously help decrease the portfolio's overall risk posture relative to target allocations. Annual cash needed is about \$9 million. Mr. Condry recommended taking \$3mm from Allspring, \$3mm from Aberdeen & \$3mm from Boston Partners.

Looking forward, we outlined the primary hurdles facing continued market momentum, noting that the trajectory revolves around two deeply uncertain questions: how and when the war in the Middle East will end, and what true underlying value is being created by AI and when it will be captured. On the fixed income front, attention remains fixed on the Federal Reserve. While rates have been held steady, banks are projecting rate increases through the end of the year, and Federal Reserve governors have recently voted separately for the first time in years, signaling that differing policy opinions are beginning to emerge.

We concluded by emphasizing that, regardless of these macro uncertainties, the portfolio remains exceptionally well-positioned as an all-weather strategy.

The Board reviewed if Perac required an extension to the real estate search. Mr. Condry checked with PERAC who indicated there is no rush on real estate as long as the board is continuing its review process (real estate to be discussed with PRIT officials at the September board meeting).

Mr. Condry informed the Board that Tony Teberio of M&T Bank will be contacting our office to inform us that M&T Bank will be acquired by Argent Financial with no change in bank custody services.

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

VOTED: to approve the capital call & cash needs/rebalancing allocations for Allspring, Aberdeen, and Boston Partners per the consultant's recommendation.

VOTE: 5-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes), DelloRusso (Yes).

Mr. Condry exited the meeting at 1:14 pm.

Gallagher Actuarial Valuation options

The Board reviewed breakouts from Gallagher to determine assumptions for the 01/01/2026 Actuarial Valuation. At 1:15 p.m. Jason Fine from Gallagher entered the meeting via cell phone. The Board reviewed the experience study options regarding investment return assumptions and COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) base adjustments, etc.

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

VOTED: to approve maintaining the 7.6% investment return assumption (rejected lowering to 7.3%), raise the COLA base to \$17,000 starting 07/01/2027 and extend the amortization schedule out to 2034.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes), DelloRusso (Yes).

Board Member Spellman Noted: **Actuarial rate** – Our 7.60% assumed rate of return is the sixth highest of the 104 systems. He is not sure if PERAC will question the rate of return when submitting the new funding schedule for PERAC approval. **Enhanced COLA** - for eligible retirees with over 20 years of creditable service. We need the average salary for Taunton employees. (80% of the average salary) retirees' pension below the 80% number they would be eligible for the enhanced COLA. Request that the Ex. Director provide a cost proposal for conducting the study before taking further steps.

Mr. Fine exited the meeting @ 1:26 p.m. and Board Member DelloRusso exited the meeting @ 1:30 p.m.

The Board met to review its regular business.

Regular Business:

Minutes – from the July 22, 2026 regular & executive session meeting.

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

VOTED: to approve the minutes for the regular & executive session meeting.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Warrants – #62 thru # 73 for 2026.

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

VOTED: to approve the warrants.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

New members of the system to date:

- Denisse Terron Sousa, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Melissa Szilagyi, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Louis Nieves, Library, Group 1, 9+2%
- Julie Nguyen, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Andrew Norman, TMLP, Group 4, 9+2%
- Allyson Vickey, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Grace Larson, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Cidalia Rosa, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Julieann Costa, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Lauren D'Acci, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Cheri Pitts, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Julie Lafferty, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Brandon Young, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Patricia Leclerc, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Lisa Fiorini, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Rachel Teixeira, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Christina Ramos, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Christopher Ferrara, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Alanna Shepard, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Tanya Harris, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Linda Melito, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Stephanie Roberts, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Hanna Fritz, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Jerry Torres, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Arbens Lesy, Taunton Public Schools, Group 1, 9+2%
- Eric McSherry, TMLP, Group 1, 9+2%
- Bethany Marques, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Lisa Costa, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Kelsie Keenan, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Kelsey Frates, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Nicole Coughlin, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Andrew Leconte, TMLP, Group 1, 9+2%
- Julie Porazzo, GATRA, Group 1, 9+2%
- Michael Smith, GATRA, Group 1, 9+2%
- Vladislav Usatenko, TMLP, Group 1, 9+2%
- Victoria Campbell, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Samantha McDonald, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Lena McGuirk, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%
- Bretton L. Heggs, Taunton Public School, Group 1, 9+2%

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

VOTED: to approve the new members.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

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

- Meagan Jorge, Taunton Public School, Refund, 01/24/2022 to 05/02/2025, 3 Years 3 Months.
- Sadio Sokona, GATRA, Refund, 01/22/2025 to 07/17/2026, 1 Year 5 Months.

- Andrew Rys, Taunton Public School, Refund, 11/18/2021 to 03/31/2023, 1 Year 4 Months.
- Cassidy O'Hara, Health Department, Transfer to Barnstable County Retirement, Taunton dates: 06/12/2023-07/01/2026. *Taunton will accept 3 years of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12 month basis.*
- Robert Frenette, TMLP, Transfer to State Retirement Board, Taunton dates: 01/06/2025-08/08/2025. *Taunton will accept 7 months of liability under G.L. c. 32, section 3(8)c on a 12 month basis.*

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

VOTED: to approve the Refunds & Transfers.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Retirement/survivorship applications:

- Stephen J. White, DPW, Group 1, DOR: 9/8/26
- Jayson Laplante, Police, Group 4, DOR: 10/17/26
- Ann Bushee, School, Group 1, DOR: 9/1/26

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

VOTED: to approve the Retirements/Survivorship's

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Deaths:

- Steven Dutra (City Hall Maint.) DOD 7/16/2026, Superannuation–Option C Survivorship to surviving spouse Karen Dutra.
- Phyllis Medeiros (Assessor) DOD 7/14/2026, Superannuation–Option B. All funds used up.
- Robert Brindle's spouse Joan Brindle deceased-DOD 5/12/25. Robert to pop up to option A.
- Patricia DeSilva (School) DOD 7/11/2026, Superannuation-Option B- \$636.98 overpayment to be taken from Option B refund due.
- John L. Ferrie (Park/Rec.) DOD 8/14/2026, Retired for Accidental Disability 7/31/2000 and chose Option B. All funds used up.
- Kyle Machado (Active Firefighter) DOD 8/14/2026. Start process for survivor benefits under G.L. c. 32, section 12-2-d.
- Gail Amaral (School) DOD 8/14/2026, Superannuation-Option B. All funds used up.

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

VOTED: to acknowledge deaths and place on file.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Make-up/redeposits and liability for creditable service:

- Andrew Norman, Light Plant, 7 months co-op time as a Student Engineer 5/23/24-8/29-24, 5/22/25-8/21/25, 6/4/26-7/23/26.

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

VOTED: to approve liability upon proper make-up/redeposits to the system.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

PERAC Memo's and correspondence: There was none.

Investments & accounting:

- Accounting reports for m/e 06/30/2026–trial balance, cash receipts & disbursements, journal entries, and general ledger and Bristol County & IntraFi bank account statements and reconciliations for m/e 06/30/2026.

- Investment Purchases (\$10,906,030.66) & Sales \$10,906,030.66 for m/e 06/30/2026 from M&T Bank/Wilmington Trust statements. After the board's full review of all reports, the Board voted as follows:

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

VOTED: to approve the accounting reports & bank statements/reconciliations for m/e 06/30/2026.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

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

VOTED: to approve all purchases & sales for m/e 6/30/2026.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Funding & Budget requests:

- Budget expenditures and account balances as of m/e 07/31/2026.
- Petty Cash invoices #378 to #382 and replenish up to \$200.00.

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

VOTED: to approve expenditures and balances thru m/e 07/31/2026 and approve petty cash invoices #378 to #382 and replenish up to \$200.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Travel, Education & Conferences:

- The Board reviewed any requests to attend PERAC Emerging Issue Forum, Sept. 17, 2026, Westborough, MA. There was none.

Legal matters:

- Review legal expenses \$6,109.50 for m/e 07/31/2026 from Sacco & Collins, P.C.

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

VOTED: to approve the legal expenses for m/e 7/31/2026.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes.

Executive Director's report

- November 10, 2026 Election update: Incumbent Dennis M. Smith was the only candidate to file a nomination paper by deadline of 08/17/2026. Pursuant to PERAC regulations 840 CMR 7.05, the board can declare the candidate to be re-elected to the board for a new 3-year term of 12/01/2026 to 11/30/2029.

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

VOTED: To approve and declare the candidate, Dennis M. Smith, be re-elected for a new 3-year term from 12/1/2026 – 11/30/2029.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

- PERAC auditors – started 08/17/2026 and will audit the retirement system for the period of calendar years 2021 thru 2024.
- Outstanding Bi-annual Affidavits
Assistant Director, Karen Medeiros, provided list of outstanding affidavits to the Board. Those on the list would be changed from direct deposit to paper checks and held until received.
- P-card (board credit card)–city policy v. board travel regs – policies align on documentation etc. Assistant, Karen Medeiros, updated the Board and no vote was taken.

- DocuSign update – The Board reviewed a DocuSign quote of \$6,872.58 for 1 year for 5 users.

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

VOTED: To approve the DocuSign quote \$6,872.58 for 1 year for 5 users and implement at the earliest convenience.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

- The Board reviewed a draft Supplementary regulation to establish a 12-month probationary period for School dept. employees and also to increase hours for all new members from 20 to 25 to be eligible to join the retirement system.

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

VOTED: To post a public hearing for next month's meeting regarding the supplementary regulation on 12-month probationary period for School dept. employees and also to increase hours from 20 to 25 to be eligible to join the retirement system.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

- Patrick O'Brien medical panel update: Currently have records from Fire dept. Mr. O'Brien agreed to provide records also. To date, only have his records from one service provider-Tristan Medical. Still missing MRI and other provider records.

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

VOTED: To wait one month before submitting the medical panel request in order to obtain the proper medical records and MRI. Reassess at the September meeting and update Fire Chief Lavigne on the status of his involuntary ADR application.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes)

The Board reviewed issues with recouping retiree overpayments following a death. Assistant Director Karen Medeiros had a meeting with Board Member DelloRusso to discuss recouping overpayments as a result of death due to late notification by families to the Retirement Board. Also discussed was utilizing the City Law Department to send demand letters etc.

VOTED: To create a sample re-payment policy for overpayments as a result of death.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

The Board discussed the possibility of implementing a policy along with HR that life insurance benefits will not be processed until all debts with the City have been satisfied.

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

VOTED: To create a sample policy with the HR Dept. regarding life insurance benefits being paid out only after all debts with City have been satisfied.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

Board member Spellman noted he will not be present at the September 2026 Board Meeting.

Office Issues

- Review of monthly time entry audit trail for retirement staff in Harper's payroll system.

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

VOTED: To table until September meeting.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

EXECUTIVE SESSION: There was none.

OLD BUSINESS: There was none.

NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

There being no further business to come before the board, it was voted as follows:

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

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:05 p.m.

VOTE: 4-0-0

A roll call was taken and recorded as follows: Smith (Yes), Spellman (Yes), Bernier (Yes), Fortes (Yes).

APPROVED BOARD OF RETIREMENT

Edward J. Spellman, Jr., Appointed member

Thomas A. Bernier, Elected member

Patrick D. DelloRusso, Jr.,
Mayoral appointed member

Ian D. Fortes, Ex-officio member

Dennis M. Smith, Elected member/Chair

Karen Medeiros
Assistant Executive Director

Jessica Gonsalves
Administrative Assistant