

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF LOUISIANA

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JULY 15, 2021

The Board of Trustees of the Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana met in regular session on Thursday, July 15, 2021, at 9:00 A.M. at the Municipal Employees' Retirement System, 7937 Office Park Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

PRESENT:

Mayor Donald Villere, Chairman
Ms. Susan Percle, Vice Chairman
Mayor Mark Piazza, Trustee
Mayor Barney Arceneaux, Trustee
Mr. Donald Clause, Trustee
Ms. Phyllis McGraw, Trustee
Mr. James Mack, State Treasurer's Office*

UNABLE TO ATTEND:

Ms. Desireé Honoré Thomas, Commissioner of Administration Office
Mr. Richard Williams, Trustee
Representative Lance Harris, Chairman
House Retirement Committee
Senator Robert Mills, Senate Retirement Committee

IN ATTENDANCE:

Maris LeBlanc, Executive Director
Susita Suire, Retirement Benefits Administrator
Christopher Saik, Chief Investment Officer
Nancy LaGarde, Chief Financial Officer
Henry Jaung, Investment Consultant – via Zoom
Gustavo Bikkesbakker, Investment Consultant – via Zoom
Greg Curran, G.S. Curran
Joey David, House Retirement

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

The Chairman asked Ms. McGraw to open the meeting with a prayer.

The Chairman led everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

The Chairman asked Ms. Suire to call roll. A quorum was present.

The Chairman asked for approval of the minutes of the meeting held on June 17, 2021.

Mayor Arceneaux moved that the minutes of the meeting held on June 17, 2021, be approved; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition. A copy is attached and made a part of these minutes.

The Chairman asked for approval of the Plan A and Plan B retirements (a list was provided to the Board Members).

Ms. McGraw moved that the Plan A and Plan B retirements be approved; the motion was seconded by Ms. Percle. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

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Mr. Saik presented the investment cash flow report as of June 30, 2021.

Mr. Saik gave an update on the Louisiana Fund II.

Ms. McGraw moved to ratify the dissolution of the previously approved sale of LA Fund II and authorize staff to have Setter Capital search for a new buyer; the motion was seconded by Mayor Piazza. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mr. Bikkesbakker and Mr. Jaung presented the Board with the preliminary performance report for the month of June 30, 2021, via Zoom. A copy of this report is attached and made part of these minutes.

Ms. LeBlanc presented written resolutions to accept remuneration reports from the Liquidators in the Fletcher matter.

Ms. McGraw moved to approve payment of the Joint Official Liquidator's fees for FIA Leveraged Fund and Fletcher Income Arbitrage Fund Ltd. as presented; the motion was seconded by Ms. Percle. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mr. Bikkesbakker introduced Jim McClure, Coleman Hubbard, and Clayton Johnston with Barrow Hanley Global Investors who gave an educational presentation to the Board via Zoom.

*Mr. James Mack entered the meeting.

Mr. Mack reported that the Personnel Committee met on July 1st and recommends to the full Board a 3% salary increase for fiscal year 2022 for the Director to apply at her discretion to the staff within the specified personnel parameters.

Mayor Arceneaux moved to approve the 3% salary increase as recommended by the Personnel Committee; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mr. Mack also reported that the Personnel Committee discussed position and salary ranges. They will bring recommendations to the Board at the next regular meeting.

The Personnel Committee recommended moving the month for Officer elections from July to August given the pending election cycle. The discussion was deferred to the agenda item for the Board Charter.

Ms. LaGarde presented the budget ending June 30, 2021.

Ms. LaGarde presented the Board with unaudited financial statements and management's analysis for May 31, 2021.

Mr. Curran presented new actuarial option factors for calculations to the Board to reflect 6.95%.

Ms. Percle moved to adopt the actuarial option factors for calculations at 6.95% effective July 1, 2021; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

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After a discussion with Mr. Curran and upon recommendation of Ms. LeBlanc, Mayor Piazza moved to adopt the assumed rate of return of 6.85% for valuation purposes effective July 1, 2021, with the provision that this rate will not increase employer rates for fiscal year 2023.

Ms. Suire gave the Board an update on current membership statuses for actives, terminated, and retirees.

Ms. Suire received a call from the Town of Oberlin requesting a participation agreement to join the retirement system.

Ms. Suire, Ms. LeBlanc, and Mr. Curran attended a Zoom meeting with the City of Shreveport's Retirement System Board to further discuss their members joining MERS. Mr. Curran submitted an engagement letter to perform a study of the cost for select members to transfer their service credit with Shreveport's Retirement System into MERS. The engagement will be between Mr. Curran and the City of Shreveport's Retirement System and not MERS.

Ms. Suire updated the Board as of today there are three (3) nominees running for the Retired Trustee seat; Ms. Susan Percle, Ms. Mary Vice and Mayor Donald Villere. The deadline for receipt of ballots is Friday, July 30th at 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Suire informed the Board that MERS will have a booth at the LMA Convention to be held downtown on July 29th and 30th.

Ms. McGraw moved to continue the Laws, Rules, and Regulations presentations by staff to the August 19th regular meeting; the motion was seconded by Mayor Piazza. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Ms. LeBlanc reviewed the Board charter with the Trustees.

Mr. Clause moved to amend 2 (b) under Duties and Responsibilities to elect a Chair and Vice Chair at the latter of the July meeting or at the conclusion of any pending Board seat election results; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mr. Clause moved to adopt the Board Charter as presented; the motion was seconded by Mayor Piazza. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Ms. LeBlanc reviewed the Personnel Committee Charter with the Trustees.

Ms. McGraw moved to adopt the Personnel Committee Charter as presented; the motion was seconded by Mayor Arceneaux. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mayor Arceneaux moved to enter executive session to discuss Jinnie Wilson vs Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana, Docket No. C-702360, Division 25, 19th Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mayor Piazza moved to return to regular session; the motion was seconded by Mayor Arceneaux. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Mayor Arceneaux moved to accept the settlement negotiation as presented by counsel in the Jinnie Wilson case; the motion was seconded by Ms. McGraw. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

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Ms. LeBlanc updated the Board on the Lafayette Consolidated Government.

Ms. LeBlanc stated that there are no new litigation cases to report.

Ms. LeBlanc informed the Board that the annual contribution statements are now being printed and mailed.

LAPERS will be held in New Orleans September 12 – 14, 2021.

Ms. McGraw moved to elect the Chair and Vice Chair at the August 19th meeting; the motion was seconded by Mayor Arceneaux. The motion carried without objection or opposition.

Ms. McGraw moved to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Ms. Percle. The motion carried without objection or opposition.



APPROVED



ATTEST