



Austin Fire Fighters Relief and Retirement Fund
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MINUTES
AUSTIN FIREFIGHTERS RELIEF AND RETIREMENT FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2020 AT 9:00 AM

Board Members Present

Steve Adler, Chair
Keith Johnson, Vice-Chair
Belinda Weaver, Treasurer
Jeremy Burke, Trustee
Brad Landi, Trustee
Bill Stefka, Administrator
Premal Amin, Asst. Administrator
Kendall Twomey, Admin. Asst.

Consultants Present

Chuck Campbell, JW
Alyca Garrison, JW
Michael McGill, COA
Brad Heinrichs, Foster&Foster
Drew Ballard, Foster&Foster

Community Members Present

Jan Wesson
Bob Nicks
Rene Vallejo
Gary Pounds
Stephen Truesdell
Reynaldo Moreno
Brandon Wade
Eric Pederson
Johnny Johnson
Unidentified attendees

Vice-Chair Keith Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

Retiree Rene Vallejo shared his concern over allegations and replies to those allegations made recently. He would like to get to the bottom of this and reminds others that board meetings are their chance to “speak up.”

- I. Minutes of the regular meeting on August 24, 2020

Brad Landi made a motion to approve the minutes. Jeremy Burke seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- II. Service retirement benefits for one applicant

After review, Jeremy Burke made a motion to approve benefits for the one applicant as presented. The motion was seconded by Brad Landi. The motion passed.

- III. PRB Funding Policy Response by Pension Board

After a brief review of the PRB Funding Policy Response prepared by Chuck Campbell and Brad Heinrichs, the Board decided to have Fund representation at the PRB Actuarial Committee meeting to be held the next day. Brad Heinrichs, Drew Ballard, Bill Stefka, Premal Amin, and Jeremy Burke all noted they plan to attend the PRB meeting. No motion necessary.

- IV. Engage Services of a Governmental Affairs Consultant

Bob Nicks reviewed the interview process by a committee which included several pension trustees. After some discussion, Bob presented the committee’s choice for these services, which is the Schlueter Group. Jeremy Burke made a motion to hire the Schlueter Group with a 50/50 split and a 3-month evaluation period. Brad Landi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Bob Nicks, Chuck Campbell, and Bill Stefka will provide the agreement document to the Board for approval at the October board meeting.

V. 30 Month Disability Review Update

Bill Stefka briefly updated the Board on a 30-month disability review candidate and upcoming steps to take before proceeding. No motion necessary.

VI. Employee Compensation Consultant Review

After some discussion, the Board requested that an RFP be prepared to be sent to potential candidates and have them make a presentation when appropriate. Jeremy Burke made a motion for a full RFP. Brad Landi seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Membership Input from Legislative Items Discussion Board

The Board discussed the AFA Discussion Board pros and cons and discussed ideas for better access, education, and input to prepare for the 2023 legislative session. No motion necessary.

VIII. Response to Inferences of Nepotism

In response to recent allegations, Jeremy Burke made a motion that the Austin Firefighters Relief and Retirement Fund never consider, pursue, or hire Jill Dara Burke or Jeremy Edward Burke to ever work as an employee of the Fund. With a second from Brad Landi, the motion passed unanimously.

IX. Request by ARFFA to Observe the Pension Trustee Elections Ballot Count in November and Trustee Election Process

Retiree Rene Vallejo discussed the request made by ARFFA to observe the Pension trustee elections ballot count in November. After the Board discussed the trustee election process further, Steve Adler made a motion for a representative from the AFA and ARFFA be present, have ballots mailed to a PO Box, hold ballot counting all at once, and a third-party representative be responsible for collecting and delivering the ballots and staying for the count. Jeremy Burke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Pension staff will reach out to the vendor about creating secure ballots to use during this process as well.

X. Update on Legal and Ethical Review

After some discussion, Jeremy Burke made a motion not go into closed session. With a no from Keith Johnson, Belinda Weaver, and Steve Adler and Brad Landi abstaining, the motion did not pass. The Board agreed to table item 10 until after items 11-13.

XI. Financial statements, transaction, and fund expense reports

Premal Amin presented the August 2020 financial statements, transaction, and fund expense reports. No motion was necessary.

XII. Roadmap

Premal Amin presented the Fund Roadmap to the Board which includes current and future topics and projects. Premal updated the Board on other future topics not listed on the Roadmap such as providing data for the actuaries to eventually determine COLA affordability and Meketa's Q3 presentation to be provided in November.

XIII. Update on Legal and Ethical Review

At 11:23 am, the Board entered closed session for the Update on Legal and Ethical Review. Closed session concluded at 11:44 am. No action was taken by the Board during closed session. Now back in open session, Chuck Campbell explained that a formal complaint has been made by a trustee of a fellow trustee's multiple violations of the plan's Code of Ethics. Jeremy Burke requested the following be included in these minutes. "On August 31, 2020, trustee Jeremy Burke requested a formal investigation of fellow trustee Keith Johnson and Jeremy Burke. As of August, 29, 2020, no formal complaint or written allegation had been presented to the

Fund Administrator or to the Fund’s legal counsel Chuck Campbell or Alyca Garrison.” Mr. Campbell noted, according to the plan’s Code of Ethics and the circumstances in this case, the pension board Secretary-Treasurer may engage outside counsel to assist with the investigation of the violations addressed in the filed complaint. Under the advisement of Mr. Campbell, an outside firm was engaged by the Secretary-Treasurer to assist with this case. Jeremy Burke had questions about these actions taken without prior notice. No action was taken on this item.

XIV. Call for future items

Future agenda items for discussion will include a Governmental Affairs Consultant update and the call for trustee elections to be held on November 1-15, 2020.

Motion to adjourn was made by Belinda Weaver. With a second from Jeremy Burke, the meeting adjourned at 12:04 pm.

Board Members

Mayor Steve Adler, Chair
Keith Johnson, Vice-Chair
Belinda Weaver, Treasurer
Jeremy Burke, Trustee
Brad Landi, Trustee