



## **CT TEACHERS' RETIREMENT BOARD**

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## **MINUTES**

**May 16, 2018 at 3:00 pm**

The meeting of the Teachers' Retirement Board was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Chairperson, Clare Barnett on Wednesday, May 16, 2018.

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Clare Barnett, Teacher Member  
Bill Myers, Teacher Member  
Steven Muench, Teacher Member  
Jonathan Johnson, Public Member  
Charles Higgins, Public Member  
William Murray, Teacher Member  
Stephen McKeever, Teacher Member, AFT  
Laurie Martin, Office of the State Treasurer  
Elaine Lowengard, Public Member

### **BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

Lisa Mosey, Teacher Member  
Gregory Messner, Office of Policy and Management  
Kathy Demsey, State Department of Education

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Darlene Perez, Administrator  
Charlene Hill, Assistant to the Administrator  
Loc Pho, Associate Accountant

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Robyn Kaplan-Cho, CEA  
James Stirling, Stirling Benefits  
Karen Nolen, OPM  
Helen Sullivan, impending TRB Administrator  
Walt Ciplinski, Retired Teacher  
Alba Fastaia, Retired Teacher  
Rita McDougald-Campbell, Retired Teacher  
Ken Poppe, Retired Teacher  
Mary Hendrickson, Retired Teacher  
June Pinkin, HFT-Retirees

## **Open meeting – Chairperson**

### **1. Agency Report provided by Darlene Perez, Administrator:**

#### **Health Fund:**

The new budget includes 16 million dollars coming into the health fund. The money will not be used to decrease member premiums because it is already needed to make up for the gap the State has not been giving us for their share of the health fund. The money is being used to offset inconsistent funding over the past decade. The funds will help us stay out of a deficit situation and allow us to continue to pay claims.

#### **Health Insurance:**

We had to deploy a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan during the third trimester of the Stirling Benefits contract which is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2018. The deployment of the MA plan moved two-thirds of the retiree population out of the Stirling plan into the MA plan. The last count was approximately 7,000 people are staying in the Stirling plan, and we're almost at 29,000 membership so the balance of that will be going into the MA plan. With such an exodus of population of covered members from the plan it was viewed as a change in the terms and conditions of the contract with Stirling Benefits. The board Chairperson directed the TRB counsel and benefit consultant to speak with Mr. Stirling and his counsel. A tentative agreement has been reached on fees and the next step is to commit this agreement into a contract amendment subject to approval by six different entities.

The health insurance open enrollment is closed except for emergency situations, for example, if someone was in the hospital or otherwise indisposed of to the point they could not meet the deadline. We are allowing those members on a case by case basis through the end of May to enroll in the Stirling plan if they choose to without any disruption in the health insurance coverage.

### **2. Consideration and Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for April 25, 2018.**

A motion was made by Bill Myers and seconded by Bill Murray to approve the meeting minutes for April 25, 2018 as amended. All members voted in favor and the motion was passed.

### **3. Consideration and Approval of the subcommittee's recommendation for the new TRB Administrator.**

There were 44 applications received by DAS in response to the posting of the TRB Administrator position. All applications were reviewed by DAS and narrowed down to 16 applicants who were referred to the subcommittee for further consideration. The subcommittee selected seven applicants who were interviewed. Helen Sullivan was unanimously selected by the subcommittee and recommended to the Board as the new TRB Administrator.

A motion was made by Bill Myers and seconded by Charles Higgins to approve the recommendation by the subcommittee for Helen Sullivan as the new TRB Administrator. All members voted in favor and the motion was passed.

#### **4. Consideration and Approval of the Administrator's actions regarding:**

- a. Granting of service retirement benefits for the month of April, 2018.
- b. Survivor benefits for the month of April, 2018.
- c. Reports & recommendations of the Medical Review Committee regarding applications for Disability Payments as presented to the Medical Review Committee at the April, 2018 meeting.

A motion was made by Bill Murray and seconded by Steven Muench to approve the granting of service retirement, survivor benefits and applications for a disability allowance for the month of April, 2018. All members voted in favor and the motion was passed.

3:18 pm Stephen McKeever entered.

#### **MATTERS FOR THE BOARD INFORMATION:**

Retirement Statistics for the month of April, 2018.

Clare Barnett, Chairperson, discussed a conversation that took place prior to the board meeting which included some representatives from the ARTC and CEA, as well as the TRB administrator, benefit consultant and retired teachers. It was an attempt to hear from people regarding retired teachers' healthcare. No conclusions were reached but a lot was learned. The conversation was beneficial and Clare would like to it continue. A continued conversation with Dr. Joe Fields is expected to take place prior to the next board meeting. In addition, the August workshop which is being changed from August 8, 2018 to August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 will be dedicated to this topic.

#### **COMMENTS FROM OBSERVERS:**

June Pinkin, HFT-Retirees, asked to have information added at the bottom of documents the TRB sends out that tells for healthcare and for pensions what is the required contribution and what the actual contribution is, what percent of the required contribution was met and what the cumulative underfunding amount is to help retired and active teachers understand it's the state not funding the fund so they know where to direct their efforts. In response, June was advised that the Administrator will look into revising the documents it as it relates to budgetary and legal commitments.

James Stirling, Stirling Benefits, thanked Darlene Perez, TRB Administrator for all of the work she has done. He shared that they have dozens of municipal clients and almost universally the people they work with work extremely hard to do the right thing for their constituents but Darlene stands out as an Administrator. In the 12 years they has worked with her, they have been consistently impressed with her diligence on behalf of the staff, on behalf of the membership and on behalf of enacting the board's policies and procedures. From their perspective as a vendor, working with TRB, Darlene has been an exceptional person to interface with.

Mary Hendrickson, retired teacher, commented that the website is not a good source for getting information out to retired teachers. Mary also submitted the following written statement:

Mary Hendrickson - Open Statement

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no other comments or announcements, a motion was made by Bill Myers and seconded by Bill Murray to adjourn the meeting. All members voted in favor and the motion was passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:31p.m.