

**FRANKLIN REGIONAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 31, 2024**

A meeting of the Franklin Regional Retirement Board, duly posted to be held via remote participation on the above date, was called to order at 8:31 AM by Board Chair Sandra Hanks, with Vice Chair Paul Mokrzecki, Board Members Angel Bragdon, and Mary Stokarski present. Also present in the Board office located at 101 Munson Street, Suite 108, Greenfield MA was Executive Director Dale Kowacki, Assistant Director Kristine Mathis, Member Services Accountant Ashley Manley, and Member Services Accountant Nicole Gaspar. Data Maintenance Clerk Patricia Hume joined remotely. Gabriele Voelker joined the meeting at 8:32 AM.

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

On a motion made by Angel Bragdon and a second by Gabriele Voelker, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following minutes:

- December 20, 2023, regular minutes
- December 22, 2023, special meeting minutes
- January 3, 2024, special meeting minutes

Payroll, Refunds, Transfers and Bills Warrants

A motion was made by Paul Mokrzecki to approve the following warrant totals, Mary Stokarski seconded the motion. All ayes

Retirees		\$1,198,166.96
Refunds		\$2,322.53
Transfers		\$0.00
Invoices	2023	\$107,840.37
	2024	<u>\$457,628.78</u>
For a total		\$1,765,958.64

Cash Transfer between Investments and Bank

On a motion made by Angel Bragdon and a second by Mary Stokarski, the Board voted unanimously to transfer \$1,085,000.00 from Fiera to cover February's warrants.

Visitors: None

Membership (new members, new positions, additional positions)

A motion was made by Gabriele Voelker and seconded by Angel Bragdon to accept the following new members.

Gabriele Voelker then amended the motion to say, "to accept the new membership list as presented to us." Angel Bragdon seconds the amended motion. All ayes.

<u>New Memberships</u>	<u>HIRE DATE</u>	<u>C.S. %</u>	<u>New %</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
-	-	-	-	-	-
Bassett-Fox, Stephanie	1/11/2024	100%	-	PNR	Exec. Assist. To Superintendent
Beelje, Maureen	1/1/2024	100%	-	FRN	Educational Technologist
Burley, Mildred	12/27/2023	100%	-	ASH	Highway Operator/Laborer
Conaway, Gary	12/11/2023	90%	-	PNR	Instructional Assistant
Glenn, Lora	11/20/2023	90%	-	PNR	Instructional Assistant
Grader, Cameron	1/8/2024	100%	-	MOH	Paraprofessional
Little, Chelsea	1/5/2024	100%	-	MOH	Admin Asst to Principal
McCrary, Timothy	1/10/2024	100%	-	MOH	Custodian
Oldham, Kelly	12/11/2023	100%	-	PNR	Admin Assist
Quirk, Elizabeth	12/1/2023	50%	-	FCH	Travel Ambassador
Rogers, Victoria	1/2/2024	100%	-	DER	Instructional Assistant
Tero, Erica	12/21/2023	100%	-	ERV	BCBA
Yarian, Autumn	1/2/2024	50%	-	MOH	Paraprofessional
			-		
<u>New Positions</u>					
Misterka, Christine	1/2/2024	100%		SND	Instructional Assistant
<u>Additional Positions</u>					
Roberts-Crawford, Amy	12/15/2023	100%		MOH	Afterschool Prog. Assist

Angel Bragdon made a motion to accept the following liability for the buyback and makeup. Paul Mokrzecki seconded the motion. All ayes

Accept Liability for Buybacks and Makeups Through Other Systems:

Brunetti, Gino A.: The Chicopee Contributory Retirement System has asked FRRS to accept creditable service liability if their current member, Gino A. Brunetti, re-deposits a refund taken from this system. The refund, approved by the Board effective as of 08/31/2016, was for deductions of \$775.64. Mr. Brunetti worked as a Custodian for the Frontier Regional School District contributing to this system from 11/04/2014 through 01/21/2015. Total service FRRS will accept is 2 months, 18 days if Mr. Brunetti re-deposits these funds with the Chicopee Contributory Retirement System.

Paul Mokrzecki made a motion to accept the following retirement package for retired Assistant Director Deborah Frentzos, Mary Stokarski seconded the motion.

All ayes

New Retirees:

Frentzos, Deborah – The retirement packet has been submitted to PERAC to retire Deborah Frentzos for a Superannuation, Option C retirement allowance. Her last day of work was December 29, 2023, and her retirement benefit will begin on December 30, 2023. Mrs. Frentzos was a group 1 member working as the Assistant Director of the Franklin Regional Retirement System and previously in accounts payable/payroll for the Pioneer Valley Regional School District, accruing 23 years, 7 months of creditable service.

Deaths:

Apanell, Eunice – Option A retiree since 01/01/2004, Ms. Apanell was the Town Accountant, Secretary, and Treasurer for the Town of Deerfield and South Deerfield Water, accruing 21 years of creditable service. DOD was 01/17/2024 at the age of 82. Eunice was the Option C beneficiary of Daniel Apanell. Daniel will “pop up” to an Option A monthly benefit.

Berube, John – Option A Accidental Disability retiree since 10/03/2011, Mr. Berube was a custodian for the Frontier Regional School District, accruing 8 years, 1 month of creditable service. DOD was 12/26/2023 at the age of 68.

Lyon, Bruce – Alternate payee of Claudia Lyon since 01/01/2003. Claudia’s benefit will bump up to the full Option A amount. DOD 01/20/2024 at the age of 81.

Mallet, Roger – Option A retiree since 12/31/2011, Mr. Mallet was the Health Inspector for the Town of Orange, accruing 28 years, 3 months of creditable service. DOD was 01/03/2024 at the age of 90.

Hall, Richard – Option B retiree since 07/01/1999, Mr. Hall was an assessor for the Town of Orange, accruing 32 years of creditable service. DOD was 01/16/2024 at the age of 91. No annuity balance remains.

Karras, David – Option A retiree since 10/31/2016, Mr. Karras was a Truck Driver and Mechanic for the Town of Orange, accruing 17 years, 1 month of creditable service. DOD was 01/13/2024 at the age of 73.

Manners, Robert – Mr. Manners was currently a Selectman for the Town of Shelburne and had previous time as a police officer in Shelburne and part time police officer for the Town of Charlemont. He was predeceased by both beneficiaries listed. Reaching out to next of kin. DOD 01/19/2024 at the age of 59.

General Business:

1. Vote Retirees' COLA for July 1, 2024

Social Security approved a 3.2% increase effective July 1, 2024. The COLA is limited to 3% of the first \$17,000 of the annual retirement benefit.

Paul Mokrzecki made a motion to grant our retirees a 3% COLA. Angel Bragdon seconds the motion. All ayes

2. MACRS travel approval June and October

There are two MACRS conferences in 2024. The Spring conference is at the Emerald Resort in Hyannis, MA from June 1st through June 5th. The Fall conference is held sometime in October but the dates have not yet been determined.

A motion was made by Gabriele Voelker to approve the travel expenses for those who want to attend the MACRS conference June 1st through June 5th and to also approve the October 2024 meeting travel expenses. Angel Bragdon seconds the motion. All ayes

3. Rehiring Dale part-time after he retires

A discussion was had about Dale Kowacki and Patty Leveille's upcoming retirement as well as Deb Frenzoz's recent retirement and the amount of knowledge and expertise that they all have. The Board was presented with Dale Kowacki's offer of returning on a part-time basis for 10-15 hours per week.

On a motion, Paul Mokrzecki votes to authorize Kristine Mathis (incoming Executive Director), to bring in former Executive Director Dale Kowacki on an "as needed" basis after consultation with the Board Chair, which will then be presented to the full Board at its next subsequent meeting. Angel Bragdon seconded the motion. All ayes

4. PTG Contract Renewal for 1 more year

We have received a renewal contract from PTG with discounted rates and extending the expiration to 3/31/2029. Kristine Mathis shared information from her conversation with Michael Sacco who indicated that our current contract is still in effect. There was some confusion about the automatic annual renewal period of the current contract.

A motion was made by Gabriele Voelker to continue working with Board Legal Counsel, Attorney Michael Sacco regarding clearing up the different dates of the contract, so we have more concrete information. Angel Bragdon seconded the motion. All ayes

5. Possible further discussion for hiring a Member Service Accountant
Sandra Hanks advised the Board that Diane Wright was hired as the new Member Services Accountant starting on February 5, 2024.

A motion was made by Gabriele Voelker to notify all retirement units, that we want to welcome aboard our new employees with Kristine Mathis as our new Executive Director, Ashley Manly as Assistant Director and Diane Wright as our new Member Services Accountant. We announce the three new members to our staff and ask everyone to welcome them aboard. Also, to thank Dale for his service. As well as, to recognize retired Assistant Director Deborah Frenzoz for her service. Angel Bragdon seconded the motion. All ayes

A motion was made by Paul Mokrzecki to recognize Executive Director Dale Kowacki with appreciation and gratitude for 19 years of loyal and dedicated service. Mary Stokarski seconded the motion. All ayes

6. Possible further discussion of additional bank to de-risk lack of DIF
Chair Sandra Hanks has received additional information in relation to the lack of DIF from one bank but would like to gather information from 2 more banks.

New Business:

No new business.

Discussion topics

There is no new information regarding disability applications and DALA appeals, or proposed legislation regarding elected officials. Also, no update on Call firefighters.

Mary Stokarski left the meeting at 9:13 AM.

Adjournment

On a motion made by Gabriele Voelker and seconded by Paul Mokrzecki, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED ON FEBRUARY 28, 2024

Patricia Hume, Data Maintenance Clerk

Sandra A. Hanks, Chair and Treasurer

Angelina J. Bragdon, Council Member

Gabriele H. Voelker, Board Member

Mary A. Stokarski, Board Member

Paul J. Mokrzecki, Vice Chair