



Austin Fire Fighters Relief and Retirement Fund
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MINUTES
AUSTIN FIREFIGHTERS RELIEF AND RETIREMENT FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 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
Aaron Lally, Meketa
Leo Festino, Meketa

Community Members Present

Jan Wesson
Rene Vallejo
Rich Brock
Zack Cziryak
Doug Fowler
Unidentified attendees

Mayor Steve Adler called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

I. Minutes of the regular meeting on October 19, 2020

Jeremy Burke proposed an amendment to the minutes for clarification and made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Keith Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Service retirement benefits for one applicant

After review, Keith Johnson made a motion to approve benefits for one retiree applicant as presented. The motion was seconded by Jeremy Burke. The motion passed unanimously.

III. 2021 COLA

Premal Amin reviewed the letter from the actuary confirming the Fund's ability to afford and grant a full CPI-U COLA of 1.4% as measured through September; effective January 1, 2021 to all eligible annuitants. Keith Johnson made a motion to approve the COLA as stated. Belinda Weaver seconded the motion. The motion passed with no objections.

IV. Trustee Elections Update

Bill Stefka discussed the results of the recent Pension Board Trustee Elections and the procedures followed to ensure transparency. The final count was 431 votes for Doug Fowler and 405 votes for Stephen Truesdell. Mr. Fowler's 3-year term will begin on the pension board meeting in January 2021. Belinda Weaver made a motion to certify the vote. Keith Johnson seconded the motion. With no objections, the motion passed.

V. RFP Benchmark Update

Bill Stefka updated the Board on the RFP process regarding the employee compensation benchmark study. The responses to the RFP are due in the first week of December and information will be provided to the Board before the December meeting. No motion necessary at this time.

VI. Lead Plaintiff Security Litigation Request

Bill Stefka reviewed a memo received from one of the plan's security litigation firms Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd. They requested the Fund take a lead plaintiff role in a certain case and explained why the Fund would be a good candidate. Chuck Campbell noted the security litigation clause in the plan's investment policy and procedures is to be revised, per earlier discussions, to provide clarity; but it has not been finalized. The Board concurred this section of the policy needs to be completed before proceeding as a lead plaintiff in any cases such as this. Mr. Stefka said he will notify the firm of the Board's decision. No motion was necessary.

VII. Complaint under Code of Ethics and Update on Related Review

Steve Adler presented a memo to the Board explaining that he, as the Board Chair and per our Code of Ethics provisions, reviewed a complaint filed with him by fellow trustee Brad Landi regarding Mr. Landi's allegation of an ethics code violation by the Board Secretary-Treasurer Belinda Weaver. After previously reviewing all the information as presented to the Board today, Mayor Adler concluded there was no violation of the ethics code and gave the reasons for his findings. No action was taken at this time. Next, Jeremy Burke discussed his allegation that Vice Chair Keith Johnson was in violation of the plan's ethics code by communicating publicly about confidential issues related to the current investigation in progress; which the Fund's legal counsel advised against. Mr. Burke, then made a motion to remove Keith Johnson from the Vice Chair position, as provided in the plan's governance policy. Chuck Campbell discussed why this motion is not deemed valid, therefore no such motion can be made. Mr. Campbell then updated the Board on the outside independent counsel's investigation, currently underway, of the other allegations of ethics code violations. Mr. Campbell noted this outside counsel wants to conclude their review and give a presentation at the December meeting. No action was taken at this time.

VIII. Employee Vacation Leave Payout

Keith Johnson noted that he requested this item be put on the agenda. After a brief discussion, Steve Adler requested that Mr. Johnson provide more background information on this item for the Board; and resume discussion at the next meeting. The Board concurred. No motion was necessary.

IX. Meketa Presentation

Aaron Lally and Leo Festino with Meketa, the Fund's investment consultant, presented the 3Q20 Investment Report to the Board. Overall, the Fund is performing very well with a return of 5.5% for the third quarter. The Fund is consistent and outperforming its peers. For rebalancing purposes, Mr. Lally and Festino noted it is Meketa's recommendation to transfer \$25 million from the Westwood Large Cap Value Fund into the SSGA S&P500 Index Fund. They noted this asset class is an efficient market and balancing with an index fund will reduce fees. Belinda Weaver made a motion to accept the recommendation as stated. Jeremy Burke seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. Financial statements, transaction, and fund expense reports

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

XI. Roadmap

Premal Amin presented the Fund Roadmap to the Board which includes current and future topics and projects. No motion was necessary.

XII. Call for future items

Future agenda items for discussion will include the proposed 2021 budget, the ethics violation review presentation, the RFP Benchmark presentations, and review the security litigation section of the plan's investment policy and procedures.

Hearing no objection, Mayor Steve Adler adjourned the meeting at 11:56 am.

Board Members

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