

NEW ORLEANS FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF FUND

Martin Gaal
Board President

Thomas F. Meagher, III
Secretary-Treasurer

SUBJECT:

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Firefighters' Pension & Relief Fund**

TIME, DATE AND PLACE:

**January 13, 2021
2401 Westbend Parkway
Suite 3001
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130**

This meeting was held via zoom.

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present: Thomas Meagher, Martin Gaal, Stephen Roy, Branden Krsak, Al Tervalon, Norman White and Roman Nelson.

Also present:

Pam Meyer

Louis Robein, Board Attorney

Paul Mitchell

**Timothy McConnell, retired Superintendent
, active firefighter**

A quorum being present, the Board President called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

REVIEW AND ACCEPT MINUTES

**MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Gaal to approve the December 2020 Regular Board minutes with corrections.
Motion passed.**

NO OBJECTIONS

REFUND OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Dean Felch is requesting a refund of his contributions.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Gaal to approve the refund of contributions to Mr. Felch.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

CHANGE OF BENEFICIARY

Anthony Battistella updated his beneficiary forms.

R.S. 11:3376 DISABILITY APPLICATIONS

Bruce V. Hurley: New Fund Fire Fighter, age 62 with 21 years of service is applying for a non-duty Service Connected Disability Pension effective November 27, 2020.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Gaal to deny a 50% non-duty service connected Disability Pension and approve a Regular Pension which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary. The member has the right to appeal the decision and provide sufficient medical documentation to support his disability.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

REGULAR PENSION APPLICATIONS:

None

PLOP APPROVALS

None

DROP WITHDRAWAL

None

DROP APPLICATIONS (effective January 1, 2021)

Gino Ascani: New Fund Firefighter, age 50 with 12 years of service is applying for DROP.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by White to approve a DROP application which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

Scott H. Schmidt: New Fund Operator, age 58 with 30 years of service is applying to enter DROP effective January 1, 2021.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Krsak to approve a DROP application which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

REPORTS OF DEATHS

Pensioners:

John B. Gullo: Mr. Gullo died on December 19, 2020, at the age of 80, leaving a widow and no minor children. He entered the department on March 4, 1962 and retired on March 17, 1987 after 25 years of service. He spent 33 years on pension.

Widows:

Anna J. Bernard died on November 30, 2020 at the age of 93. Her benefits began on June 1, 1985. She spent 35 years on benefits.

Raley J. Bayhi died on December 11, 2020 at the age of 95. Her benefits began on September 1, 1990. She spent 30 years on benefits.

MOTION: Moved by Gaal and seconded by Meagher to remove the above noted deceased members and widows from the pension rolls.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

WIDOW'S APPLICATIONS

Mrs. Carol A. Baroni is applying for a Non Duty Death benefit effective November 1, 2020.

MOTION: Moved by Gaal and seconded by Meagher to approve a non-duty death benefit effective November 1, 2020.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

Mrs. JoAnn R. Gullo is applying for a Line of Duty Death benefit effective January 1, 2021.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Roy to approve a non-duty death benefit effective January 1, 2020 and wait for the additional information before approving a Line of Duty Death benefit.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

APPLICATIONS PENDING

Joseph J. Margin: New Fund Fire Educational Officer, age 56 with 30 years of service is applying for a 50% Service Connected disability effective December 1, 2020.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Gaal to approve a 50% service connected Disability Pension which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary. The member has the right to appeal the decision and provide sufficient medical documentation to support his disability.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

Timothy A. McConnell: New Fund Fire Superintendent, age 59 with 36 years of service is

applying for a 50% Service Connected disability effective October 24, 2020.

Board members Meagher and Gaal spent several minutes reminding Mr. McConnell of the dilemma and anxiety he put several retirees through who were seeking a 50% service connected disability pensions during the prior administration. They reminded him that pension benefits owed to several members were delayed for months because McConnell felt that a 50% disability pension required that a member receive only 50% of his pensionable salary. Mr. McConnell refused to support a motion to pay benefits owed and earned to those members. Meagher and Gaal noted that they would **not** deny Mr. McConnell full the pension benefits owed him.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by White to approve a 50% service connected Disability Pension which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary. The member has the right to appeal the decision and provide sufficient medical documentation to support his disability.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

William Ballard, Sr.: was approved for a regular pension on June 8, 2020. Mr. Ballard has supplied additional information to support an application for a 50% Service connected line of duty disability pension effective June 8, 2020.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Krsak to approve a 50% service connected Disability Pension which provides that benefits are calculated at 2 ½% of the member's average 60 month compensation for the first twelve years of service and all years of service until the member has reached 50 years of age; and 3 1/3% of his average 60 month pensionable compensation for all years of service and any portion of a year beyond 12 years of service and 50 years of age; If the member has beyond 30 years of service the retirement benefit for each year or portion of a year shall be 3 1/3% of the average 60 month pensionable compensation up to 100% of pensionable salary. The member has the right to appeal the decision and provide sufficient medical documentation to support his disability.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Board members were provided with key financial revenue and disbursement figures for the New and Old system for December 2020.

OLD BUSINESS:

SEB payment history request: No update provided

Information for life insurance: No update provided

NEW BUSINESS

Payment to MERS for prior Service Time

Mr. Meagher informed the Board that the staff employees have received cost estimates for the purchase of 12 years of additional prior service time. Kehoe, Mitchell and Meyer, both qualify to purchase the additional service time. Mr. Meagher provided the Board with the cost to the Fund (employer share) and the employee share. Discussion followed.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Krsak to approve the purchase of 12 years of prior service time for staff members.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

Payment of unused sick and annual leave

Mr. Meagher noted that each year staff, who elect same, cash in unused accumulated sick and annual leave, less 40 hours, subject to the approval of the Board.

MOTION: Moved by Gaal and seconded by Krsak to approve the payment of unused sick and annual leave less the minimum required balance.

Motion passed.

Meagher abstained.

Transfer of service credits to NOMERS

Meagher noted that Michael Antoine has requested that his service and accumulated credits be transferred to NOMERS.

MOTION: Moved by Meagher and seconded by Krsak to approve the transfer of funds related to Mr. Antoine employment with the department.

Motion passed.

NO OBJECTIONS

LEGAL:

The SEB litigation was decided in favor of the Fund. Member's disability date will remain unchanged. The Fund was requested to pay \$900 in filing fees to process the judgment. Matter is appealed

Citco matter went back to the 5th Circuit.

Triche matter is delayed until June.

Mr. Robein noted that the Longevity payment from the City was received and thanked Mr. White and his staff for the payment. Checks will be mailed this year no earlier than Feb. 1, 2020.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned.

TIMELY FILING OF APPLICATIONS:

All Members applying for retirement, DROP or PLOP must do so 45 days in advance of the scheduled retirement date. All medical documentation for disability applications must be in the administrative office 45 days prior to the scheduled retirement date. Failure to comply with the Fund's rules will cause a delay in the Board taking action and will probably force an extension beyond the member's desired retirement date.

The administrative office will continue to process all paperwork in a friendly, orderly, and timely fashion. We thank all applying members for their continued cooperation. This will enable the Administrative Office and the Board of Trustees to perform their jobs more efficiently.

Members who have recently changed their address or marital status and have not updated their beneficiary form should do so. Please contact the Pension Office during the hours of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm for beneficiary verifications. Your cooperation is appreciated.

APPROVED By:  **Date:** 2/10/2021