

**SONOMA COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT BOARD
DISABILITY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Thursday, October 19, 2023
9:32 a.m.

Presiding: Chair Brian Williams.

Present: Trustees Travis Balzarini and Bob Williamson; Chief Executive Officer Julie Wyne; Assistant Chief Executive Officer/Chief Legal Counsel Cristina Hess; Member Services Manager Jackie Purter; and Retirement Analyst Rebecca Gay.

Absent: Trustee Joe Tambe; Alternate Retiree Trustee Neil Baker.

Public Via
Zoom: Veranika Burrell

Public comments were solicited prior to the meeting by emailing Jackie.Purter@sonoma-county.org. Members of the public who joined the Zoom meeting via the Zoom app or by calling in, were able to provide live public comment for each agenda item, after the Board and staff provided their comments.

I. MINUTES APPROVAL

Approval of the September 21, 2023 Minutes.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini, seconded by Trustee Williamson to approve the September 21, 2023 Disability Committee Meeting Minutes with a corrections as noted. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

The Disability Committee moved into Executive Session and closed the meeting to all attendees who were not necessary for the determination of a disability retirement. While the meeting was closed, the attendees were locked out. Those still present were re-connected to the meeting once the Board returned to open session.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee met in closed session pursuant to Government Code section 54957(b) to consider the employment status and evaluation of performance of SCERA members as concerns eligibility for disability retirement and reinstatement to active membership.

A. Applications for Committee Action:

1. STEPHEN MERICAL, Deputy Sheriff II filed 12/14/22 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Williamson and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Mr. Merial be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

2. JOHN DAY, Heavy Equipment Mechanic II filed 03/07/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini and seconded by Trustee Williamson to recommend that Mr. Day be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

3. DANIEL VALLELUNGA, Correctional Deputy II filed 03/20/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini and seconded by Trustee Williamson to recommend that Mr. Vallelunga be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION, continued

A. Applications for Committee Action, continued:

4. JON BUIJTEN, Probation Officer III filed 04/03/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini and seconded by Trustee Williamson to recommend that Mr. Buijten be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

5. ELISE HANSEN, Communications Dispatcher II filed 04/05/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini and seconded by Trustee Williamson to recommend that Ms. Hansen be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

6. JOSE ALCALA, Correctional Sergeant filed 04/10/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Williamson and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Mr. Alcala be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION, continued

A. Applications for Committee Action, continued:

7. VERANIKA BURRELL (AKA SAVITSKAYA), Correctional Deputy II filed 05/02/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Williamson and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Ms. Burrell be denied a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

8. JASON HACKATHORN, Correctional Deputy II filed 05/30/23 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Balzarini and seconded by Trustee Williamson to recommend that Mr. Hackathorn be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 3-0-2-0 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Absent
Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Absent
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

B. Discussion:

Reviewed the October 2023 Disability Report.

The Disability Committee moved out of Executive Session and reopened the meeting to all Zoom attendees who were locked out of the meeting during the closed session period.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT OUT – OPEN SESSION

Committee Chair Brian Williams reported out in open session that the Committee unanimously recommended to grant a service connected disability retirement to Deputy Sheriff II Stephen Merial, Heavy Duty Mechanic II John Day, Correctional Deputy II Daniel Vallelunga, Probation Officer II Jon Buijten, Communications Dispatcher II Elise Hansen, Correctional Sergeant Jose Alcala, and Correctional Deputy II Jason Hackathorn. The Committee unanimously recommended to deny a service connected disability retirement to Correctional Deputy II Veranika Burrell.

V. GENERAL DISCUSSION MATTERS

There were no general discussion matters.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VII. NEXT MEETING

Scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in the SCERA Board Room located at 433 Aviation Boulevard, Suite 100 in Santa Rosa, CA.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

IX. APPROVAL

The above minutes for the Disability Committee meeting on October 19, 2023 were approved at the Disability Committee meeting on December 14, 2023.

BRIAN WILLIAMS, CHAIR