

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

Thursday, October 24, 2024
8:31 a.m.

Presiding: Chair Brian Williams.

Present: Trustees Travis Balzarini (arrived @ 8:35 a.m.), Joe Tambe and Bob Williamson; Alternate Retiree Trustee Neil Baker; Chief Executive Officer Julie Wyne; Assistant Chief Executive Officer/Chief Legal Counsel Cristina Hess; Member Services Manager Jackie Purter; and Retirement Analyst Rebecca Gay.

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.

Trustee Brian Williams notified the Board of his need to utilize an emergency exception, under California Government Code section 54953(f)(2), to his in-person attendance at the October Disability Committee meeting and the notice requirements for appearance by teleconference. He indicated a medical issue prevented him from attending in person.

I. MINUTES APPROVAL

Approval of the September 19, 2024 Minutes.

Motion was made by Trustee Tambe, seconded by Trustee Williamson to approve the September 19, 2024 Disability Committee Meeting Minutes. The motion carried 4-0-0-1 with voting as follows:

Mr. Baker	Aye
Mr. Balzarini	Absent
Mr. Tambe	Aye
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. ROWAN SHINOHARA TAYLOR, Deputy Sheriff II filed 10/12/22 for a service connected disability retirement. On 05/18/23 the Retirement Board denied the application for a service connected disability as applicant is not considered permanently incapacitated.

Case was returned to hearing.

2. CHRISTOPHER HERMAN, Park Ranger I filed 12/02/22 for a service connected disability retirement. Consideration under Government Code Section 31724 (date allowance becomes effective) and 31725.65 (reemployment plan) is requested. On 05/23/24 the Retirement Board denied the request for GCS 31724.

Motion was made by Trustee Tambe and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Mr. Herman be granted a retroactive retirement date per Government Code Section 31724. The motion carried 5-0-0-0 with voting as follows:

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

3. JOHN BAZZANO, Senior Communications Dispatcher filed 02/23/24 for a service connected disability retirement.

Motion was made by Trustee Tambe and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Mr. Bazzano be granted a service connected disability retirement. The motion carried 5-0-0-0 with voting as follows:

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

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION, continued

A. Applications for Committee Action, continued:

4. KRISTIE MCCARTHY, Correctional Deputy II filed 05/14/24 for a service connected disability retirement. Consideration under Government Code Section 31725.65 (reemployment plan) is requested.

Motion was made by Trustee Williamson and seconded by Trustee Tambe to recommend that Ms. McCarthy be granted a service connected disability retirement under Government Code Section 31725.65. The motion carried 5-0-0-0 with voting as follows:

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

5. VERONICA MARTINEZ ORDAZ, Deputy Sheriff II filed 05/23/24 for a service connected disability retirement. Consideration under Government Code Section and 31725.65 (reemployment plan) is requested.

Motion was made by Trustee Williamson and seconded by Trustee Balzarini to recommend that Ms. Martinez Ordaz be granted a service connected disability retirement under Government Code Section 31725.65. The motion carried 5-0-0-0 with voting as follows:

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

B. Discussion:

Reviewed the October 2024 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.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT OUT – OPEN SESSION

Committee Chair Brian Williams reported out in open session that the Committee voted unanimously to recommend granting a service connected disability retirement to Senior Communications Dispatcher John Bazzano, Correctional Deputy II Kristie McCarthy, and Deputy Sheriff II Veronica Martinez Ordaz. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend granting Park Ranger I Christopher Herman's request for a retroactive retirement date per Government Code Section 31724. The Committee return Deputy Sheriff II Rowan Shinohara Taylor's case back to hearing.

IV. GENERAL DISCUSSION MATTERS

There were no general discussion matters.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VI. NEXT MEETING

Scheduled for Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. in the SCERA Board Room located at 433 Aviation Boulevard, Suite 100 in Santa Rosa, CA.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

VIII. APPROVAL

The above minutes for the Disability Committee meeting on October 24, 2024 were approved at the Disability Committee meeting on December 19, 2024.

BRIAN WILLIAMS, CHAIR