

**SONOMA COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
RETIREMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, March 21, 2024
9:05 a.m.

Presiding: Brian Williams, Chair

Present: Trustees Neil Baker (Alternate Retiree), Travis Balzarini, Erick Roeser, Joe Tambe, Mark Walsh, and Bob Williamson (Vice Chair); Chief Executive Officer Julie Wyne, Assistant CEO/Chief Legal Counsel Cristina Hess, Finance and Retiree Services Manager Cheryl Enold, Member Services Manager Jackie Purter, Retirement Analyst Rebecca Gay, and Administrative Aide Julia Smith; Paul Angelo and Todd Tauzer (of Segal)

Absent: Trustees Chris Coursey, Amos Eaton, and Greg Jahn

Public comments were solicited prior to the meeting by emailing Rebecca.Gay@sonoma-county.org. Members of the public that joined the Zoom meeting via the app or dial in were provided opportunity to submit live public comment for each agenda item after the Board and staff provided their comments.

I. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2024, Retirement Board

Recommendation: Approve February 22, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Trustee Tambe, seconded by Trustee Balzarini, to approve the February 22, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion carried 6-0-0-3 with voting as follows:

Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Coursey	Absent
Mr. Eaton	Absent
Mr. Jahn	Absent
Mr. Roeser	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Aye
Mr. Walsh	Aye
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

The Board of Retirement moved into Executive Session and closed the meeting to all attendees who were not necessary for the discussion of the employment status and evaluation of performance of a SCERA member as concerns continuing eligibility for a disability retirement. Those attendees exited the Board room and/or the meeting video and audio were shut off by the host and attendees neither heard nor watched the meeting. All meeting attendees were re-admitted to the meeting once the Board returned to open session.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session. Meeting closed pursuant to Government Code section 54957(b) to consider the employment status and evaluation of performance of a SCERA member or members as concerns the continued eligibility for a disability retirement.

TIMOTHY KEEGAN, JR., Retired Correctional Sergeant filed 11/15/23 to have his service connected disability retirement canceled per Government Code section 31730.

A motion was made by Trustee Williamson, seconded by Trustee Tambe, to approve the request of Timothy Keegan, Jr., Retired Correctional Sergeant, to have his service connected disability retirement canceled per Government Code section 31730. The motion carried 6-0-0-3 with voting as follows:

Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Coursey	Absent
Mr. Eaton	Absent
Mr. Jahn	Absent
Mr. Roeser	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Aye
Mr. Walsh	Aye
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

The Board of Retirement moved out of Executive Session and reopened the meeting to all attendees that were placed in the lobby during the closed session period.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT OUT

Chair Williams reported that the request of Timothy Keegan, Jr., Retired Correctional Sergeant, to have his service connected disability retirement canceled per Government Code section 31730 was granted by unanimous vote of the Board.

IV. REGULAR CALENDAR

Chair Williams announced that the Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy discussion in agenda item C was going to precede agenda items A and B.

C. Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy Amendments

CEO Julie Wyne recapped the analysis and Board discussions that led to the proposed amendments to the Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy, reiterating that this action by the Board will not result in a COLA recommendation. Ms. Wyne noted that further policy discussions need to occur before any modifications to the COLA program are considered. She then summarized the proposed amendments to the Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy, which are to set the Non Member Reserve Interest Crediting Rate at actual earnings with a floor of zero and ceiling of the Plan's Actuarially Assumed Investment Rate of

Return, to make a one-time allocation of the balance of the Negative Contingency Reserve to the Employer Reserve and to reduce the Interest Fluctuation Reserve from 3% to 1% of the Plan's Market Value of Assets before excess earnings can be allocated to benefits enumerated in the County Employees Retirement Law.

Recommendation: Approve amendments to the Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy.

A motion was made by Trustee Balzarini, seconded by Trustee Walsh, to approve amendments to the Interest Crediting and Reserve Policy. The motion carried 6-0-0-3 with voting as follows:

Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Coursey	Absent
Mr. Eaton	Absent
Mr. Jahn	Absent
Mr. Roeser	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Aye
Mr. Walsh	Aye
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

A. COLA Discussion

Pursuant to the COLA Policy, in light of existing reserve balances, Ms. Wyne provided the status of reserves, annual changes in CPI, and estimated cost of a Cost-of-Living Adjustment for 2024 to be communicated to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and Sonoma County Association of Retired Employees (SCARE) representatives.

B. SACRS Proxy Designation

Recommendation: Designate a Voting Proxy for the SACRS Spring Conference.

A motion was made by Trustee Tambe, seconded by Trustee Walsh, to designate Brian Williams as voting proxy and Julie Wyne as back-up voting proxy. The motion carried 6-0-0-3 with voting as follows:

Mr. Balzarini	Aye
Mr. Coursey	Absent
Mr. Eaton	Absent
Mr. Jahn	Absent
Mr. Roeser	Aye
Mr. Tambe	Aye
Mr. Walsh	Aye
Mr. Williams	Aye
Mr. Williamson	Aye

D. Communications

1. Service Retirements
2. Reciprocal Service Connected Disability Benefit – Aneez Raghavan
3. GFOA Award for 2022

Trustees thanked Finance & Retiree Services Manager Cheryl Enold and her staff for the tremendous effort of compiling the ACFR and PAFR and for winning the GFOA Award.

V. Trustee/Staff Training & Conferences

Notify Julia Smith if you plan to attend any future event. Please note, if out of state travel to attend a conference is not approved in the Budget separate approval from the Board must be obtained prior to attending the conference.

- A. CALAPRS General Assembly, March 2 to 5, 2024, Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage, CA. Trustees Baker and Williams reported that the speakers were excellent and quite compelling. Some of the highlights were Frances Donald's economic update in which she unapologetically admitted she still has open questions about where the economy is going, the discussions on AI from both an investment and operational point of view, the fireside chat with Marcie Frost, CalPERS CEO, and the geopolitical risk discussion, which rightly terrified the audience.
- B. CALAPRS Advanced Principles of Pension Governance for Trustees, March 27 to 29, 2024, UCLA Luskin Conference Center, Los Angeles, CA. Trustee Walsh is attending.
- C. 2024 AgriVest Farmland Fund Annual Shareholder's Meeting, April 17 to 19, 2024, Residence Inn, Idaho Falls, ID.
- D. CALAPRS Trustee Virtual Roundtable, May 3, 2024.
- E. SACRS Spring Conference, May 7 to 10, 2024, Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort, Santa Barbara, CA. Trustees Baker, Eaton, Walsh, Williams, and Williamson are attending.
- F. NCPERS Annual Conference & Exhibition, May 19 to 22, 2024, Seattle, WA. Trustee Walsh is attending.
- G. SACRS Public Pension Investment Management Program, July 14 to 17, 2024, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, Berkeley, CA. Trustee Walsh is attending.

VI. GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Opportunity was given to advise the Board of new matters and for Trustees to ask questions for clarification, provide information to staff, request staff to report back on a matter or direct staff to place a matter on a subsequent agenda.

Trustee Walsh suggested a meeting of the Admin Benefits Committee be held to discuss the member interest crediting rate and to discuss the minimum level of benefits provided to safety members that are injured in the line of duty.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Opportunity was given for public comment on non-agenda items within the jurisdiction of the Retirement Board.

Kem Screechfield, retiree, suggested that the Board and management staff have name plates at the meetings for the benefit of members of the public in attendance. Sherry Bradford, employee of the County, stated she was taking personal time off to attend the Retirement Board meeting and noted there were over 90 members of the public (retirees/active employee members/other interested parties) on Zoom. Phyris Tobler, of SCARE, stated she was pleased to see the COLA discussion moving forward and looked forward to future discussions. Dennis Cianfichi, retiree, stated he was glad this topic is being discussed but would like the process to be easier to understand for retirees.

VIII. NOTICE OF NEXT MEETINGS

All meetings are held at SCERA in the Board Room at 433 Aviation Boulevard, Suite 100, Santa Rosa, CA, and broadcast via Zoom unless otherwise noted.

Investment Committee
March 28, 2024
8:30 a.m.

Disability Committee
April 18, 2024
8:30 a.m.

Retirement Board
April 18, 2024
9:00 a.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

X. APPROVAL

The above minutes from the March 21, 2024, Retirement board meeting were approved at the Retirement Board meeting on April 18, 2024.

BRIAN WILLIAMS, CHAIR