



Minutes of the Pension Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Of the Wentzville Fire Protection District  
May 25, 2023

The Pension Board Meeting of the Wentzville Fire Protection District was held on May 25, 2023, at 11:14 am. at Wentzville Fire District Headquarters, 502 Luetkenhaus Boulevard, Wentzville, MO 63385

Chief Schneider called the meeting to order at 11:14 a.m.

Roll Call: Chief Schneider called roll; all five pension board members were present. Director Bob Hawkins, Director Jennifer Houston, Director Frank Grassmuck, Trustee Captain Fred Hohenshell, and Trustee Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski.

Also in attendance were Assistant Chief John LeDoux, Shop Steward Max Mueller, Assistant Shop Steward Bryan Notheis, and Dan Ladd from Foundation Wealth Management. Administrative Assistants Stacy Krieger and Lisa Potts were also present.

Director Hawkins made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. It was seconded by Director Grassmuck, Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye.

Director Hawkins motioned to approve the Pension Board Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2023. Director Houston seconded the motion. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye.

Old Business:

The board was presented with the election of the first retiree from the Wentzville Fire Protection District. The first retiree elected 50% Joint & Survivor. On a motion from Director Hawkins and second of Director Grassmuck, the 50% Joint & Survivor election was accepted. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye. Assistant Chief LeDoux explained that Penchex would be notified, and the first payment will be made on July 3, 2023.

Asset smoothing was discussed at a previous meeting. The board supports the recommendation of Nyhart, and on a motion of Director Hawkins and second of Director Grassmuck, Asset Smoothing will be applied to the Defined Benefit plan. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye.

New Business:


Changing the discount rate of the defined benefit has been proposed, and to do this, it is recommended to change the asset allocations from 50 fixed/ 50 Equities to 45 Fixed and 55 Equities. The discount rate would go from 5% to 5.2%, which is still highly conservative. On a motion of Director Hawkins and seconded by Director Houston, the asset allocation will be changed to 45 fixed and 55 Equities. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye.

Nyhart put together a proposal to show what an increase in benefits would cost. They priced out several options. There was discussion as to affordability with the options and steps to pursue options. There are several state statute requirements to make changes to defined benefits. Both Nyhart and Foundation Wealth Management have assisted in the proposal to increase the benefits. Chief Schneider would like approval to move forward with leg work. The board agreed, and a level increase recommendation will come later.

Chief Schneider also discussed a meeting with Simpara and a review of the saving since going self-funded. With the savings, he would like to recommend that after the 18-month COBRA, 50% of the premium to the retired employee and spouse be offered. The employee would pay the other 50%. If there are children still on the plan at the time of retirement, the employee would be responsible for 100% of the child's premium. The employee is also responsible for the deductible. There was a discussion regarding unfunded liability and predicting medical costs; more will be discussed at a later meeting.

Mr. Ladd stated that the information they have reviewed keeps the district in a good position, and that is why Auditor Slusser was able to provide positive words about the district being a leader.

Director Hawkins motioned to adjourn the Pension Board Meeting at 11:40 a.m.; Director Grassmuck seconded it. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-aye, Director Grassmuck-aye, Captain Fred Hohenshell-aye, Firefighter Paramedic Pat Szarwinski -aye.

  
Frank Grassmuck, Secretary

  
Stacy Krieger, Recording Secretary