

## **MINUTES OF MEETING November 19, 2019**

The regular monthly meeting of the Northampton Retirement Board was called to order by Chairperson Joyce Karpinski at 1:35 p.m. in City Council Chambers, Municipal Hall, 212 Main Street, Northampton, MA.

Members present were Joyce Karpinski, Melissa Roberts-Cote, Susan Wright, Tom Sullivan and Michael Lyons. Also present Administrative Assistant Elsie Vazquez.

### **Visitors**

None

### **New Business**

### **Regular Business**

The Board accepted the following new members:

Bertha Thorman (School)  
Tyler Hampson (Police)  
Owen Aptekar-Cassels (School)  
Mark Dinicola (School)  
Donyaël Parrish (Housing)  
Jacob Trombley (Housing)  
Manuel Bermudez (Housing)  
Shawn Flaherty (DPW)  
Alan Wolf (Mayor's Office)

The Board reviewed superannuation retirement applications for the following members:  
Timothy McQueston (Fire)

The Board reviewed disability retirement applications for the following members:  
None

The Board reviewed retirement allowances for the following retirees:  
None

The Board reviewed the following deceased members/retirees/survivors:  
None

On a motion made by Ms. Roberts-Cote and seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) by roll call to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on

October 29, 2019 (Karpinski:Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

The Board reviewed and approved the following warrants:

Pension payroll warrant totaling \$947,344.92

Accounts payable warrant totaling \$54,517.26

Board and staff payroll warrant totaling \$12,052.92

The Board reviewed the following reports:

October Trial Balance

Transaction journal from the de Burlo Group, Inc for October 2019

PRIT Statement for October 2019 (November not received prior to meeting)

The Board reviewed the following wire transfers for the current month:

\$13,336.70 from PRIM to Peoples' United Bank (distribution)

\$760,000 from Peoples' United Bank to Florence Bank

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report on the Florence Bank account for October:

Bank statement: \$217,862.66

Outstanding disbursements: \$211,011.69

Adjusted bank balance: 6,850.97

Outstanding receipts: \$135,805.05

Trial Balance end of month balance: \$142,656.02

The Board reviewed the following makeup/buyback requests:

None

The Board reviewed the following correspondence:

None

### **Old Business**

The Staff Committee, consisting of Ms. Wright and Mr. Sullivan, presented its findings on the topic of the staff position descriptions and step scale recommendations.

Ms. Wright started by saying that she and Mr. Sullivan agreed to adopt the new position descriptions, the step scales and a new position title (Member Services Assistant) as recommended by the Collins Center study.

The Board reviewed the compensation schedule recommended by the Collins Center. Ms. Wright noted that the scale would move up by the COLA each fiscal year.

Ms. Roberts-Cote asked if there was a formula that was used to decide where to place the staff on the scales. Ms. Wright said that they had not used a formula. Mr. Sullivan said that he had felt that the administrator should be placed on step 11 and the member services assistant should be placed at step 9. Ms. Wright noted that she had wanted to place the administrator at step 10 and the member services assistant at step 8, but had accepted the higher placement as a compromise with Mr. Sullivan. Ms. Wright said that the Collins Center had created the scales around the average salary of all the systems she had surveyed. Ms. Roberts-Cote felt that the staff should each be placed at step 8 and 10 instead of 9 and 11.

Ms. Roberts-Cote said that she thought that the assistant position was similar to her position in the health department and that she agreed with the recommended scale in the report. She also noted that because the assistant treasurer has access to thousands of dollars and is in Grade I she thought that the administrator's placement was fair.

Mr. Lyons noted that he had asked Mary Acairdi of the Collins Center some questions via email. He inquired how the retirement systems were chosen for the survey. He noted that Leominster probably should not have been included. Ms. Acairdi had told him that he would have to go through the board with any questions.

Ms. Wright noted that the Collins Center chose which systems to survey. Upon request, the Collins Center looked at a slightly different group of retirement systems which included Holyoke. Ms. Acairdi had said this would not change her recommendations for a salary scale.

Mr. Lyons inquired whether the increases would go back to January 1, 2019. Ms. Karpinski said that the scales were based on FY20 salaries of other retirement systems. Ms. Wright said that steps have always been effective on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

On a motion made by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms. Roberts-Cote, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to adopt the new position job descriptions, including the title change for the assistant position. (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

On a motion made by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms. Roberts-Cote, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to adopt the compensation schedule. (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

On a motion made by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Ms. Roberts-Cote, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to review the salary scales every three years. (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

On a motion made by Ms. Wright and seconded by Mr. Sullivan, the Board voted (4-1) to place the administrator at Step 11 and the member services assistant at Step 9, to be effective July 1, 2019. (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: No, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

The member services assistant asked if the staff would receive a COLA. Ms. Wright said that COLAs were already included in the pay schedules.

The Board reviewed the proposed 2020 budget prepared by the administrator. Whether or not to change the amount budgeted under staff salaries was briefly discussed. Ms. Wright said she did not think it would matter and it could stay as is. On a motion made by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms. Roberts-Cote, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the budget (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

**Other Business**

None

**Adjournment**

On a motion made by Ms. Roberts-Cote and seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 2:22p.m. as follows: (Karpinski: Yes, Lyons: Yes, Roberts-Cote: Yes, Sullivan: Yes, Wright: Yes).

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19th, 2019 1:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Member Services Assistant

**THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON  
12/19/2019**

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Joyce Karpinski, Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Melissa Roberts-Cote**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Michael J Lyons**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Thomas Sullivan**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Susan Wright**