

**Swampscott Retirement Board  
Meeting Minutes  
June 27, 2023**

Received by Town Clerk  
July 26, 2023 11:22am

A meeting of the Contributory Retirement Board was held in the Third Floor Conference Room on Tuesday, June 27, 2023.

Present:

Vice-Chair John Behen, Amy Sarro, Robert Powell

Absent:

Chair Thomas Driscoll, Kevin Breen

Guests (Remote):

Mary Ellen Fletcher, Select Board Member

Guest (in Person):

Kevin Thompson

The meeting was unanimously called to order by a motion made by Robert Powell and seconded by Amy Sarro at 8:06 am.

**Approve Meeting Minutes**

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Robert Powell and seconded by Amy Sarro to approve the Meeting Minutes from May 23, 2023.

**Acceptance of New Member Enrollments**

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to approve the following new members.

- Michael Brison, Assistant Town Clerk, DOH 6/12/2023

**Retirements**

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Robert Powell and seconded by Amy Sarro to approve the following retirements.

- Vladimir Akim, SPS Network Manager, Superannuation Option A, DOR 6/30/2023, 20 years, 8 months
- Gary Lord, SPD Lieutenant, Superannuation Option B, DOR 7/7/2023, 32 years, 3 months

## **Deaths**

The following member death was noted by The Board:

- Frances Snow, Former SPS Exec. Sec to Superintendent, SuperAnn Opt. A, DOD 4/20/2023

## **Administrative Reports Put on File:**

- PERAC Memo #13: 2022 Salary Verification Request
- PERAC Memo #14: Tobacco Company List

## **Expenses/Financials:**

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to approve the following expense.

- Expense Warrant 6/2023                      \$17,189.89

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to approve the following payroll warrant.

- Payroll Warrant 6/30/2023                      \$634,366.63

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to approve the following transfer.

- People's Transfer to MM Account \$475,000.00

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to approve the following transfer.

- PRIM Transfer to People's                      \$475,000.00

April financials were reviewed - cash receipts, disbursements adjustments, trial balance & bank reconciliations.

### **Transfers/Refunds/Rollovers**

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Robert Powell and seconded by John Behen to approve the following refunds as a group:

- Krista Burke, Former SPS Tutor - Partial refund of interest owed
- Nicole Mehegan, Former SPS ABA Tutor - Partial refund of interest owed
- Elaine Vousboulis, Former SPS ESP – Partial refund of interest owed
- Karol Feliz, Former SHA Admin Assistant – Refund – 11 mos.
- Natalie Pena, Former SPS Grants Manager – Partial refund

The Administrator noted that the first three partial refunds were part of the PERAC Audit.

### **Buyback/Makeup Requests**

- None

### **New Business:**

- Upcoming RFPs for: Actuarial Consultant & Custodian  
The Administrator noted that both contracts expire at the end of December 2023. DAHAB Associates will be responsible for the RFP for a Custodian. The Board discussed the benefits of using PERAC as an actuary. John Behen suggested that we use our current actuary to do a "stress test" on our actuarial data to ensure that it is accurate. John Behen asked to have this as an item on our next agenda. The Board unanimously agreed to begin the process of the Actuarial RFP in September 2023.
- Extension of PTG Contract  
The Board unanimously agreed to table discussion on extending the PTG Contract until next meeting to review the percentage of increase of fees for the software services.
- Summer Newsletter  
The Board agreed to send the Summer Newsletter to retirees. Robert Powell suggested that we look into the feasibility of a Facebook page for our retirees and members. The Administrator agreed that we can look into it.

## **Old Business:**

- COLA – John Behen announced that the Selectboard did not approve the extra 2% COLA at the June 26 Selectboard meeting. John Behen complimented Mary Ellen Fletcher and Robert Powell complemented Doug Thompson on their attention, due diligence, and willingness to learn about the Retirement System as part of their voting process. John Behen commented on his appreciation of the continued involvement of Eric Hartman, Chair of FinCom with the Board. The Administrator also received a note from the Chair, Thomas Driscoll, thanking John Behen and Robert Powell for their presentation to the Selectboard. Some of the takeaways from the Selectboard meeting are as follows:
  - John Behen commented that it would have been beneficial to have started this process earlier. He followed up with Mary Ellen Fletcher on a comment she made at the Selectboard meeting about the possibility of appropriating funds toward retirees since the 2% did not pass. Mary Ellen Fletcher stated that she is working on some ideas to discuss at the next Board meeting.
  - Amy Sarro suggested a public forum about the retirement system for the benefit of employees, retirees, FinCom, and the Selectboard. She also suggested continuing to educate FinCom and the Select board about the retirement system. Mary Ellen Fletcher suggested making a recording about how the system works.
  - John Behen suggested a triple meeting among the Retirement, Finance, and Select Board.
  - Robert Powell wanted to go on record that the MMA, while originally opposed to the design of the 2% COLA, supported that law after working with the Governor and Legislature to address their two primary concerns with the amendment including adding language to 1) ensure that municipalities are given appropriate authority to accept or reject the COLA decision made by retirement boards and 2) clarification that the increase would apply only to the approved base, not the entire pension. Robert Powell also commented that the Selectboard has recently spent money on property purchases etc., even though they continue to say that they are concerned about adding more debt to unfunded initiatives.
  - Robert Powell commented that one of the goals of the Board is to increase the COLA base. He suggested we ask the Actuary what data looks like if we were to move the base to \$18,000 as part of the "stress test."
  - The Administrator provided information on how many of our retirees are actually participating in health insurance. (133 participating, 133 of them on Medicare.) The board discussed finding out who is our representative on the PEC (Public Employee Committee) and inviting that individual to one of our meetings.
- PERAC Audit Updates – The Administrator presented The Board with details regarding an error made on a retiree's retirement calculations which was identified during the PERAC Audit. The retiree's pension has been corrected; however, the retiree owes \$4,529.61 for deductions taken in error. The retiree is asking the board to take a share of the responsibility of the payment as he feels it was not his fault. John Behen explained that when the Administrator provides a retirement benefit

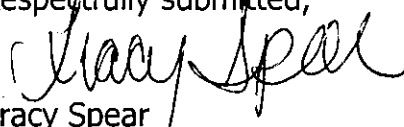
estimate prior to retirement, it can be taken to an accountant or actuary to review it for errors. John Behen also explained that a repayment plan is an option. The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Amy Sarro and seconded by Robert Powell to table the discussion until the next meeting. During that time, the Board will look into the situation and the potential options for a mutually acceptable resolution.

### **Administrative Updates**

The Administrator brought the attention of the Board that there are three disability retirees who have not provided verification of income to PERAC. The Administrator pointed out that the Board has the ability to terminate retirement benefits if the income verification is not provided. The Administrator has spoken to all three individuals, and they've all agreed to send the necessary paperwork to PERAC. The Board agreed to send letters to the individuals stating that if the paperwork is not returned by July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Board will vote on termination of retirement benefits at the July board meeting.

The Board voted unanimously on a motion made by Robert Powell and seconded by Amy Sarro to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 am.

Respectfully submitted,

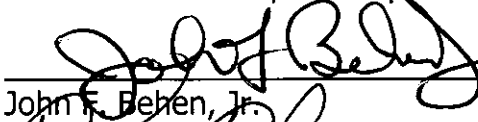


Tracy Spear  
Retirement Administrative Assistant



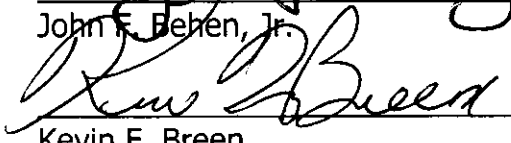
Thomas H. Driscoll, Jr., Esq.

Chair, Appointed



John F. Behen, Jr.

Vice-Chair, Elected Member



Kevin F. Breen

Elected Member



Robert J. Powell, III

Appointed Member



Amy L. Sarro

Ex-Officio

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