

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF AND RETIREMENT FUND

A regular meeting of the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund (HFRRF) Board of Trustees as authorized under sections 551.125 & 551.127 of the Texas Government Code and in accordance with the order of Governor Greg Abbott on March 16, 2020, last extended on March 6, 2021, suspending certain requirements of the Open Meetings Act, convened via a telephone/video conference on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Trustees present were Brett R. Besselman (Chair), Stephen R. Whitehead (Vice Chair), Lisa R. Slagle (Secretary), Gerard L. Daniels, David Riegor, David O. Lantrip, Arif Rasheed (City Treasurer Designee), Earnest W. Wotring (Mayor's Representative), and Albertino "Al" Mays (Citizen Member). Member absent was Pete Ng. Also present were staff members Ralph D. Marsh (Executive Director), Ajit Singh (Chief Investment Officer), Claudia McInnis (Director of Finance and Administration), Dalia "Dolly" De La Cruz (Director of Member Services), John D. Moore II (Director of Technology & Building Services), and Adam E. Smith (General Counsel).

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The Chair invited comments from the public. No comments were received.

The Board extended their birthday greetings to David O. Lantrip and the Chair.

The Chair introduced the newly hired employee from the Member Services Department.

Gerard L. Daniels and Earnest W. Wotring entered the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

There was a motion by David O. Lantrip, seconded by Lisa R. Slagle, to approve the following items listed on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of the minutes of the regular Board meeting held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.
- B. Approval of the minutes of the Investment Committee meeting held on Wednesday, February 24, 2021.
- C. Deferred Retirement Option Plan application(s) effective March 1, 2021 and April 1, 2021.
- D. Application(s) for membership into the Fund.
- E. Application(s) for reinstatement into the Fund.
- F. Application(s) for service retirement.

The motion carried.

David Riegor entered the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

The Director of Finance and Administration reviewed the second quarter 2021 fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 expenses, highlighting expenses that are under budget.

The Director of Finance and Administration reviewed the Fund's consolidated financials and highlights for the second quarter fiscal year 2021 ending December 31, 2020, noting the Plan's Net Position at approximately \$4.643 billion. She also reviewed several financial trends between fiscal year 2021 and previous fiscal years.

Earnest W. Wotring departed the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

The Board noted the “2021 Committee Assignments” as presented by the Chair.

The Director of Member Services discussed the April 15, 2021 deadline for submission of the 2020 tax returns from members receiving general disability benefits.

There was a motion by David O. Lantrip, seconded by Lisa R. Slagle, to make an exception to the Fund’s policy and extend the deadline to June 30, 2021 for submission of the 2020 tax returns from members receiving general disability benefits due to the extension of filing of the federal income tax return deadline to June 15, 2021 allowed by the Internal Revenue Service to Texas residents because of the recent Texas winter storms. The motion carried.

The Executive Director reviewed the new policy regarding notarization requirements with respect to Fund-issued forms, explaining the need to waive or make modifications to Member’s documents requiring notarizations during declared disasters.

There was a motion by David O. Lantrip, seconded by David Riegor, to approve the new policy, as presented, regarding notarization requirements with respect to Fund-issued forms. The motion carried.

The Director of Member Services discussed the deadline related to pro-rated death benefit applications explaining the need to make an exception to the current policy.

There was a motion by Lisa R. Slagle seconded by Albertino “Al” Mays, that any day in which Governor Greg Abbott’s March 13th, 2020 disaster declaration has been in effect shall not be counted for purposes of the 180-day deadline under section 6.08 of the Pension Benefits Policies. The motion carried.

The General Counsel, with additional comments from the Executive Director, presented an overview of the legislative bills of interest to the Fund in the 87th Texas legislature.

The General Counsel provided updates on the Fund’s lawsuits against the City of Houston and City officials related to Senate Bill 2190 in the 85th Texas legislature and on the declaratory judgment relating to informal marriage.

Under future agenda items, Lisa R. Slagle, requested to have a meeting of the Personnel & Procedures Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m. on a motion by Lisa R. Slagle, seconded by David Riegor. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa R. Slagle
Board Secretary