

**CITY OF ATLANTA FIRE FIGHTERS’
DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
February 18, 2021
Webex Teleconference
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Derek “Brent” Hullender	Fire, City of Atlanta
Russell Sykes	Fire, City of Atlanta
Louis Amis	HR Designee, City of Atlanta
Youlanda Carr	CFO Designee, City of Atlanta

OTHERS PRESENT

Mary Shah	Strategic Benefits Advisors
Stephanie Atli	Strategic Benefits Advisors
Matt Perini	Strategic Benefits Advisors
Lori Pocock	Strategic Benefits Advisors
Ed Emerson	Morris, Manning & Martin
Chelsea Deppert	Morris, Manning & Martin
Carl Christie	Law Department, City of Atlanta
Alicia Thompson	Law Department, City of Atlanta
Rosie Woods	Pension Administrator, City of Atlanta
Amanda Rouser	Pension Analyst, City of Atlanta
Karen Sutton	Finance Department, City of Atlanta

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Derek ‘Brent’ Hullender called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. via Webex telephone conference. Chairman Hullender indicated that a quorum was present for the meeting.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Sykes to approve the Agenda as presented and the motion was seconded by Mr. Amis. The motion unanimously carried and the Agenda was approved.

III. MINUTES

The Committee Members reviewed the Minutes of the January 21, 2021 Fire Fighters’ Defined Benefit Administrative Committee Meeting, which were distributed in advance and reviewed by Counsel.

With there being no changes or modifications, a motion was made by Mr. Sykes to approve the Minutes as presented and the motion was seconded by Mr. Amis. The motion carried unanimously and the Minutes were approved.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGERS' REPORT

Service Pension Applications

Ms. Shah presented four (4) service pension applications to the Committee for approval. Three meet the 30-year service requirement and the other retiree is over age 55 so none of the service pension applications had an age penalty applied. Chairman Hullender asked if the members had seen and signed off on the calculations and Ms. Shah informed the group that SBA is in the process of reaching out to the retirees. Ms. Shah stated that none had questionable service or pay data. Chairman Hullender asked if there was any indication that David Head had been on military active duty during a period around 1991 to 1992 and if there had been back contributions paid for that period. Ms. Shah stated she would review the data to see if there was back pension paid.

Chairman Hullender requested that in the future the applications be included in the meeting package along with the calculations.

A motion was made by Mr. Sykes and seconded by Mr. Amis to approve the four (4) service pension applications on the attached spreadsheet for the meeting date of February 18, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

Beneficiary Applications

Ms. Shah presented one (1) beneficiary application to the Committee for approval. Ms. Shah pointed out that the retiree's date of death was December 21, 2020 and the beneficiary's payment is effective December 22, 2020 (not 2021 as shown in error on the attached spreadsheet).

A motion was made by Mr. Sykes and seconded by Mr. Amis to approve the beneficiary pension application on the attached spreadsheet for the meeting date of February 18, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

Lump Sum Applications

Ms. Shah noted that there were no lump sum applications this month, but SBA is working on three to be presented next month.

Financial Statement

Ms. Shah presented the December 2020 unaudited financial statements provided to SBA by Zenith and reminded the Committee these would be the last ones Zenith would provide. Ms. Shah also stated that the Finance department had reviewed the financials and Ms. Carr agreed.

Invoices for Approval

Ms. Shah stated that the Finance department has reviewed and approved the invoices in the packet and after approval, these are what will be paid.

A motion was made by Mr. Sykes and seconded by Ms. Carr to approve the invoices in the packet for the meeting date of February 18, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

With no further questions or discussion, the Administrative Managers’ Report was concluded and accepted as informational.

V. ATTORNEYS’ REPORT

Ordinance Change to the Appeals Process

Mr. Christie presented an ordinance introduced by Councilmember Archibong to revert the appeals process back to the way it was before the Shook legislation took effect in April 2020. Originally, if someone disagreed with a finding from the Administrative Committee for their plan, the initial decision was made by that Committee and any appeal was reviewed by the Investment Board. In April, a change was made so that the Administrative Committee made the initial decision and also heard any appeals. This legislation will change the appeal process so that appeals are heard by the Investment Board. It would give a “fresh set of eyes” to an appeal. The actuary did a cost analysis and concluded that there would be no cost to make the change. The legislation will come before the Finance Executive Committee on February 24, 2021. Per the charter, each Administrative Committee needs to provide a non-binding vote for or against recommending the change.

A motion was made by Mr. Amis and seconded by Mr. Sykes to approve recommendation of the legislation as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Iron Mountain Update

Mr. Emerson provided an update on a current issue with Iron Mountain and the scanning project for the pension files transferred from Zenith. The Iron Mountain Legal Department has not yet approved modifications to the Statement of Work needed to begin this process. The next step is to request a meeting with Iron Mountain’s Legal Department to get the document finalized.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Emerson provided an update on the Zenith overpayments. He and Mr. Christie will meet to agree upon an approach and then submit a claim for the most recent appeal issue where Zenith is partially responsible and also put Zenith on notice that this is not the only claim of the Plan against Zenith. Mr. Emerson noted that in some cases an overpayment may not be the fault of

Zenith, for example, overpayments may occur due to the timing of death notifications from the beneficiary or estate. In other cases, the City may bear some responsibility and money should only be recouped from Zenith where the overpayment was through their fault.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Employee Contributions on Vacation Payout in Excess of 600 Hours

Ms. Shah brought up a situation that recently happened in the Police Plan. Vacation payout is limited to 3 years of pay. For the Fire Plan, vacation is capped at 900 hours if an employee is on the 53-hour schedule or 600 hours if the employee is on the 40-hour schedule. The situation came up with a Police Officer who had accumulated over 600 hours of vacation and questioned if he had to pay pension contributions on the excess vacation hours over 600 since those hours would not be included in his pension calculation. Ms. Shah verified that SBA checked with Zenith and was told this situation rarely happened. It was highlighted because the officer in this case did not have any pension contributions taken out of his vacation payout and SBA had to take the back pension out of his initial retro check. Chairman Hullender agreed that pension contributions taken on the excess hours should be refunded in this situation.

A motion was made by Mr. Sykes and seconded by Ms. Carr to refund pension contributions taken on excess vacation hours not included in a retiree’s pension calculation. The motion carried unanimously.

Northern Trust Access

Ms. Shah informed the Committee that there is currently an issue with allowing retirees to turn off the Direct Deposit notice mailed to them. Northern Trust ties this access to also allowing the retiree to change his / her bank information directly in the system. SBA will be having discussions with Mr. Amis and the Pension Team to determine if retirees should be allowed to make those changes themselves. In the meantime, SBA will turn off the paper Direct Deposit notices for the retiree. Chairman Hullender stated that Mr. Bill Brockton is a good contact to help disseminate information to the Fire retirees.

Pay in the Month of Death

Chairman Hullender requested SBA discuss their recommendation on handling pay in the month of death. Ms. Shah stated that in the month of death, payment is made at month-end but the participant is only entitled to pay for the fraction of the month that they were alive. If there is a beneficiary, the beneficiary would be entitled to the fraction of the remaining month. When SBA is notified of a death, the payment is stopped as soon as possible in that month to prevent overpayment, and then the Administrator works with the estate to pay the correct amount (or recover any overpayment). In terms of medical, dental and vision, the entire monthly premiums are collected if you have coverage on the first day of the month. SBA is proposing to change the

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administrative practice so that if a retiree is alive on the first day of the month, then he / she will be paid benefits for the entire month. This practice would bring the pension payments in line with the health and life insurance deductions. It would also alleviate some overpayment situations where the TPA is not notified of a death until later in the month. Ms. Shah noted this proposal had not yet been presented to the other boards. Mr. Emerson asked how this coincides with the terms of the plan and Ms. Shah answered that there isn’t anything specific in terms of the payment and she believes this is an operational practice. She also stated that SBA can look at the financial impact to the plans of making this change. Chairman Hullender stated that unless there was contradiction with the plan documents or ordinance, he would be in favor of making the change if done in conjunction with the other plans. Ms. Shah stated the proposal would be presented to the other plans at their March meetings.

VIII. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

IX. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Committee at this time, the Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Derek “Brent” Hullender, Chairman

These Minutes were adopted on _____, 2021.