

CITY OF ATLANTA DEFINED BENEFIT
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE
GENERAL EMPLOYEES' PLAN
MEETING

October 14, 2021
Webex Teleconference
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

ALFRED BERRY JR.	Retiree, City of Atlanta
ANGELA GREEN	Retiree, City of Atlanta
BRYANT MITCHELL	Retiree, Atlanta Public Schools
JOE HOOD	Active, Atlanta Public Schools
QUENTIN HUTCHINS	Active, Atlanta Public Schools
MOHAMED BALLA	CFO, City of Atlanta
JEFFREY NORMAN	HR Commissioner, City of Atlanta

OTHERS PRESENT

MARY SHAH	Strategic Benefits Advisors
STEPHANIE ATLI	Strategic Benefits Advisors
LORI POCOCK	Strategic Benefits Advisors
ED EMERSON	Morris, Manning & Martin
CHELSEA DEPERT	Morris, Manning & Martin
TYRONIA SMITH	City of Atlanta Law Department
ERIC DEC	City of Atlanta Law Department
YOULANDA CARR	City of Atlanta Finance Department
PAMELA GOINS	City of Atlanta Finance Department
DELISHA ROBINSON	City of Atlanta Finance Department
KAREN SUTTON	City of Atlanta Finance Department
AMANDA ROUSER	City of Atlanta Pension Department
ROSIE WOODS	City of Atlanta Pension Department

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Berry called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. It was noted the meeting was being held by Webex Teleconference.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Mitchell to approve the Agenda, the motion was seconded by Mr. Hood. The motion carried unanimously and the Agenda was approved.

III. MINUTES

The Committee Members reviewed the Minutes of the September 9, 2021 General Employees' Defined Benefit Administrative Committee Meeting, which were distributed in advance and reviewed by Counsel. Ms. Green requested a correction to the minutes—under Old Business, Overpayments, “The Board had started some collections but ~~Doug Strachan~~ the City would have to confirm what happened after that.”

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Following discussion and review, a **motion was made by Mr. Hutchins to adopt the Minutes as amended. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mitchell. The motion carried unanimously and the Minutes were adopted.**

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGERS' REPORT

Pension Applications

Service Pension Applications

The Committee reviewed Service Pensions numbers 1 through 15 on the attached spreadsheet.

Ms. Shah confirmed that Eric Mitchell is fully aware that he is retiring with an age penalty. Chairman Berry thanked SBA for confirming that Mr. Mitchell is aware of the age penalty and asked that going forward the benefit approvals package include a signature from any participant retiring less than 8 months from an unreduced benefit.

Following this review, a motion was made by Mr. Hutchins and seconded by Mr. Hood to approve Service Pension Applications Nos. 1-15 as listed on the attached spreadsheet dated October 14, 2021. The motion carried unanimously and the Service Pension Applications were approved.

Chairman Berry noted that Doug Strachan was on the list of retirees this month and noted that he had been the representative for Active Employees on the Committee. Mr. Emerson informed the Committee that he had drafted an amendment to the bylaws to clarify that this seat must be occupied by an active employee. Ms. Smith will review this amendment to the bylaws before it is submitted to the Investment Board for approval.

Beneficiary Applications

The Committee reviewed Beneficiary Applications number 1 through 4 on the attached spreadsheet.

Following this review, a motion was made by Mr. Hutchins and seconded by Mr. Bryant to approve Beneficiary Applications Nos. 1-4 as listed on the attached spreadsheet dated October 14, 2021. The motion carried unanimously and the Beneficiary Applications were approved.

Lump Sum Applications

The Committee reviewed Lump Sum Applications 1-12 as informational only. Chairman Berry asked SBA how someone is able to take a \$150k lump sum refund. Ms. Shah informed the Committee that anyone who is vested and who applies for a refund is required to sign a form that explains the annuity benefit that they are giving up if they choose to take a refund.

Cash Financial Statement and Payables Listing Check Register

Ms. Carr noted on the financial statements that the contributions in August were higher than in July due to an additional pay period; otherwise, there were no particular items of note. She also stated that the Finance team is currently going through a financial audit with KPMG and that the results will be presented to the Investment Board in January or February 2022. Ms. Green noted that she had requested information related to interest on the Wells Fargo checking account and that she had not yet received that information. Ms. Shah informed Ms. Green that she would provide the response to her request and that she would also distribute the response to the other members of the Committee.

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A motion was made by Mr. Hood and seconded by Mr. Hutchins to approve the unaudited financials based on review and input from the Finance Department. The motion carried and the Financials were approved. Ms. Green abstained.

Chairman Berry questioned the 800 numbers listed on the SBA invoice and asked that, in the future, Ms. Shah make it clear what the numbers are for (i.e., whether they are a phone number or a fax number).

Ms. Goins noted that she had reviewed the invoices and had approved all but two items: the SBA special projects fee and the DoubleUp Invoice. Ms. Shah noted that SBA is working with Mr. Norman to approve the special projects fees and confirmed that these fees will not be paid until they are approved. Mr. Norman has requested additional information from SBA to support its charges for the special project work so that he can assess whether the charges should be approved. Chairman Berry asked if the special projects were included in the revised SBA fixed fees and Mr. Norman confirmed that they were not.

Ms. Pocock informed the Committee that the expense reimbursement for Mr. Hutchins would be \$592.62 less than presented because Calloway Gardens was refunding duplicate hotel charges directly to Mr. Hutchins. SBA is working with Mr. Hutchins to receive a revised expense report with the corrected amount.

Ms. Goins discussed the DoubleUp invoice from 2018 that was received for web services. Ms. Green suggested that the meeting minutes from 2018 be reviewed to determine whether this invoice and these charges were approved by the Committee. Chairman Berry asked that the invoice be removed at this time until research could be done to determine if the charges had been approved by the Committee.

A motion was made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Mitchell to remove the DoubleUp invoice from the Payable Listing Check Register until further research could confirm if the web services had been approved by the Committee. The motion carried unanimously and the invoice was removed.

With the removal of the DoubleUp invoice (\$178.13), removal of the SBA Special Project Fees (\$35,238.00 for the City and \$9,493.00 for APS) and the change to Mr. Hutchins expense reimbursement, the revised invoice total to be paid this month is \$164,759.07. Ms. Pocock will send revised invoice sheets to all Committee members for September and October 2021 with the discussed revisions.

A motion was made by Mr. Hutchins and seconded by Mr. Hood to approve the Payable Listing Check Register based on review and input from the Finance Department with the revisions noted above. The motion carried and the revised Payable Listing was approved. Ms. Green abstained.

V. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Emerson provided an update that the Investment Board would be hearing appeals on 10/20/2021 during their regularly scheduled meeting time. General Plan participants with appeals being presented are: Thomas Bradford, Georgia Miller, Virginia Brooks, Lee Ramey, Mary Wyche and Patricia Culpepper.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

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VII. OLD BUSINESS

Summary Plan Description (SPD)

Mr. Emerson informed the Committee that he had emailed the Committee members copies of the draft revised SPD. The draft includes changes from Segal and SBA. Mr. Emerson stated that he would like someone at the City knowledgeable of the pension plans to review the draft and have all Committee members read through the document one more time before it is finalized. The APS version is in progress and will be distributed next. Mr. Emerson also offered to set up a working session to review the documents with either the entire Committee or with individual members as needed.

Overpayment Reporting

Ms. Shah discussed a working group consisting of SBA, Mr. Emerson, Mr. Norman and the City Legal team that has been meeting to discuss overpayments. Due to the volume of appeals, the group is looking at alternative methods of recoupment aside from the straight 25% reduction method that the Committee approved in October 2020. Chairman Berry questioned if the above group had the authority to look at alternative methods since the 25% reduction method chosen by the Committee was approved by Counsel and the Plan Actuary. Mr. Emerson stated that the Investment Board requested that the group look at alternative recoupment methods that could be adopted. He added that the 25% reduction method was chosen by the Committee because it was appropriate for these specific cases, but that it may be less appropriate for other situations. He informed the Committee that there is proposed legislation in Congress that seeks to limit what overpayments can be recouped from individual pension plan participants. Mr. Emerson is following these developments closely in light of the appeals that will be heard on October 20th by the Investment Board.

Jesse Hillard

Ms. Shah presented additional information about Jesse Hillard, a participant discussed during the August meeting. Mr. Hillard was a retiree receiving pension payments when he was rehired by APS in 2017; however, his pension payments were not suspended until 2020, so he was overpaid \$21,554.85. Mr. Hillard was sent a letter asking him to either repay the overpayment or have it taken through paycheck deductions over a 60-month period. When he resumes his pension payments, the offset for recoupment would continue if the overpayment has not yet been repaid. Ms. Shah also added that since he is a rehired retiree, he is no longer accruing benefits under the pension plan and is instead in the FICA plan contributing 7.5%. In total, Mr. Hillard's current pay would be reduced by 18% to recoup the overpayments. Ms. Shah provided the option to calculate the repayment over Mr. Hillard's lifetime instead of over 60 months. Chairman Berry asked SBA to pursue that option if it is better for Mr. Hillard. Ms. Green asked Finance to look into whether there could be tax ramifications since there had been previous issues with the Board having to pay IRS fees when someone came back to work and was still receiving pension payments.

Chairman Berry also asked Mr. Emerson if he was still pursuing Zenith for their responsibility and culpability with regard to some of the overpayments. Mr. Emerson stated that he and Mr. Christie had been working together on a demand letter to Zenith. Since Mr. Christie had been leading this effort, Mr. Emerson will work with the City Legal team to bring them up to speed. Chairman Berry asked Ms. Shah to put this issue under Old Business on next month's agenda.

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Online Modeler Timeline

Ms. Shah stated that SBA is completing their testing and will be rolling out the online modeler tool to the General Plan from November 15th through December 17th. This will allow active employees to log in and model their own retirement estimate.

Other issues

Chairman Berry asked about SBA having a presence at City Hall. Ms. Shah stated that once in-person meetings resume, SBA will work to schedule time on those days to be at City Hall. Mr. Norman informed the Committee that City Hall is open for limited in-person transactions that have been authorized and that he would let the Committee know once additional in-person meetings are approved.

Ms. Green raised two issues. The first was in regard to a request to SBA to do a comparison between the number of calls between Fire, Police and General plan participants. She received information for only one month and would like additional information. Ms. Shah stated that she has call volume through the end of September that shows calls by plan and that she will circulate this information to the Committee. Ms. Green's second question was in regard to a co-worker's son who had worked for the City for 30 years. His mother called to report his death and she was told that it would take 8 to 12 weeks for any benefits to be paid. Ms. Green asked what could take 8 to 12 weeks when the birth certificate and death certificate had been provided. Ms. Shah informed the Committee that it takes time to confirm which beneficiary is eligible and to collect all of the necessary paperwork from the beneficiary. Beneficiary commencements also have to be approved by the Committee which can add several weeks depending on the timing of the paperwork and the next scheduled meeting. Ms. Shah informed the Committee that the goal is always to get the beneficiary into pay as soon as possible.

VIII. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

IX. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Chairman Berry informed the Committee members that the next meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2021; however, this is Veterans Day and the City will be closed. Chairman Berry proposed an alternative date of November 10, 2021, and asked Ms. Shah to confirm this would work for the other Committee members.

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X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Committee at this time, Chairman Berry called for adjournment at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alfred Berry, Jr., Chairman

These Minutes were adopted on _____, 2021.