

The regular meeting of the Gardner Contributory Retirement Board was called to order by the Chairperson, Denise Merriam, on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 10:01 AM in Room #17, City Hall, Lower Level, Retirement Office. Board Chairperson, Denise Merriam, Ex-Officio Board Member, John Richard and Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse were present. Board Members Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney and Robert Newton joined the meeting remotely via a conference call due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts being under a state of emergency effective March 10, 2020. Governor Charlie Baker’s Emergency Executive Order which suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law were utilized for this Board Meeting.

On a motion by John Richard, seconded Robert Newton, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 23, 2020. The Board members present then signed the permanent minutes of the regular meeting of November 24, 2020. The Board Administrator will have the Board Members that were participating via conference call come into the Retirement Board’s Office individually to sign all documents from today’s Board Meeting.

On a motion by John Richard, seconded by Kevin McInerney, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Trial Balances and the General Ledger Histories for November 30, 2020 and to accept the City Treasurer’s bank reconciliations for November 2020.

On a motion by Kevin McInerney, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to approve Warrant #01/21 dated January 29, 2021, totaling \$568,569.75.

Vendor	For	Amount
MACRS	2021 Annual Dues	600.00
Law Offices of Michael Sacco	Invoice #6054	\$ 263.00
Stone Consulting, Inc.	Invoice #48-122020	\$ 1,000.00
Pension Payroll #01/21	Annuity Paid	\$ 94,301.71
	Pension Paid	\$ 465,015.43
	Veteran's Benefits Paid	\$ 273.75
	Dependents Paid	\$ 201.74
	COLA Paid	\$ 6,914.12
TOTAL WARRANT #01/21		\$ 568,569.75

The Board next reviewed the PRIM statement for the Gardner Retirement System for the month of December 2020, noting a positive \$2,743,978.94 Net Change in Investment Value for the month. The Management Fees for the month were \$59,632.20.

The Board Members reviewed the notice received from Pension Reserves Investment Management Board regarding the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) that was received on January 4, 2021. A copy of the report is available for review in the retirement board office.

Under “Correspondence” the Board reviewed PERAC Memo #38/2020; PERAC Memo #39/2020; PERAC Memo #01/2021; PERAC Memo #02/2021; PERAC Memo #03/2021; PERAC Memo #04/2021; PERAC Memo #05/2021; PERAC Memo #06/2021 and PERAC Memo #07/2021. Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse, will register all Board Members for the PERAC webinar on Prosper SFI Online Submission that is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2021.

The Board reviewed an email received on December 28, 2020 from Attorney Michael Sacco regarding Plymouth Retirement Board V. CRAB and the accompanying Memo that was attached to the email. The Board also reviewed another email received from Attorney Michael Sacco on January 11, 2021 that contained an all client memo on the Vernava Decision.

Under “Old Business”, the Board reviewed the Final Actuarial Draft of 01/01/2020 from Stone Consulting, Inc.

On a motion by John Richard, seconded by Kevin McInerney, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board the Board unanimously voted to approve the Final Actuarial Draft of 1/1/2020 Report. The Board Administrator will notify Stone Consulting, Inc. that the report can be finalized.

Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse, updated the Board Members on the status of the three disability retirement applications currently in process:

The Retirement Board Members reviewed the Regional Medical Panel Certificate received for Disability Applicant #1.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board the Board unanimously voted to approve the Regional Medical Panel Certificate received for Disability Applicant #1.

Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse will upload the disability application for applicant #1 to PERAC via the Prosper computer program. All Board Members will have to log into Prosper after the file has been uploaded for PERAC’s review and approval prior to the file being transmitted.

Disability Applicant #2 had their first Regional Medical Appointment on January 7, 2021 and their second Regional Medical Appointment was scheduled for January 17, 2021 in Newton, MA. Disability Applicant #2 was seeing individual medical doctors.

Disability Applicant #3 the Retirement Board is still waiting for the work accommodations to be received by the Human Resource Department. Once the work accommodations are received, they will be forwarded to Attorney Collins at Michael Sacco Law Offices for him to review and forward to Disability Applicant #3’s attorney.

Under “Old Business”, the Board Members reviewed the corrections to the Fifth Board Member Policy that was originally accepted at the December 23, 2020 Board Meeting. The (s) on the word Member has been removed and the Fifth Board Member Policy states that upon election or re-election, the Fifth Board member will be sworn in by the City of Gardner, City Clerk.

On a motion by John Richard, seconded by Kevin McInerney, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board the Board unanimously voted to approve the corrected Fifth Board Member Policy.

Under “New Business”, the Board opened nominations for election of a Board Chairperson to serve a one year term from February 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022. Neil Janssens nominated Denise Merriam with Robert Newton seconding the nomination. There were no other nominations, therefore, nominations were closed by Neil Janssens.

On a motion by Neil Janssens, and seconded by Robert Newton, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to elect Denise Merriam for the one year term of February 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022 as the Board Chairperson.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by Kevin McInerney, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to elect a 3.0% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for FY2022 pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 32, Section 103(i). The Social Security increase for this year was 1.30%.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to grant superannuation retirement benefits to Joanne M. Kelly, Option B, effective November 27, 2020.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to grant superannuation retirement benefits to Steven Bourgeois, Option B, effective December 11, 2020.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to grant superannuation retirement benefits to Priscilla Arsenault, Option B, effective December 16, 2020.

On a motion by Robert Newton, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board unanimously voted to grant superannuation retirement benefits to Maryann Desmarais, Option B, effective December 31, 2020.

The Board then recognized the deaths of Jovide Girouard, Retired City Engineer; Andre D. Lafortune, Retired DPW Laborer; Lucille B. Vallee, Retired School Nurse; and Constance H. Johnson, Retired Gardner Housing Authority Clerk.

Under “New Business,” the Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse, updated the Board Members that 254 of the 2020 Annual Affidavits were mailed out on June 29, 2020 with their June payroll checks and notice of deposits. Of the 254, 253 have been returned and 1 is still outstanding. Retirees and Survivors had until August 21, 2020 to return their 2020 Annual Affidavits. Second notices were mailed out on August 4, 2020. The Board Administrator reviewed the 2020 Annual Affidavits received and realized that there is one that is still outstanding for Evelyn Anderson. The Board Administrator has spoken directly with Ms. Anderson and the Board Administrator is waiting for Ms. Anderson to return her signed 2020 Affidavit.

Board Administrator, Cheryl Bosse, also updated the Board Members that the 1099R Forms for 2020 were mailed out on January 22, 2021.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at 10:00 AM.

All meetings are scheduled to be held in City Hall, 1st Floor, Room 128, Mayor’s Conference Room.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 10:24 A.M. was made by Kevin McInerney, seconded by John Richard, passing unanimously (5-0). Voting “yes” on a roll call vote were Neil Janssens, Kevin McInerney, Robert Newton, John Richard and Denise Merriam, the Board adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 A.M. APPROVED:

John Richard, Ex-Officio

Kevin McInerney, Appointed

Denise M. Merriam, Elected (Ends 6/30/2023)
Chairperson

Robert W. Newton, Elected (Ends 6/30/2023)

Neil W. Janssens, Appointed (Ends 1/1/2024)

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