

# Minutes of the Franklin Regional Retirement Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, June 18, 2014  
at the Franklin Regional Retirement System office, 278 Main Street, Greenfield MA

Vice Chairman Margaret Sullivan called the meeting to order at 11:04 am and then turned the meeting over to Dale Kowacki

Members present were:

Erving Treasurer – Margaret Sullivan, Vice Chairman Advisory Council  
Buckland Treasurer – Linda Marcotte  
Deerfield Treasurer – Barbara Hancock  
Franklin County Regional Housing – Robin Sherman  
Franklin Regional Council of Governments – Patricia Auchard  
Frontier Regional School - Paula Light  
Gill Treasurer – Veronica LaChance  
Leverett Treasurer – DeeAnn Civello  
Pioneer Valley Regional School – Deb Mero  
Shelburne Treasurer – Robert Taylor  
South Deerfield Water District – Eunice Apanell

Also present were:

Michael Kociela – Director of Finance and Operations, School Union 28

Retirement Board present:

Paula Light - Second Member Appointed by Advisory Council

Retirement staff present:

Dale Kowacki - Executive Director; Secretary, Advisory Council  
Deborah Frentzos - Member Services Accountant  
Patty Leveille - Administrative Assistant

## **Minutes Accepted**

*On a motion by Veronica LaChance and second by Robert Taylor, the Council voted to accept the minutes of the November 6, 2013 meeting.*

## **Procedures on conducting elections of Council officers**

*On a motion by Deb Mero and second by Veronica LaChance, the Council voted to adopt the following procedures to elect council officers:*

### **Procedures for conducting elections of officers**

**Chapter 32 § 20(3)(g) – Chapter 34B § 19(g)**

- Chair will call for nominations from the floor. No second is required, but will be allowed.
- A member should know beforehand if the person he or she wishes to nominate is both eligible and willing to serve. A person can nominate himself or herself.

- Unless they provide an indication that they are interested, a nominee must be present. A nominee can decline when first named. A nominee who remains silent when nominated is in effect accepting the nomination.
- The Chair will repeat each nomination and second. The Chair will ask if there are any further nominations, if not, the Chair will declare the nominations closed.
- After nominations are closed – voting can take place or nominations for the next office can be called by the Chair.
- Candidates will be voted on in the order in which they were nominated
- For more than one nominee – the Chair calls first for those voting in the affirmative by one of the following three methods.
  - vote by voice (viva-voca)
  - vote by rising
  - vote by raising hand

**Note: Open session votes cannot be by secret ballot – per AG's office  
11/7/2013**

- The Chair will begin the voting by saying “Those in favor of the first nominee, say aye (or rise, or raise hand). Those opposed say nay. The ayes have it and \_\_\_\_\_ is elected to \_\_\_\_\_. If the nays are in the majority, the Chair will say the nays have it and the first nominee is not elected, and then the voting for the second, etc. nominees will occur.
- As soon as one of the nominees receives a majority of the vote the Chair will declare the person elected. The process starts over with new nominations if the current nominees do not receive a majority.
- If there is only one nominee the chair can take a vote by specified manner or can declare the nominee elected.
 

*A motion by Barbara Hancock and second by Deb Mero, to have single nominations decided by majority vote was defeated with a majority of nays and one aye.*

### **Election of a Council Chairman**

This position will serve the remainder of a three year term to December 31, 2016. Nominations were requested from the floor.

*Linda Marcotte nominated MARGARET SULLIVAN, seconded by Robert Taylor.*

*Dale Kowacki asked if there were any more nominations, barring none, moved to vote.*

*By voice vote of all ayes, no nays, and no abstentions, MARGARET SULLIVAN was elected to the office of Chairman.*

**Margaret Sullivan then stepped down from the Vice Chairman position.**

*Robert Taylor nominated VERONICA LACHANCE for Vice Chairman*

*Dale Kowacki asked if there were any more nominations, barring none, moved to vote.*

*By voice vote of all ayes, no nays, and no abstentions, VERONICA LACHANCE was elected to the office of Vice Chairman.*

### **Organize for Fall Election**

The 3-year term of Mary Stokarski (Third Member) ends on December 31, 2014. The paperwork to run the election was presented and reviewed by the council, and a request for volunteers from the council to certify nomination papers and count ballots was made, with Veronica LaChance, Linda Marcotte, Eunice “Susie” Apanell, Margaret Sullivan, and Patricia Auchard raising their hands to volunteer – although, Pat is tentative pending legislative transfer of FRCOG to State Retirement.

### **Increase Retirees’ COLA base**

At its January 29, 2014 meeting, the Retirement Board voted to increase the retirees’ COLA base to \$15,000. Approval by the Advisory Council is required as well.

The council members discussed the impact on member units and retirees of increasing the COLA base from \$14,000 to \$15,000 with a compelling appeal from Robin Sherman to forego the increase for the sake of units in budget crisis, in particular the housing authority.

*On a motion by Margaret Sullivan and second by Deb Mero, the Council voted by raising hands, with 7 for, and 3 against, to approve the increase of the retirees’ COLA base to \$15,000.*

### **Change the Actuarial Method**

In response to a few units inquiring whether they could pay-off their share of the unfunded liability, Dale Kowacki, Executive Director, researched the options and found that the most acceptable route was to change the system’s actuarial method from a pooled approach, to individual valuations for each unit.

The council members discussed the merits and demerits of making the change, again with compelling testimony that making the change would mean a dramatic increase in the potential for catastrophic increases in an individual unit’s assessment if they should suffer an early career, disability retirement. That led to a request that should the Retirement Board continue to pursue the change, the Retirement Board should step- up its outreach to the towns so that they understand the impact of changing the actuarial method.

*In the end, the council voted by straw poll to report to the Retirement Board that the council wants to stay with a pooled actuarial method.*

### **Adjournment**

*On a motion by Linda Marcotte and second by Veronica LaChance, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Accepted at the November 5, 2014 Advisory Council Meeting

Dale Kowacki  
Advisory Council Secretary

This page intentionally left blank.