

HAILEY BLANKENSHIP
Executive Secretary



Martin Spani
Board Chair

STATE OF WASHINGTON
BOARD FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS & RESERVE OFFICERS
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October 23, 2023

The 241st regular meeting of the Board for Volunteer Firefighters and Reserve Officers was convened at 9:00 A.M. in Suite 206 of the James R. Larson Forum Building by Chair Martin Spani, with Board Member Debora Smith, Board Member Brian VanCamp, Board Member Miland Walling and Executive Secretary Hailey Blankenship present. Also present were Krisiti Bromley via zoom and James Aber of Washington State Investment Board, Michael Harbour and Luke Masselink of the State Actuaries Office, Saurabh Maheshwari of Linea Solutions Inc. and Mark Wautenpau of Cowlitz Co. FPD #6.

Secretary Blankenship requested the order of Agenda items #1 and #2 of New Business be moved to the top of the agenda for convenience of guest presents.

The Board reviewed the July 23, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. It was moved by Board Member VanCamp, seconded by Board Member Haglin and carried to approve the previous meeting minutes with no noted corrections.

FIRST HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

None

OLD BUSINESS

Secretary Blankenship introduced the project manager for the database replacement project, Saurabh Maheshwari, he provided the Board with an update on the project. The project was scheduled for a January 1, 2024 Implementation date; however there were some delays due to getting the data from the current state payroll system. Rather than having two implementation dates product go live will be pushed until March of 2024. Currently, BVFF staff are cleaning up the data extraction that will be migrated into Pension Pro+ as well as working on getting the payroll data from HRMS. The project is holding at a moderate risk due to budget and implementation delays that are expected. Testing with BVFF data continues in the test environment and is proving to be very user friendly. In addition to BVFF staff Linea has three individuals assisting with product testing. We will have a demonstration available in the near future.

The private letter ruling requesting status change to a Length of Service Award Plan (457 (e)) under IRS law has been drafted noting the changes to plan participation removing the previously enrolled reserve law enforcement officers. As of September the Private Letter Ruling has been assigned to an IRS review team but no additional feedback has been received to date.

Secretary Blankenship a quick reminder on the discussion regarding the LODD Benefit under review for Alan Basso. This appeal is still on hold, Ms. Basso's has retained new legal counsel and they are continuing to pursue the appeal.

NEW BUSINESS

James Aber and Kristi Bromley of the Washington State Investment Board presented the first performance update since the splitting of the plans. Investment data post at the end of each quarter, this performance update is as of September 30, 2023. The Vol Fire Plan has 220 million in assets with 71% invested into equity while the Reserve Officer Plan has proportional assets of 3.4 million with 70% into equity. Based on quarterly results returns are down in the first two quarters but there was a spiked increase in the third. Looking at the one year snap shot the returns look stronger than if it is broken down by quarter. It is expected that rates will stay consistent with the increase in oil prices and economic unrest. The Reserve Officer's fund was established August 1, 2023 and after two months it is presenting with a negative return, this was anticipated and will be monitored.

Michael Harbour and Luke Masselink of the State Actuaries Office presented to the Board the 2022 Annual Valuation. At a high level review there were no major changes, the decline in volunteers continues and the fire insurance premium tax transfer amount has been lower due to the pension database project. One of the highlighted liabilities was the vested benefits that have not been collected by members over the age of 65. There are over 2000 vested and retired members over the age of 65 and roughly 400 over the age of 90. These retired vested members and the benefits they are eligible to collect increase the plans liability by 5%. To reduce this liability, Secretary Blankenship is going to look into a way to contact these members and pay out eligible benefits. Over the last several years contribution rates have remained consistent and make up close to 2% of revenue for the VFF & RO funds. The conversation transitioned to the conversation of funding methods and the need to review and update following the split of the BVFF & RO fund. Secretary Blankenship will schedule a work session for this topic. The 2023 Valuation report will be the second abbreviated report utilizing the same data presented here in the 2022 report. OSA will also be working on updating the administrative factors used by BVFF staff to calculate benefits. A WAC hearing will be scheduled one factors are available. The last change in factors was implemented in 2017.

The Board discussed and set the 2024 EMSD and Reserve Officer Relief and Pension fees: it was moved by Board Member Haglin, seconded by Board Member VanCamp

- \$140 {\$110 to municipality, \$30 to member} for pension
- \$240 for relief
-

The Board discussed the Retire/Rehire surcharge. It was moved by Board Member Haglin and seconded by Board Member Waling to not implement a Retire/Rehire surcharge

Secretary Blankenship presented and reviewed the 2023 annual survey results. Of the 200 surveys distributed, 65 were received back. Of the 65, there was 1 response that was below average while the remaining were average or above average.

Secretary Blankenship presented Partial Permanent Disability Awards for the following:

-Glenda Palmer; Ms. Palmer has received most recently a total knee replacement and has reached maximum recovery. She was given an impairment rating of 50% to the right lower extremity. An award amount of \$54,018.17. Board Member VanCamp moved and Waling seconded the approval for Ms. Palmer's PPD award.

-Greg Laycock; Mr. Laycock was diagnosed with PTSD after an event on July 5, 2022. Mr. Laycock has been receiving treatment since this date. After a second IME conducted on August 18, 2023 it was determined Mr. Laycock could return to work. This same IME also gave Mr. Laycock a Category 2 impairment rating of mental health. This PPD award is in the amount \$22,821.96. It was moved by Board Member VanCamp and seconded by Board Member Haglin to approve this award.

Secretary Blankenship provided Board Members with a copy of the Accountability Audit Management Letter. There were no notable findings and the team continued to provide support for the new database system and the increased data security and reduced risk of error that it will provide.

The Board discussed and set 2024 Board Meeting dates as below. All meetings will be held in Olympia.

January 22nd
 April 22nd
 July 22nd
 October 21st

The Board reviewed the Secretary's leave and pay records

The Board reviewed and approved (Haglin moved, Smith seconded) the administrative expenditure vouchers numbered #02949 through #03019 and various travel vouchers.

There was a motion by VanCamp seconded by Smith and carried that the retirement pensions and lump-sum settlements listed below be approved effective on the listed dates:

PARTICIPANT	DEPARTMENT	EFFECTIVE	AMOUNT
VERNON AHLF	S. CLE ELUM	6/12/23	221.40
DAVID BAKER	DOUGLAS 2	5/26/23	84.00
KARL BANGERTER	SNOHOMISH 27	8/20/23	251.70 J/S
JEFFREY BLAISDELL	SKAMANIA 1	7/16/23	255.00 J/S
WILLIAM BOYLE	BUCKLEY	7/14/23	228.00 @62
MICHAEL BROWN	KLICKITAT 2	6/4/23	300.00
CRAIG BRUNER	WHATCOM 3	6/20/2023	4334.27 LUMP
BRIAN CULLER	STEVENSS 4	7/16/2023	300.00
DAVID DAVIS	COULEE CITY	5/26/23	300.00
SHARON DAVIS	COULEE CITY	5/26/23	300.00
TOM DINEEN	GRAYS HARBOR 16	6/11/22	177.24 J/S
LLOYD DIVELBISS	PORT ANGELES	7/15/21	4334.27 LUMP
ROD FENSTERMAKER	LEWIS 15	4/7/23	73.50
TERRY FRASL	WEST THURSTON	5/30/23	248.70 SURV.
DONITA FRENCH	JEFFERSON 2	6/22/23	300.00
DAWN FRIEL	GRANT 12	1/1/23	172.50
RON FRIESE	PACIFIC 3	3/23/23	228.00 @62
SARAH GAUDIO	SPOKANE SHERIFF	9/19/23	6229.83
ARTHUR GROBBEN	NORTHPORT	12/20/23	67.62 @64
CRAIG HADEN	LINCOLN 7	7/6/23	276.00 @64
SHEILA HANCOCK	LINCOLN 4	5/4/23	150.00
TED HANSON	E. GRAYS HAR. FR	4/22/23	77.00
JAMES HARTE	PIERCE 26	5/12/23	300.00
MARK HAUSCHILD	SPOKANE 9	6/24/23	300.00
DANNY HEITZMAN	YAKIMA 5	7/11/23	3278.03 LUMP@62
GERALD HELM	CENT. WHIDBEY	7/14/23	3790.08 LUMP
DAN HOCTOR	KLICKITAT 7	6/10/23	300.00
MIKE HUBBY	NO. WHATCOM	7/6/23	300.00
CODY ISBELL	GRANT 3	6/1/23	247.50 J/S
DWAYNE JANSEN	OAK HARBOR	4/20/23	300.00
LARRY LAMB	WALLA WALLA 8	10/17/23	300.00
KARL LASKA	METALINE FALLS	7/15/23	300.00
DOUGLAS LEROY	KITSAP 2	1/1/2013	55.79 J/S
SCOTT MARTIN	MONTESANO	5/27/23	153.90 @62
THOMAS MCKEON	WHATCOM 7	6/4/23	255.00 J/S


JOHN MCKOWN	OCEAN SHORES	6/9/23	6849.62 LUMP @61
TODD MOULTON	COSMOPOLIS	7/8/23	256.50 J/S
JOSEPH MUNZI	KITSAP 7	11/19/22	60.20 J/S
SHANNON NORRIS	STEVENS 1	6/6/2023	6619.19 LUMP @63
DAN NUTLEY	CHELAN F&R	5/27/2021	300.00
LARRY PASCO	KITTITAS 1	6/20/2023	73.50
MARK PETERSON	PACIFIC 2	8/21/2023	235.98 J/S
TROY(MARGERET) PHILLIPS	STEVENS 11	8/10/2023	4893.18 SURV LUMP
DANIEL PUGERUDE	SKAGIT 7	8/7/23	3009.72 LUMP
ROGER (CONSTANCE)KING	RUSTON	3/18/18	179.67 SURV
JOHN RODWELL	SPOKANE 10	4/19/23	3569.40 LUMP
JAMES SOOY	SPOKANE 3	6/19/23	300.00
RICHARD TETU	SAN JUAN 4	9/21/23	253.20 J/S
EDWARD TOMPKINS	MORTON	12/4/22	3278.03 LUMP@62
CRAIG ULLELAND	ADAMS 1	12/16/22	84.00
FRANKLIN WALKER	SOUTH KING	8/22/2023	125.08 J/S @62
BRENDAN WALTER	WHATCOM 13	9/3/2022	70.00
WILLIS WOOD	LEWIS 8	6/9/2023	250.20 J/S
DAVID WYATT	E. GRAYS HARBOR	9/2/2016	202.50

GOOD OF THE ORDER

SECOND HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Mark Wautenpaugh asked the Board if it could utilize a similar system that Department of Revenue used for unclaimed property to pay benefits to those members that have a vested pension benefit but have not collected it.

There was a motion by VanCamp, seconded by Smith, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 11:17 am.


 Hailey Blankenship, Executive Secretary