



TEXAS PENSION  
REVIEW BOARD

Board Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 2023

**1. Meeting called to order (0:05)**

The second meeting of 2023 of the Pension Review Board was called to order Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in the William P. Clements building, room 402, 300 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas, 78701.

**2. Roll call of board members (0:13)**

Board members present:

Keith Brainard, presiding  
Marcia Dush, via videoconference  
Christopher "Chris" Gonzales, via videoconference  
Rob Ries  
Christopher Zook, via videoconference

Board members absent:

Stephanie Leibe

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Mr. Brainard.

**3. Administrative matters (1:00)**

**a. Consideration and possible action to approve June 29, 2023, board meeting minutes**

Mr. Brainard entertained a motion to suspend reading the minutes of the June 29, 2023, board meeting and approve them as circulated.

The motion was made by Mr. Ries and seconded by Mr. Gonzales.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**b. Consider excusing the absence of board member from the June 29, 2023, board meeting**

Ms. Dush entertained a motion to excuse Mr. Brainard's absence from the June 29, 2023, board meeting.

The motion was made by Mr. Zook and seconded by Mr. Ries.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Public comment (2:51)**

There were no public comments.

**5. Intensive review of Abilene Firemen's Relief and Retirement Fund (4:29)**

Ms. Dush reminded attendees of the PRB's statutory duties, then discussed her concerns regarding Abilene Firemen's Relief and Retirement Fund's (Abilene Fire) actuarial soundness and equitable distribution of benefits. She noted that the PRB is not an enforcement agency, but that it is able to bring focus to funds with the intensive review process.

Mr. Brainard asked Bryan Burnham, David Fee, and Robert Munter to present the PRB's intensive review of Abilene Fire. Mr. Burnham presented key metrics used to select Abilene Fire.

The board and Mr. Fee discussed Abilene Fire's substantial decrease in funded ratio over the last two decades, which lead to assets worth only 75 percent of the retiree liability. Mr. Zook commented that Abilene Fire is underperforming compared to other TLFRA systems but would be considerably more so if compared to all state and national systems. Ms. Dush and Mr. Munter discussed the changes made when Abilene Fire began employing a new investment consultant. The board discussed the role of liquidity within a fund and explained how long-term funding issues could affect future employees.

Mr. Fee and the board discussed the system's flat dollar benefit cap that is projected to become an insubstantial benefit over time. They further discussed the need for the system to use demographic assumptions that reflect reasonable firefighter behavior once the firefighters are projected to pay significantly more in contributions than the benefit is worth. They also discussed the difficulty in increasing firefighter contribution rates and the likely need for increased city contributions. The board noted the importance of system trustees' compliance with the PRB minimum educational training requirements.

The board took a 15-minute break from 11:32 a.m. to 11:47 a.m.

Mr. Brainard called on the representatives from the City of Abilene and Abilene Fire to address the board. From the City of Abilene: Robert Hanna, City Manager, and Mike Rains, City Finance Director-who is also Abilene Fire's Secretary and Treasurer. From Abilene Fire: Rodney Goodman, Plan Administrator; Tony Kay from AndCo Consulting; Lindsey Redman, Brad Heinrichs, and Taylor Walling, from Foster & Foster. The representatives and the board discussed their ongoing efforts to improve the fiscal soundness of the fund and specific areas that needed improvement.

Mr. Brainard entertained a motion to adopt Abilene Firemen's Relief and Retirement Fund intensive review as presented.

The motion was made by Ms. Dush and seconded by Mr. Ries.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**6. Actuarial Committee (2:04:51)**

**a. Update on independent actuary selection per Section 2.025, Article 6243a-1, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes**

Tamara Aronstein updated the board on Dallas Police and Fire Pension System's (DPFP) selection of an independent actuary. She stated that the actuarial firm Cheiron and DPFP had entered into a contract in August, then she informed the board of the next steps and milestones.

**7. Notice of intent to review rules- 40 T.A.C. Chapters 601, 603, 604, 605, 607, and 609 (2:07:51)**

Ms. Aronstein informed the board of the rule review requirement, purpose, and timeline.

Mr. Brainard entertained a motion to publish a notice of intent to review the rules contained under Title 40 of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapters 601, 603, 604, 605, 607, and 609 in the Texas Register.

A motion was made by Mr. Ries and seconded by Ms. Dush.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**8. Executive Director Report (2:11:49)**

**a. Updated Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget**

Ms. Cardona presented the updated fiscal year 2024 operating budget to the board.

**9. Future meetings: agenda items, dates, locations, and other arrangements (2:12:38)**

Mr. Brainard announced that the next PRB meeting would take place on November 21, at 10:00 a.m. in the same location. The Investment Committee will meet on the same day following the board meeting at 2:00 p.m. in the same location.

**10. Adjournment (2:12:59)**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

**PRB staff in attendance:**

Amy Cardona	David Fee	Mariah Miller	Tamara Aronstein
Ashley Rendon	Robert Munter	Wes Allen	Jasmin Loomis
Bryan Burnham	Noah Jones	Lindsay Seymour	

**Members of the public in attendance:**

Adam Bazaldua- City of Dallas	Jesse Moreno- City of Dallas	James Marts- Odessa Fire
Clifford Sparks- City of Dallas	Jack Ireland- City of Dallas	Art Alfaro - TEXPERS
Cara Mendelsohn- City of Dallas	Brian Hebert- Beaumont Fire	Eddie Solis
William Cheshire- Beaumont Fire	Luis Delgado- City of Dallas	John Posey- LBB
Chris Peterson- Dallas Firefighters Association	Travis Jones- Odessa Fire	Scott Olguin
Tyler Grossman- El Paso Firemen & Policemen's Pension	Jill Contreras- Odessa Fire	Sarah Lacy - Locke Lord LLP



**Keith Brainard, presiding**