

**MINUTES OF  
STATE TEACHERS  
RETIREMENT BOARD MEETINGS**

**September 20, 2024**

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The State Teachers Retirement Board met at the STRS Ohio offices in Columbus, Ohio, on Friday, September 20, 2024, at 10:24 a.m. Retirement Board Chair Rudy Fichtenbaum called the meeting to order.

Dr. Fichtenbaum welcomed Mike Harkness to the STRS Ohio Retirement Board. Mr. Harkness was elected by the board at the August 2024 meeting to serve for a term through August 31, 2025. He is a contributing member with the Akron Public Schools.

The following members were in attendance: Carol Correthers, Pat Davidson, Alison Falls, Rudy Fichtenbaum, Michelle Flanigan, Mike Harkness, Scott Hune representing the Director of Education & Workforce, Elizabeth Jones, Julie Sellers, and Wade Steen.

**MENTORING ASSIGNMENT**

Dr. Fichtenbaum announced that Ms. Sellers would serve as mentor for Mr. Harkness during the 2024-25 board year.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Jones, to approve the minutes of the August 2024 Retirement Board meeting.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, absent; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes, Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE AMENDED 2024-2025 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Sellers, that the board approve the 2024-2025 Committee Assignments as revised to include Mike Harkness on the Legislative committee.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, absent; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

## **REPORT FROM THE MEMBER BENEFITS DEPARTMENT**

The chair recognized Christina Elliott, deputy executive director – Member Benefits, to give a department update.

Ms. Elliott reviewed the member benefits survey results. After members interact with staff in one of STRS Ohio's Member Benefits departments, they are asked to complete a survey. Every program surveyed reported high satisfaction with the STRS Ohio staff. Over 95% of respondents said they were satisfied or better with the overall service and experience.

## **RECOGNITION OF PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

The chair recognized the following to address the board:

Marvin Stotz, representing himself, expressed concern about fee transparency.

Dan MacDonald, representing 279R-NE Ohio AFT retirees, expressed concern about retirees' loss of purchasing power and COLA.

Gerald Newsome, representing himself, expressed concern about members wanting benefits which are not allowable by Ohio law.

Karen Loeffler, representing herself, expressed concern about STRS Ohio.

Cathi Steinhauser, representing herself, expressed concern about fiduciary responsibility.

Dean Dennis, representing himself, expressed concern about investment returns and time set aside for public participation speakers.

Bob Buerkle, representing himself, expressed concern about COLA.

Suzanne Laird, representing herself, expressed concern about STRS Ohio.

Sue Brannan, representing herself, expressed concern about STRS Ohio.

Robin Rayfield, representing ORTA, expressed concern about STRS Ohio.

Tom Curtis, representing himself, expressed concern about expenses.

Robin Beebe, representing herself, expressed concern about STRS Ohio.

## **RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICES OF WADE STEEN**

The board conveyed to Mr. Steen its sincere thanks and appreciation for the valuable service he has rendered, and that the resolution be made a part of the minutes of the September 20, 2024, meeting.

Next, Ms. Sellers moved, seconded by Ms. Flanigan, for a vote of no confidence in the direction of the STRS Senior management and investment staff and stated it is important to have this formal vote as we move forward for our near future transitions and improved transparency.

Mr. Davidson, seconded by Mr. Harkness, recommended an amendment to Ms. Sellers' motion for a no confidence in any Senior Staff or STRS employee involved in writing the 14-page anonymous letter.

After some discussion, Mr. Davidson withdrew his amendment to the motion.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Ms. Sellers, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Ms. Correthers, no; Mr. Davidson, no; Ms. Falls, no; Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Mr. Harkness, abstain; Ms. Herrington, no; Dr. Hunt, no; Ms. Jones, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion failed.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Correthers, to enter executive session under authority of Division (G)(1) of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code for the purpose of discussing appointment, employment or compensation of a public employee or official, Division (G)(3) of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code for the purpose of conferring with the board's attorney regarding pending or imminent court action and Division (G)(5) of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code for the purpose of discussing matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or state statutes.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Ms. Sellers, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

The board entered executive session at 12:41 p.m.; the session adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Public Session resumed at approximately 2:20 p.m.

The chair recognized Lynn Hoover, acting executive director and chief financial officer - Finance, for a report from Finance.

Before beginning her report, Ms. Hoover commented on the discussion which occurred earlier in the day regarding the no-confidence vote and requested board members clarify and communicate their expectations of staff and with direction of the organization.

At the end of the discussion, it was decided to move Routine Matters up in the agenda to ensure a vote would be taken on those items before the end of the day.

## **APPROVAL OF EXPENSES DURING AUGUST 2024**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Falls that the expenditures for the month ending August 31, 2024, in the total amount of \$7,738,716 be approved.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

## **CONSENT MOTION**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Sellers, that the Retirement Board approve the Member Benefits-related motions as listed on the report located in the Routine Matters folder. (Records are not public per Ohio Revised Code 3307.20).

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

## **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS TO ACT FOR THE BOARD IN ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Falls that the Retirement Board authorizes the administrative officers to act for the board in all matters related to the operation and administration of the system as described on the resolution located in the Routine Matters folder.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

## **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS TO ACT FOR THE BOARD IN ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE DETERMINATION AND PAYMENT OF BENEFITS**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Jones, that the Retirement Board authorizes the administrative officers to act for the board in all matters related to the determination and payment of benefits as described on the resolution located in the Routine Matters folder.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS TO ACT FOR THE BOARD IN ALL INVESTMENT MATTERS**

Dr. Fichtenbaum moved, seconded by Ms. Falls, that the Retirement Board authorizes the administrative officers to act for the board in all investment matters as described on the resolution located in the Routine Matters folder.

Discussion followed concerning the separation of duties in the resolution versus the separation of duties in the investment policies. Ms. Falls suggested the motion be deferred until the next meeting Ms. Wideman stated the existing resolution would remain in place in the interim.

The chair agreed to defer to a later date and withdrew his motion.

### **REPORT FROM THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

As committee chair, Dr. Fichtenbaum reported that the committee met on Thursday, September 19 and discussed the pension funding policy, governance consultants, and the November Board Education and Planning Session.

The committee recommended staff follow-up for information clarifying costs for Global Governance Advisors (GGA) and references and costs for Hackett Group and Dr. Fichtenbaum so moved.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, abstain; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, abstain; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

### **REPORT FROM THE INVESTMENT COMMITTEE**

The chair recognized Ms. Falls for a report from the Investment Committee.

Ms. Falls reported that the committee met on Thursday, September 19 and discussed a high-level conceptual review of the asset-liability study, as well as the annual review of the securities lending program. She added there were no committee recommendations and announced the next committee meeting would be in October or November.

## **REPORT FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

The chair recognized Dr. Hunt for a report from the Legislative Committee.

Dr. Hunt reported that the committee met on Friday, September 20 and discussed the Governmental Relations' update, employer contribution rate update, and member purchasing power.

The committee recommended the adoption of a resolution urging members of the Ohio Delegation to Congress to pass the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 82), and Dr. Hunt so moved.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, abstain; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

### **AUTHORIZE SECURITIES LITIGATION**

The chair moved, seconded by Ms. Correthers, to authorize the Attorney General to pursue on behalf of STRS Ohio, appointment as lead plaintiff, or co-lead plaintiff with an entity (or entities) acceptable to the Executive Director and Chief Legal Officer, in the securities action discussed in executive session on this date.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

### **AUTHORIZE LITIGATION**

The chair moved, seconded by Ms. Herrington, to authorize the Attorney General to file on behalf of STRS Ohio, the litigation action discussed in executive session on this date.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, yes. The motion carried.

### **APPROVE EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE PLAN**

The chair moved, seconded by Ms. Herrington, that the Board approve the Early Retirement Incentive Plan as discussed in executive session on this date.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes;

Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, abstain. The motion carried.

### **APPROVE END OF EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**

The chair moved, seconded by Ms. Herrington, that the Board approve the End of Employment Agreement for William Neville as discussed in executive session on this date, and further authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Dr. Fichtenbaum, yes; Ms. Herrington, yes; Ms. Correthers, yes; Mr. Davidson, yes; Ms. Falls, yes; Ms. Flanigan, yes; Mr. Harkness, yes; Dr. Hunt, yes; Ms. Jones, yes; Ms. Sellers, yes; Mr. Steen, abstain. The motion carried.

### **REPORT FROM THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

The chair recognized Lynn Hoover, acting executive director and chief financial officer - Finance, for a report from Finance.

Ms. Hoover introduced Don Schley, chief actuary to present a Supplemental Benefit Overview. Mr. Schley reviewed the timeline for the supplemental benefit discussion and the history of supplemental benefit payments. From 1980-2000 payments totaled \$700 million which is a \$10 billion impact on assets due to lost investment income and compounding.

Mr. Schley discussed the updated decision framework for determining whether a supplemental benefit can be paid and the factors for calculating a payment amount. A supplemental benefit payment would reduce the amount available for board spending within the sustainable benefit plan.

With further discussion the board can decide at the October meeting whether a supplemental benefit will be paid in December.

Mr. Schley presented COLA Comparison in response to a board member request for information on Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) compared to STRS Ohio. Ohio law differs between the two systems and allows STRS Ohio to pay a COLA if fiscal integrity is not materially impaired whereas for OPERS it is stated as an annual benefit adjustment. There are many differences between the systems' structure, demographics, assets and liabilities. Mr. Schley discussed the history of OPERS cost-of-living adjustments and pension changes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair announced the next Retirement Board and committee meetings would be held over October 16, 17 and 18, 2024. With no further business to come before the board, the meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.



# **APPENDICES**



STATE TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
OF OHIO

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICES OF  
WADE STEEN**

WHEREAS, Wade Steen was first appointed to the State Teachers Retirement Board by Ohio Governor John Kasich on August 30, 2016, was reappointed by Governor Mike DeWine in 2020 and his current term expires on September 27, 2024; and

WHEREAS, his expertise in accounting, his indefatigable commitment to Ohio's public educators and his thoughtful consideration of all issues made him a valuable contributor to Board deliberations; and

WHEREAS, his knowledge and business background served his Board colleagues and Ohio's teaching community well during his tenure on the Board; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Teachers Retirement Board conveys to Wade Steen its sincere thanks and appreciation for the valuable and significant service he has rendered; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board conveys to Wade Steen its best wishes for his continued and well-deserved success in all future endeavors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be made a part of the minutes of the September 20, 2024, meeting and that a copy be presented to Wade Steen.

**STATE TEACHERS RETIREMENT BOARD**

Rudy Fichtenbaum, Chair

Lynn A. Hoover, Acting Executive Director

THE STATE TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO (“SYSTEM”)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
TO ACT FOR THE BOARD IN ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE OPERATION AND  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code (“ORC”) Chapter 3307 sets forth the duties and responsibilities of the System and pursuant thereto the State Teachers Retirement Board of Ohio (“Board”) has adopted policies, salary schedules for the compensation of all personnel, and a budget of expenses necessary for the proper operation of the System, and

WHEREAS, ORC Section 3307.04 provides that the State Teachers Retirement Board of Ohio may authorize its administrative officers to act for the Board in accordance with its policies;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, a deputy executive director or other administrative officer of the System duly authorized by the Executive Director be authorized to act for the Board in all matters necessary for the daily operation and administration of the System, including the employment and compensation of personnel, implementation of operational and administrative policies and procedures, purchase of goods and services, and authorization of expenditures for all expenses not in excess of the total amount budgeted for current expenses, and that such persons may execute documents in furtherance thereof, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that expenditures by such administrative officers may be subject to subsequent approval by the Board.

THE STATE TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO (“SYSTEM”)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
TO ACT FOR THE BOARD IN ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE DETERMINATION  
AND PAYMENT OF BENEFITS

WHEREAS, Chapter 3307, Ohio Revised Code (“ORC”), governs eligibility for membership and eligibility for and payment of survivor, disability and service retirement benefits and provides for the determination of the amounts of such benefits, and

WHEREAS, ORC 3307.04 provides that the State Teachers Retirement Board of Ohio (“Board”) may authorize its administrative officers to act for the Board in determining the eligibility for membership and benefits and the amount of such benefits,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in order to maintain accurate membership records and information and facilitate prompt payment of benefits, the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director – Finance or the Deputy Executive Director – Member Benefits, or another administrative officer of the System duly authorized by the Executive Director be authorized to act for the Board in all matters related to the determination of membership eligibility, the determination of earnings included in compensation, the determination of membership and eligibility for and the amount of benefits paid to members and beneficiaries, and to make payments thereof, and execute any documents in furtherance thereof, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such action by such administrative officers may be subject to subsequent approval by the Board.

**Resolution to Urge Members of the Ohio Delegation to the United States  
Congress to Pass the Social Security Fairness Act**

Whereas, the Windfall Elimination Provision reduces the Social Security benefits of Ohio educators who receive a pension from the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS Ohio); and

Whereas, the Government Pension Offset reduces the Social Security spousal or survivor benefit paid to an educator who receives a pension from STRS Ohio by two-thirds of the benefit they receive from STRS Ohio; and

Whereas, there are over 500,000 active members and retirees STRS Ohio who are subject to these provisions that subject them to a reduction of Social Security Benefits in an arbitrary manner; and

Whereas, the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) has been introduced in the 118<sup>th</sup> United States Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset;

Whereas, members of the United States Congress have filed a discharge petition to force a vote on H.R. 82 and have received the required number of signatures; now therefore

Be it Resolved, that State Teachers Retirement Board urges members of the Ohio Delegation to the United States Congress to vote in favor of the discharge petition and in favor of passage of H.R. 82; and

Be it Further Resolved that this resolution be delivered to all members of the Ohio Delegation to the United States Congress.

THE STATE TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO  
275 East Broad Street Columbus, OH 43215-3771

**(The following reports are not public information.  
Reference Section 3307.20, Ohio Revised Code)**

- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTIONS DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON SURVIVOR BENEFITS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON RECOMMENDED DISABILITY BENEFITS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON DENIAL OR TERMINATION OF DISABILITY BENEFITS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON DISABILITY TRANSFERS TO OPERS/SERS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON ACTION ON APPEAL HEARINGS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON SERVICE RETIREMENTS AND REEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**
- **REPORT TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD ON RESCIND ACTION OF DENIALS**