

# CHARLOTTE FIREFIGHTERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

428 East Fourth Street • Suite 205 • Charlotte, North Carolina • 28202 • (704) 626-2728 • Fax (704) 626-7365

## BENEFITS COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 13, 2025

- PRESENT:** Melinda Manning – Chair (left at 10:30 a.m.), Kim Heffernan (left at 10:45 a.m.), Ryan Pope and Sheila Simpson (left at 9:40 a.m.)
- ABSENT:** Kevin Gordon
- OTHER:** Staff - Sandy Thiry, Ty Phelps, Michelle Maxwell, Desiré Dixon, Lisa Flowers – legal counsel

### OFFICIAL CALL TO ORDER

Melinda Manning called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

#### I. MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Kim Heffernan motioned to approve the January 9, 2025 BC meeting minutes and Sheila Simpson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### II. NOTEWORTHY NEWS

Due to the repealed Windfall Elimination Provision, the Social Security Administration will no longer require a letter to confirm retiree benefits. However, Social Security statements will need to be updated to remove the WEP language. The Social Security Administration personnel may experience a shift in workload due to a reduction in benefit verifications and manual calculations of WEP and GPO participants, and an increase in the recalculation and correction of benefits. Other possible impacts, as a result of increasing these benefits, include the reduction of food and medical assistance.

RETIREES FIRST Act – (Reducing Excessive Taxation Inefficiencies by Reforming Elder Exemptions To Support Fairness, Inflation Relief, and Simple Taxes.) This bill aims to reduce Social Security taxes for seniors.

#### III. WORKPLAN

The Committee reviewed the workplan.

#### IV. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

All pertinent information has been sent to CBIZ for the Experience Study including the data from annual evaluations. CBIZ will combine the data and speak with the Benefits Committee prior to finalizing and presenting it to the Board during a future meeting.

The Committee discussed the sick and vacation conversion policy and tabled it for this meeting but will review and bring a recommendation for review by the Board during a future meeting. The Committee discussed the importance of educating members of potential changes which include creating training modules and sending information to active members about the impact and potential cost savings.

The advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing Disability hearings were discussed. Sandy Thiry spoke with a potential disability vendor about the needs and expectations of the System. NCPERS published a solicitation email on behalf of the CFRS to other plan administrators inquiring about the use of third party

vendors of disability administration. Most vendors could customize the process with some or all the services needed to complete a disability application such as process the application, follow-up and evaluations, medical review, resolve staffing issues, maintain privacy, and eliminate bias. The System could be a second level for appeal.

## **V. BENEFIT PAYMENTS**

Closed Session

Kim Heffernan motioned to enter closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. Sheila Simpson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ryan Pope motioned to move from closed session to open session at 10:29 a.m. Kim Heffernan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Committee requested additional information from the retiree and the staff.

Working Session started at 10:30 a.m.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was presented during the February BC Meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.