

LAW ENFORCEMENT RETIREMENT BENEFITS STUDY COMMITTEE

Authorized by Act 25 of the 2019 Legislative Session

Virtual Meeting Only

November 17, 2020 – 2:00 p.m.

Please note all member participated via telephone, video, or teleconference:

Members present:

BETH PEARCE, Chair, Vermont State Treasurer

SENATOR JANE KITCHEL, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations

SENATOR JEANETTE WHITE, Chair of the Senate Committee on Government Operations

REPRESENTATIVE MAIDA TOWNSEND, Designee Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN GANNON, Designee Chair of the House Committee on Government Operations

CAPTAIN MICHAEL MANLEY, representing Major Ingrid Jonas

MICHAEL O'NEIL, Member appointed by the Vermont Troopers' Association

BETH FASTIGGI, Commissioner of Human Resources – via telephone

ROGER DUMAS, Chair of the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System

JOHN FEDERICO, Member appointed by the Vermont State Employees' Association

Members absent:

INGRID JONAS, Designee Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety

Also attending:

Michael Clasen, Deputy State Treasurer

Tim Duggan, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the State Treasurer

Erika Wolffing, Director of Retirement Operations

Ashlynn Doyon, Executive Assistant to the Treasurer

Steve Howard, Vermont State Employees' Association

Jenny Audet, Classification Department of Human Resources

The Chair, Beth Pearce, called the Tuesday, November 17, 2020 committee meeting to order at 2:03 p.m., which was held virtually by conference call and teleconference only.

Item 1: Agenda Approval and Announcements

There were no announcements or changes to the agenda.

On a motion made by Mr. O'Neil, seconded by Mr. Federico, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Item 2: Approve the minutes of October 29, 2020

On a motion made by Mr. O'Neil, seconded by Ms. Fastiggi, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of October 29, 2020 as submitted.

Item 3: Position Review – Questionnaires from Agencies/Departments

The Committee reviewed the adopted law enforcement definition for consideration with the agency/department responses to the questionnaires. The Committee considered each questionnaire

response with staff recommendations on whether the position meets the adopted definition and should therefore remain in VSERS Group C. Ms. Pearce explained that the committee would consider each position or group of positions and would vote if there was disagreement on whether the position should remain in Group C or not.

The Committee first considered and discussed the investigator positions at the Attorney General's Office. Staff recommended that both the ICAC and MFRAU investigative positions met the definition and should therefore remain in Group C. The Committee agreed with this recommendation.

The Committee next considered the Capitol Police Officer position. Staff recommended that the position did not meet the definition and should therefore be removed from Group C, however there was disagreement amongst the Committee members and a vote was taken whether Capitol Police Officers should be considered law enforcement and should remain in Group C. The committee voted to keep Capitol Police Officers in Group C on a vote of 9-1.

The Committee considered the Medical Board Investigators at the Department of Health and agreed with the staff recommendation that the position did not meet the definition and should be removed from Group C.

The Committee considered the positions at the Department of Liquor Control including the Liquor Control Investigators, Liquor Control Investigator Supervisor, and the Director of Liquor Compliance and Enforcement. Staff recommended that the positions did not meet the definition however there was disagreement amongst the Committee. Staff recommended that the positions be considered as a Group on the question of whether they should remain in Group C. The Committee voted to keep the positions above listed at the Department of Liquor Control in Group C on a vote of 5-4 with 1 abstention.

The Committee considered the questionnaire responses for the Licensing Board positions at the Secretary of State's Office. Staff recommended that the positions did not meet the law enforcement definition and the Committee agreed on a vote of 9-0 with 1 abstention.

The Committee last considered the positions at Department of Motor Vehicle, including Motor Vehicle Criminal Investigator, Motor Vehicle Criminal Unit Supervisor, Motor Vehicle Chief Inspector, and the Motor Vehicle Enforcement and Safety Director. Staff recommended again that the positions be considered as a hierarchy and that they met the law enforcement definition and remain in Group C. The Committee agreed with this recommendation.

On a motion made by Senator White, seconded by Mr. Dumas, the Committee voted unanimously by roll call to recommend that existing Group C positions remain in Group C with the following exceptions: Medical Board Investigator, Licensing Board Investigator, Licensing Board Investigator Coordinator and Licensing Board Chief Investigator.

On a motion made by Senator White, seconded by Mr. Dumas, the Committee voted unanimously to inform the respective Agencies and Departments of the recommendation made by the Committee and that they may submit testimony in writing to the Committee that will be included in the final report.

On a motion made by Mr. Dumas, seconded by Representative Townsend, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend that those position for which a change is recommended, existing employees have the option to be grandfathered into their current retirement group.

Item 4: Preliminary Discussion Mandatory Retirement Age

The Committee decided to defer discussion of the mandatory retirement age until the next meeting in December.

Item 5: Other Business and Public Comment

None.

Item 6: Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Dumas, seconded by Ms. Federico, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 4:11 p.m.

Next Meeting Date:

The next Law Enforcement Retirement Benefits Study Committee Meeting is Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted.



Erika Wolfing
Director of Retirement Operations, Office of the State Treasurer