

MICHAEL S. PIECIAK
STATE TREASURER

RETIREMENT DIVISION
TEL: (802) 828-2305

Emergency Personnel Survivors Benefit Fund

Draft Minutes

December 17, 2024

Members Attending:

Gavin Boyles, Deputy Treasurer and Treasurer's Designee

Michael Desrochers, Governor's Appointee

Leslie Welts, Attorney General's Appointee

John Marcus, Chief Fire Service Training Officer

Also Present:

Ashlynn Doyon, State Treasurer's Office

Justin St. James, State Treasurer's Office

Becky Levine

Bill Elwell

Tyler Atherton

Item 1: Call to Order and Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Mr. Boyles called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and facilitated introductions of those present on the call. He also explained that the previous meeting's minutes were from over six years ago and asked the Board's pleasure as to how to approve. All but one Board member are newly appointed members. Mr. Desrochers noted that he was on the Board at the time and that the previous meeting did not contain any contentious items. **Ms. Welts moved to approve the May 26, 2016 minutes. Mr. Desrocher seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the Board approved the minutes unanimously.**

Item 2: Review of Application for Mark Atherton

Mr. Boyles introduced the Mark Atherton application. He noted that Bill Elwell was in attendance and was present the day of Mark Atherton's death and had offered to facilitate the application for Ms. Levine and Tyler Atherton, but that he was unsuccessful in getting that application submitted to the

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Treasurer's Office. Mark Atherton's death took place more than one year prior to the Board hearing. Mr. Boyles noted that the statute expressly provides the Board with the ability to waive that deadline for extenuating circumstances. Mr. Boyles also noted that as of that morning, the Treasurer's Office did receive Tyler Atherton's birth certificate in the mail, which was the final outstanding piece to complete the application.

Ms. Levine and Mr. Atherton both spoke to Mark Atherton's commitment to Pownal Emergency Services. Mr. Desrochers asked what Mark Atherton's job was and Mr. Atherton replied that his father was the President of the Pownal Rescue Squad, as well as an EMT. Mr. Elwell added that the role of President was a demanding job both administratively and also that Mark Atherton and Becky Levine would always make sure that shifts were covered even doing so themselves.

Ms. Welts expressed condolences to the family and also asked what the term "responding from home," as articulated in the application meant. Ms. Levine responded that Pownal is both a volunteer and paid agency and that sometimes, because they covered the station so frequently, on night or weekends members respond from home to alleviate some of the amount of time that is spent at the station.

Mr. Desrochers asked if a motion was needed in order to waive the one-year deadline. Mr. Boyles and Mr. St. James determined that a motion to waive the time deadline was not necessary.

Ms. Welts asked an additional question about Ms. Levine's dual role as Executive Director of the Rescue Squad and her listing as a survivor on the application. Mr. Boyles noted that he did not see the employer report as a conflict of interest because per statute, the payment check would be written to Tyler Atherton.

Ms. Welts moved to approve the application for survivor benefit payment in the amount of \$80,000 to Tyler Atherton, as a result of the death of his father, Mark Atherton, while on duty in service to the Pownal Rescue Squad. Mr. Marcus seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the Board approved to motion unanimously.

Item 3: Public Comment

Ms. Levine and Mr. Atherton both thanked the Board and the Treasurer's Office for their time and consideration of the application.

Item 4: Adjournment

Mr. Marcus moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Desrochers seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor to adjourn the meeting at 12:23 p.m.