

**LAW ENFORCEMENT RETIREMENT BENEFITS STUDY COMMITTEE**

Authorized by Act 25 of the 2019 Legislative Session

Tre-Fin Conference Room

**December 19, 2019 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Members present:**

BETH PEARCE, Chair, Vermont State Treasurer

SENATOR JANE KITCHEL, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations

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

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

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:**

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

INGRID JONAS, Designee Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety

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

**Also attending:**

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

Erika Wolffing, Director of Retirement Operations

Roger Marcoux, Sheriff Lamoille County

The Chair, Beth Pearce, called the Thursday, December 19, 2019 committee meeting to order at 9:34 a.m., which was held in the Tre-Fin Conference Room, Pavilion Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT.

**Item 1:           **Agenda Approval and Announcements****

There were no announcements or changes to the agenda.

**On a motion made by Mr. Dumas, seconded by Mr. Federico, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Item 2:           **Approve the minutes of September 27, 2019****

**On a motion made by Senator Kitchel, seconded by Mr. Dumas, the Committee voted by roll call to approve the minutes of September 27, 2019 with Ms. Pearce, Senator Kitchel, Representative Gannon, Representative Townsend, and Mr. Federico voting in the affirmative. Mr. Dumas abstained.**

**Item 3:           **Update from the Sub-Group on Job Specification Review****

Ms. Wolffing updated the full committee on progress made by the Sub-Group on its job specification review. The Sub-Group met twice during the fall and reviewed the job specifications for all positions in Group C against the adopted working definition of a Law Enforcement Officer. The Sub-Group provided a memorandum outlining progress made and recommended next steps to be reviewed and adopted by the full Committee. The Sub-Group identified 22 positions that were presumed to meet the working definition and were therefore appropriately included in VSERS Group C and appropriately subject to mandatory

retirement at age 55. The Sub-Group also identified 14 positions that need further review in the form of a questionnaire from the appointing authority and face to face meetings with staff and representatives from the Committee.

**On a motion made by Mr. Dumas, seconded by Representative Townsend, the Committee voted unanimously to accept the questionnaire as presented and the memorandum from the Sub-Group outlining next steps for the coming year.**

**Item 4: Proposed Next Steps**

Ms. Pearce explained that an additional meeting would need to be held in early January to approve the final progress report as well as a meeting toward the end of January for a hearing. The hearing would give an opportunity for groups of employees who believe they should be in VSERS Group C to address the Committee. Ms. Pearce further clarified that the Sheriffs have an outstanding issue for the Committee to review outside the legislatively mandated scope of the Committee.

**Item 5: Draft Progress Report**

Mr. Duggan presented a draft progress report due the legislative committees of jurisdiction on January 15, 2020. The Committee members had a few edits including adding the working definition used, adding language about the appropriation for outside legal counsel, and including the group comparison chart to further highlight the differences between Group C and the other groups.

**Item 6: Other Business and Public Comment**

Sheriff Marcoux made remarks about the issues involving the sheriff departments. Some departments elected to join VMERS, other departments, including Lamoille county, elected to join VSERS. Mr. Marcoux stated this has made it difficult for him to recruit and retain deputies who leave to work in towns that offer VMERS Group C or D, a 20-year retirement plan.

There was no other business of additional comments from members of the public.


**Item 7: Adjournment**

**On a motion made by Senator Kitchel, seconded by Mr. Federico, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:51 a.m.**

**Next Meeting Date:**

The next Law Enforcement Retirement Benefits Study Committee Meeting is TBD.

Respectfully submitted.



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