

**MEETING OF THE RETIREMENT BOARD  
OF THE COUNTY EMPLOYEES' AND OFFICERS' ANNUITY AND BENEFIT FUND  
OF COOK COUNTY AND EX OFFICIO FOR THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT  
EMPLOYEES' ANNUITY AND BENEFIT FUND OF COOK COUNTY  
70 West Madison, Suite 1925  
Chicago, IL 60602**

**February 1, 2024 - 9:30 A.M.**

The County Employees' and Officers' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Cook County and the Forest Preserve District Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Cook County are herein collectively referred to as the "Fund."

Call to Order and Roll Call

**Trustees Present:** Patrick McFadden, President; Diahann Goode, Vice-President; Hal Dardick, Secretary; Tanya Anthony, Lakeisha Marvel, Kevin Ochalla, Jerry Pray, Tracy Reed, Samuel Richardson, Jr.,

**Staff Present:** Brent Lewandowski, Executive Director; Saron Tegege, Deputy Executive Director; Margaret Fahrenbach, Legal Advisor; Gary LeDonne, Director, Benefits Administration; Francis Gonzalez-Crussi, Senior IT Manager; Mario Hollemans, Administrative Coordinator

**Others Present:** Mary Pat Burns, Burke Burns & Pinelli, Ltd

President McFadden stated that there was a quorum of the Board present at the meeting and that certain trustees had asked to participate remotely. It was moved by Trustee Richardson and seconded by Trustee Goode, pursuant to Section 7(a) of the Open Meetings Act, that the Board allow trustees who are not able to be physically present at the meeting to participate remotely.

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED BY VOICE VOTE

President McFadden asked if anyone present wanted to address the Board, but no one requested to do so.

1. Review and Consideration of January 4, 2024, Open and Closed Board Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Trustee Richardson and seconded by Trustee Dardick that the presented minutes of the open session and the closed session of the Board meeting on January 4, 2024, be adopted and that the minutes from the closed session remain closed.

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED BY VOICE VOTE

2. Review and Approval of:

a. Bills, Payroll Records

It was moved by Trustee Goode and seconded by Trustee Richardson, having received confirmation from Fund staff that the indicated payments were consistent with the 2023 and 2024 administrative budgets, that the Board ratify the action taken by Fund staff in January, 2024, in paying the presented bills for expenses incurred in 2023 and 2024 and that the Board approve the recommendations from Fund staff to remit payments for the presented bills for expenses incurred in 2024.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Anthony, Dardick, Goode, Marvel, Ochalla, Pray, Reed,  
Richardson, McFadden  
NAYS: None

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED

b. Annuities, Spouse and Child Annuities and Refunds

It was moved by Trustee Richardson and seconded by Trustee Goode, after due consideration of the applications presented to the Board and having confirmed that the Fund staff followed the Fund's procedures in reviewing and processing the applications, that the recommendations from the Fund's staff for the presented annuities and refunds be approved.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Anthony, Dardick, Goode, Marvel, Ochalla, Pray, Reed,  
Richardson, McFadden  
NAYS: None

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED

c. Ordinary and Duty Disabilities

It was moved by Trustee Richardson and seconded by Trustee Goode, after due consideration of the applications presented to the Board and having confirmed that the Fund staff followed the Fund's procedures in reviewing and processing the applications, that the recommendations from the Fund's staff for the presented disability applications be approved.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Anthony, Dardick, Goode, Marvel, Ochalla, Pray, Reed,  
Richardson, McFadden  
NAYS: None

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED

### 3. Administrative Matters

#### a. Review and Consideration of Approval for the Concentra Contract Extension

President McFadden stated that under the Illinois Pension Code, proof of disability must be furnished by a Board appointed physician before applications for disability benefits can be approved. The Fund has retained the services of Concentra to provide the proof needed for disability applications. He stated that the Executive Director requested that the contract with Concentra be extended for an additional one-year term. An Amendment to the contract signed by the vendor and approved as to form by fiduciary counsel was presented for the Board's consideration.

It was moved by Trustee Goode and seconded by Trustee Dardick that the Board authorize the Fund to amend the agreement with Occupational Health Centers of Illinois, P.C., d/b/a Concentra Medical Centers, to extend the engagement through February 28, 2025, upon the terms in the presented Amendment that has been signed on behalf of the vendor and approved as to form by fiduciary counsel. It was further moved that the Executive Director be authorized to execute and deliver the Amendment on behalf of the Fund.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Anthony, Dardick, Goode, Marvel, Ochalla, Pray Reed, Richardson  
McFadden

NAYS: None

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED

#### b. Review and Consideration of Approval for the Draft RFI regarding Insurance Procurement

The Executive Director stated that during the January meeting, the Board had discussed whether or not the Fund had the types of insurance coverage that it needed and whether it was receiving adequate services from the procuring brokers. The Fund had prepared a draft Request for Proposal (RFI) that would solicit responses from possible brokers for the Board's consideration. The number of insurance carriers that write policies for fiduciary insurance is limited, and the Fund only expected about five entities to respond to the RFI for this type of insurance. The Board discussed the types of insurance that the Fund maintained and the general terms of the policies.

It was moved by Trustee Pray and seconded by Trustee Anthony that the Board approve the release of the presented RFI as soon as might be practicable and that the Quiet Period for the RFI begin as of the date of the Board's approval.

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED BY VOICE VOTE

#### c. Executive Director Report

The Executive Director reported on the status of the Fund's pension verification program. He stated that the Fund held 60 benefit payments that were due on February 1, 2024, because the members had not returned the Benefit Eligibility Forms (BEF) requested by the Fund. Of the 60 payments held, 33 were considered by the Board at the meeting in July, 2023, and 27 were from fiscal year 2022. The trustees discussed the processes followed by the Fund to verify pension payments. When the project began, the Fund first sent BEFs to the oldest annuitants and then considered those members who were younger. The Fund relied upon death reporting services and Lexis/Nexus searches to confirm the members' eligibility and current addresses. The Fund will come to the Board for their approval before a new process would begin. The trustees were concerned about the number of members who did not respond and the data about the members whose payments were withheld. The Executive Director stated that he would provide the Board with information about the members' ages, their locations and the amounts withheld pursuant to the pension verification program.

The Fund's vendor D4 Solutions mailed all the annuitants their 2023 1099Rs on January 30<sup>th</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup>. The vendor will mail the 1095 forms by February 28, 2024.

The posting to fill the Director of Investments position was recently placed on the Fund's website and with various other outlets. The Executive Director expected that the search process would take about two months to complete and anticipated that the position would be filled by May 1, 2024.

A meeting of the Investment Committee was scheduled for February 27, 2024, at 9:00 am and a meeting of the EMIC would follow at 11:00 am on that date.

#### 4. Legal Matters

- a. Referral to Hearing Officer
  - i. Office #182523
  - ii. Office #153106
  - iii. Office #179705
  - iv. Office #192161
  - v. Office #170702

The Executive Director gave a summary of the application process for disability benefits and stated that, in the event an application was not approved by the Board, a member could request an administrative hearing to review the decision. He stated that the Fund had identified five members who requested administrative hearings. The Fund staff determined that the bases for the denials were fact sensitive and asked that they be referred to the two administrative hearings officers that had been previously approved by the Board. The trustees discussed the administrative hearing process and how the hearing officers had been approved.

It was moved by Trustee Goode and seconded by Trustee Pray that the administrative hearings requested by the indicated members be referred to the approved hearing

officers for reviews to be conducted pursuant to the Fund's Procedural Rules Governing Administrative Hearings and with the 2024 Administrative Budget.

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED BY VOICE VOTE

b. Legal Report

Mary Pat Burns, fiduciary counsel, stated that she had prepared a written report for the trustees regarding various litigation matters. She added that there were no substantive changes to report to the Board and that there was no need to convene an Executive Session to review the status of the litigation matters.

5. Old Business/New Business

The trustees asked if the Fund provided statutory death benefits to those members who had participated in reciprocal systems. Fiduciary counsel said that she would review the status.

6. Adjournment

It was moved by Trustee Ochalla and seconded by Trustee Pray that the meeting be adjourned.

Vote Result: MOTION ADOPTED BY VOICE VOTE

The next Board meeting was scheduled for March 7, 2024, at 9:30 am.