

VENTURA COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF RETIREMENT

DISABILITY & BUSINESS MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 2023

MINUTES

**TRUSTEES
PRESENT:**

Mike Sedell, Chair, Public Member
Arthur E. Goulet, Vice-Chair, Retired Member
Cecilia Hernandez-Garcia, General Employee Member
Aaron Grass, Safety Employee Member
Kelly Long, Public Member
Tommie E. Joe, Public Member
Will Hoag, Alternate Retired Member
Robert Ashby, Alternate Safety Employee Member

**TRUSTEES
ABSENT:**

Sue Horgan, Treasurer-Tax Collector
Jordan Roberts, General Employee Member

**STAFF
PRESENT:**

Linda Webb, Retirement Administrator
Amy Herron, Chief Operations Officer
Lori Nemiroff, General Counsel
Dan Gallagher, Chief Investment Officer
La Valda Marshall, Chief Financial Officer
Josiah Vencel, Retirement Benefits Manager
Brian Owen, Sr. Information Technology Specialist
Michael Sanchez, Sr. Information Technology Specialist
Jess Angeles, Communications Officer
Chris Ayala, Program Assistant

PLACE:

In Accordance with Government Code §54953(e)(1)(A), and in response to the declared State and Local emergencies due to the Novel Coronavirus and Local Health Officer recommendation regarding social distancing, the Board of Retirement and its legislative bodies are holding meetings electronically and can be accessed below. Pursuant to Government Code §§ 54953(e)(2) and 54954.3, members of the public, to the extent required by law, will have the opportunity to directly address the Board concerning the below mentioned business.

TIME:

9:00 a.m.

ITEM:

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call.

Chair Sedell called the Disability & Business Meeting of February 27, 2023, to order at 9:01 a.m.

Roll Call:

Trustees Present: Aaron Grass, Art Goulet, Cecilia Hernandez-Garcia, Tommie Joe, Will Hoag, Robert Ashby, Mike Sedell

Trustees Absent: Sue Horgan, Kelly Long, Jordan Roberts

II. RECONSIDERATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES TO ENABLE BOARD TO HOLD MEETINGS VIA TELECONFERENCE UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953, SUBDIVISION (E), OF THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT, DUE TO STATE OF EMERGENCY AND CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION FOR CONTINUED REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS

A. Reconsideration of Circumstances to Enable Board to Hold Meetings via Teleconference Under the Provisions of Government Code Section 54953, Subdivision (e)(1)(A), of the Ralph M. Brown Act, Due to State of Emergency and Authorize Continued Remote Teleconference Meetings.

1. Staff Letter from Retirement Administrator.
2. Letter from Dr. Robert Levin, Ventura County Health Officer, Dated November 15, 2021.
3. Letter from Dr. Robert Levin, Ventura County Health Officer, Dated January 31, 2023.

MOTION: Approve.

Moved by Goulet, seconded by Joe.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Ashby, Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Long, Roberts

Abstain: -

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Sedell proposed that agenda item, VIII.A., "\$25 Million Add-On Commitment to Cross Ocean European Special Situations Fund IV", follow the Annual Investment Manager Presentations, items VII.A. and VII.B, which were time certain. He also proposed removal of agenda item, X.C., "Approval of Business Class Air Travel to Investment Manager Walter Scott for an On-Site Due Diligence Visit and Investment Conference May 8th – 11th In Edinburgh, Scotland", because he would like some more information from staff on the item.

Trustee Goulet said that he believed the Disability Status Report was now supposed to be included in the *Consent Agenda* though today he did have a question regarding the item.

MOTION: Approve as Amended.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Long, Roberts

Abstain: -

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Notice: Any item appearing on the Consent Agenda may be moved to the Regular Agenda at the request of any Trustee who would like to propose changes to or have discussion on the item. Note that approval of meeting minutes are now part of the Consent Agenda.

- A. Approve Regular and Deferred Retirements and Survivors Continuances for the Month of January 2023.
- B. Receive and File Report of Checks Disbursed in January 2023.
- C. Approve Business Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2022.
- D. Approve Disability & Business Meeting Minutes of December 19, 2022.
- E. Approve Disability Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2023.
- F. Approve Business Meeting Minutes of January 23, 2023.

Ms. Webb referenced an email sent to the trustees before the meeting listing non-substantive grammar and clarification edits to the minutes listed in the Consent Agenda. Staff was recommending approval of the minutes as amended.

MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda Items as Amended.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Long, Roberts

Abstain: -

V. RECEIVE AND FILE PENDING DISABILITY APPLICATION STATUS REPORT

Trustee Goulet expressed concern that some of the new model disability cases were taking longer than usual to bring to the Board.

Ms. Webb reviewed the general steps of the investigation timeline under the disability model and noted that she had recently done her review of a number of cases.

MOTION: Receive and File.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Goulet.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Long, Roberts

Abstain: -

VI. APPLICATIONS FOR DISABILITY RETIREMENT

- A. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement—Sandoval, Adriana; Case No. 18-004.
1. Amended Proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommended Decision After Remand to Grant the Application for Service-connected Disability, filed by Hearing Officer Humberto Flores, dated January 6, 2023.
 2. Legal Memorandum Regarding Remand, filed by Lori Nemiroff, VCERA's General Counsel, dated July 29, 2022.
 3. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, filed by Applicant, dated February 23, 2018.
 4. Hearing Notice, dated February 6, 2023.

Stephen Roberson, Attorney at Law, was present on behalf of the County of Ventura-Risk Management. Josiah Vencel was present on behalf of VCERA. Russell Ghitterman, Attorney at Law, was present on behalf of the applicant, Adriana Sandoval, was not present.

Trustee Long arrived at the meeting at 9:16 a.m., before the vote on the item.

Ms. Webb said that in November 2020, the Board granted a nonservice-connected disability retirement to Ms. Sandoval; the Board allowed the service-connected piece of Ms. Sandoval's to proceed to a hearing based on the County's representation that the evidence did not support service-connection. Last July, the Board reviewed the hearing officer's report, which revealed that Ms. Sandoval had accepted an offer from the County to withdraw her service-connected disability application in exchange for the County submitting support for the non-service-connected disability retirement. (The County has represented that they believed this position was supported by the evidence.) At the time, the County was concerned that my memorandum to the Board, which was provided as a separate agenda item, characterized the Sandoval agreement was used as a bargaining chip in a worker's compensation case, and they would like it made clear that Ms. Sandoval's worker's compensation case had been resolved long before the actual agreement was made, so the workers' compensation case of Ms. Sandoval was not related to her claim for disability retirement benefits, and the County did not entangle the two systems in the case of Ms. Sandoval. The purpose of my memorandum was to alert the Board to the fiduciary risks associated with any type of settlement that involves disability retirement.

Because the hearing officer accepted the County's argument that the agreement barred Ms. Sandoval from pursuing her service-connected disability claim, he did not address the merits of service connection. Based on the advice of the General Counsel that an agreement between the County and Ms. Sandoval was not binding on VCERA, the Board remanded the case back to the hearing officer. Before you today was a second hearing officer report, this one recommending to grant a service-connected disability retirement. Staff had not received from the parties any written comments regarding the hearing officer's report.

Mr. Roberson made a brief statement.

Mr. Ghitterman also made a brief statement.

MOTION: Approve the Hearing Officer's Recommendation to Grant the Application for Service-connected Disability, Effective July 27, 2018.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

B. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement—Peterson, Cary; Case No. 20-013.

1. Proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommended Decision to Deny the Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, filed by Hearing Officer Irene Ayala, dated December 28, 2022.
2. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, filed by Applicant, dated April 23, 2020.
3. Hearing Notice, dated February 6, 2023.

Stephen Roberson, Attorney at Law, was present on behalf of the County of Ventura-Risk Management. Josiah Vencel was present on behalf of VCERA. Edwin Stone, Attorney at Law, was present on behalf of applicant, Cary Peterson, who was not present.

Mr. Stone made a brief statement.

Mr. Roberson also made a brief statement.

MOTION: Approve Report and Recommendation from the Hearing Officer to Deny the Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement.

Moved by Goulet, seconded by Grass.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

- C. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement—Vazquez, Leonardo; Case No. 21-036.
1. Staff Recommendation to Grant the Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, dated February 9, 2023.
 2. County of Ventura-Risk Management's Response to VCERA's Preliminary Recommendation, dated February 3, 2023.
 3. Supporting Documentation for Staff Recommendation.
 4. Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, filed by Applicant's Attorney, Thomas Wicke, dated November 8, 2021.
 5. Hearing Notice, dated February 9, 2023.

Josiah Vencel was present on behalf of VCERA. Thomas J. Wicke, Attorney at Law, was present on behalf of applicant, Leonardo Vazquez Peterson, who was not present. 34.42

Mr. Vencel made a brief statement.

Mr. Wicke also made a brief statement.

MOTION: Approve Staff Recommendation to Grant the Application for Service-connected Disability Retirement, Effective January 12, 2022.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: Goulet

After the vote on the agenda item, the Board advanced to item, VIII.B., "Fourth Quarter 2022 Performance Report for Period Ending December 31, 2022".

VII. INVESTMENT MANAGER PRESENTATIONS

- A. Receive Annual Investment Presentation from Adams Street, Saguna Malhotra, and Scott Hazen.
Time Certain at 10:00 a.m.

Saguna Malhotra and Scott Hazen reviewed Adams Street's organizational changes and discussed the firm's investment outlook, portfolio strategy, composition, and investment portfolio performance, and then responded to trustee questions.

- B. Receive Annual Investment Presentation from UBS Real Estate, Paul M. Canning, and Tom O'Shea.
Time Certain at 10:15 a.m.

Paul M. Canning and Tom O'Shea reviewed UBS's organizational changes and discussed the firm's investment outlook, portfolio strategy, composition, and investment portfolio performance, and then responded to trustee questions.

VIII. INVESTMENT INFORMATION

VCERA – Dan Gallagher, Chief Investment Officer.
NEPC – Allan Martin.

A. \$25 Million Add-On Commitment to Cross Ocean European Special Situations Fund IV.
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter by Chief Investment Officer.
2. Joint Fund Recommendation Report from NEPC.
3. Cross Ocean European Special Situations Fund IV Presentation: Steve Zander, Steve Heanly, and Mark Berry.

Mr. Gallagher reminded the Board of its prior \$25 Million commitment to Cross Ocean's European Special Situation Fund IV, made at the June 21, 2021 meeting. He said Cross Ocean sourced and managed non-core loans from banks and others that sell for non-economic reasons. This investment would continue to diversify VCERA's Private Credit program. Therefore, both he and NEPC jointly recommended a \$25 Million add-on commitment to Cross Ocean's European Special Situations Fund IV.

MOTION: 1. Approve a \$25 Million Add-On Commitment to the Cross Ocean European Special Situations Fund IV, and Direct Staff and Counsel to Negotiate the Necessary Legal Documents; and, 2. Subject to Successful Contract Negotiations, Authorize the Board Chair or the Retirement Administrator, or in the Absence of Both, the Chief Investment Officer, to Approve and Execute the Required Documentation.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Long.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

The Board then took a break at 10:55 a.m.

The Board returned from a break at 11:05 a.m.

After returning from break, the Board advanced to item, VIII.D., "NEPC 2023 Investment Outlook – Capital Market Assumptions".

B. Fourth Quarter 2022 Performance Report for Period Ending December 31, 2022.
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive and file.

Mr. Martin presented the Fourth Quarter 2022 Performance Report for the Period Ending December 31, 2022.

MOTION: Approve the Fourth Quarter 2022 Performance Report for the Period Ending December 31, 2022.

Moved by Long, seconded by Grass.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

C. Monthly Performance Report Month for Ending January 31, 2023.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive and file.

Mr. Martin presented the Monthly Performance Report Month for Ending January 31, 2023.

MOTION: Receive and File.

Moved by Goulet, seconded by Joe.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

After the vote on this agenda item, the Board returned to item, VII.A., "Receive Annual Investment Presentation from Adams Street, Saguna Malhotra, and Scott Hazen".

D. NEPC 2023 Investment Outlook – Capital Market Assumptions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive and file.

Mr. Martin presented the NEPC 2023 Investment Outlook – Capital Market Assumptions.

MOTION: Receive and File.

Moved by Long, seconded by Grass.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

IX. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Annual Review of Education & Travel Policy (Revisited).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter from Chief Operations Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

2. Education and Travel Policy Proposed (Redline).
3. Education and Travel Policy Proposed (Clean).

Ms. Webb said the Board reviewed and approved several changes to the policy in January and had directed staff to examine the *Meals & Beverages* amounts and bring the results back to the Board. This had been performed by the COO and CFO.

Ms. Herron said that she and Ms. Marshall had reviewed the meal reimbursement amounts, with receipts, in light of inflation. They proposed a conservative approach, which was to apply an increase of 5% for each of the last 2 years, noting that the meal amounts had not changed since 2016.

Chair Sedell the policy allowed for due diligence evaluations to include up to 2 trustees if deemed "necessary" by the Board, but he believed that the word "necessary" should be replaced with "appropriate."

Trustee Goulet said that he agreed with Chair Sedell's proposed change.

Chair Sedell continued that the policy required a written or oral report be provided to the Board by the attendees. His position was that the CIO was already submitting a report to the Board, then it was unnecessary to require trustees to submit a report as well. Therefore, he proposed the sentence should be changed so only one report, written or verbal, be required.

Trustee Grass then suggested that it read, "and/or".

Chair Sedell proposed that the section entitled *Limitation on Meeting for Business Purposes*, which currently stated, "Travel by multiple Board members shall be conducted in such a manner as to not violate the provisions of the Brown Act.," be amended to add that caution should be taken to not discuss items that may come before the Board.

Chair Sedell proposed that the section entitled *Travel Authorization* section be amended. Currently, it stated, "Approval for travel by a Board or staff member to an educational meeting, conference, seminar, or on-site due diligence visit, whether in person or virtual, shall be made in an open meeting of the Board, except for attendance at the Spring and Fall State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS)"; he believed the CALAPRS General Assembly event should be added so that it would also be automatically budgeted like SACRS and not require Board approval to attend.

Chair Sedell proposed that the section entitled *Reporting* section be amended. Currently it stated, "Retirement Board members shall, no later than the 2nd subsequent Board meeting, provide a brief report on meetings or conferences attended on behalf of VCERA," which he felt was overkill, because if 5 Trustees attended a SACRS Conference, they would all be required to submit a report to the Board.

Trustee Long said the Board of Supervisors simply mentioned their attendance at conferences or meetings orally during "Board Comment". So, the policy could add the words, "oral or written" before the word "report."

Chair Sedell said that he liked that the suggestion by Trustee Long.

Ms. Webb said that for the current meeting staff had been asked only to bring back the meal reimbursement amounts, so she suggested that staff summarize these additional proposed changes in a redline of the policy for the Board to review at the next meeting.

MOTION: Approved Proposed Changes to the Education & Travel Policy and Bring Back the Discussed Amendments to the Board at the March 13, 2023, meeting.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Goulet.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

B. Proposed Timeline for Bringing Board of Retirement Policies and Charters Current.

1. Staff Letter from Retirement Administrator.

Ms. Webb reminded the Board of the previous discussion regarding policies overdue for Board review and reviewed the proposed timeline for Board review of them in the near future. She believed it appropriate for the Personnel Review Committee to review and propose changes to the *Senior Managers Performance Evaluation*. As for the Annual Administrative Budget Policy, she recommended the CFO review and present any resulting proposed changes to the Finance Committee first before presentation to the full Board.

MOTION: Approve Proposed Timeline for Bringing the Board of Retirement Policies and Charters Current.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

C. Appointment of Third Member of the Annual Ad Hoc Personnel Review Committee for 2023.

1. Staff Letter from Retirement Administrator.

Chair Sedell asked the other Board members if any of them were willing to volunteer to join the Ad Hoc Personnel Review Committee.

Trustee Hoag said that he was willing to reconsider and join the committee.

Chair Sedell then appointed Trustee Hoag to the Ad Hoc Personnel Review Committee.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Periodic Review of Board Policy: Trustee Communications Policy.
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.
1. Staff Letter from Retirement Administrator.
 2. Trustee Communication Policy Proposed (Redline).
 3. Trustee Communication Policy Proposed (Clean).

Ms. Webb noted that previous input from Trustee Goulet had been incorporated in the presented redline.

Trustee Goulet proposed a correction to Section II in which the word “procedure” should be plural, and also under Section III, the phrase “directed otherwise by the Board” should be changed to “unless authorized to do so by the Board.” He further noted that renumbering was needed after item 8. Trustee Goulet then said he did not understand the need for the proposed new wording in Section IV that said, “This Policy is subject to change in the exercise of the Board’s judgment.”

Ms. Nemiroff said that on occasion the Board may find it necessary or desirable not to follow the strict terms of the policy, so this change would allow the Board to deviate when, in its judgment, it was appropriate. The Board had been doing this anyway, so the statement did not need to be added, but it would just make it explicit.

Trustee Goulet then said that it seemed to him that the Board had the authority to do that anyway because it already stated, “The Board shall review this policy at least every three (3) years to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate” which meant that they could review it more frequently if they choose to do so.

Ms. Nemiroff said that it would address a situation where the Board did not necessarily want to change the policy, but they want the policy to be the general rule. So, it just gave the Board the explicit authority if, in the Board's judgment, they wished to deviate from the policy on an ad hoc or case-by-case basis.

Chair Sedell noted that he could see where it would be beneficial to have that wording in the policy.

He also said the policy seemed to imply that committee members could make requests to staff that could take a significant amount of time, before knowing if the Board would like to proceed in that direction. Part of the reason for establishing Board committees was to expedite things, and not to take away the purview of the Board. Therefore, individual Board members should present any requests to the Board that would take a significant amount of time for staff to complete, and so the policy wording on 11(b) that said, “or committee meetings” should be changed, because committees should still bring any request for significant staff work to the full Board.

Trustee Goulet said that under that section, he was unsure why requests from trustees needed to go to the Chair and also be directed to the Retirement Administrator. He suggested removal of the reference to the Board Chair so that the request would just go to the Retirement Administrator for placement on the agenda.

Chair Sedell said that he believed that was fine, as the request would need to go to the Retirement Administrator anyway. He suggested the wording say that trustee or committee requests for new or special projects or reports should be directed to the Board Chair and/or Retirement Administrator, to be potentially placed on a Board agenda for Board consideration and direction. He reminded that

Board that any trustee could bring an item up under Board Comment and request that an item be agendized.

Chair Sedell then said that changing it to say, “and/or” to the Retirement Administrator to work with the Chair if ever a trustee asked to agendize an inappropriate item. He then asked if Trustee Goulet approved of that suggested change.

Trustee Goulet said yes.

MOTION: Approve Proposed Changes to the Trustee Communications Policy, as Amended.

Moved by Grass, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

B. On-Site Due Diligence Visit to Western Asset Management Company on Monday, March 6, 2023 and to PIMCO on Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter from Chief Investment Officer.

Mr. Gallagher said that the due diligence travel requests were being recommended in accordance with the Board-adopted 2023 On-Site Due Diligence Calendar and consistent with the Education and Travel Policy. The request was for the Board to authorize up to 2 Trustees, as well as himself and General Counsel, Lori Nemiroff.

MOTION: Approve and Authorize Staff’s Request for an On-Site Due Diligence Visit to Western Asset Management Company and PIMCO, Including Up to 2 Trustees, Lori Nemiroff, Dan Gallagher, and Corresponding Costs.

Moved by Roberts, seconded by Joe.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

C. Approval of Business Class Air Travel to Investment Manager Walter Scott for an On-Site Due Diligence Visit and Investment Conference May 8th – 11th In Edinburgh, Scotland.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter from Chief Investment Officer.

Note, this item was removed from the agenda during the Approval of the Agenda.

- D. Authorization for Senior Information Technology Specialist to Attend the PRISM (Public Retirement Information Systems Management) Conference, May 7 - 10, 2023, in St. Petersburg, Florida.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter from Chief Technology Officer.
2. 2023 PRISM Conference Schedule.

Ms. Webb noted that the request was to authorize VCERA's new Senior Information Technology Specialist to attend the PRISM Conference. The conference agenda covered some technology challenges and projects VCERA would be embarking upon soon, and the conference provided valuable networking opportunities for Mr. Sanchez.

Trustee Goulet said that he objected to a probationary employee being sent to an expensive conference.

Chair Sedell asked Trustee Goulet why VCERA should not provide training to new employees.

Trustee Goulet replied that VCERA should train probationary employees on-site until they have passed probation and become permanent employees at which time they would then be able to attend expensive out-of-town conferences.

Ms. Webb explained that Mr. Sanchez would be working on several items for VCERA that are addressed specifically in the conference agenda, so it would allow for some important introductions to colleagues who have or are pursuing similar efforts.

MOTION: Approve the Authorization for Senior Information Technology Specialist to Attend the PRISM (Public Retirement Information Systems Management) Conference

Moved by Grass, seconded by Ashby.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: Goulet

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

- E. Authorization for Chief Operations Officer to Attend the Certificate of Achievement in Public Plan Policy (CAPPP) Course, July 24–27, 2023, in Chicago, IL

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

1. Staff Letter by Retirement Administrator.
2. International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans, CAPPP Course Information.

Ms. Webb said the request was for VCERA's new COO to attend the Certificate in Achievement in Public Plan Policy (CAPPP) program from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEFP). It was at her recommendation that the COO attend, as Ms. Webb herself had attended it early in her career and found it immensely valuable.

MOTION: Approve the Chief Operation Officer to Attend the Certificate in Achievement in Public Plan Policy (CAPPP) Course.

Moved by Goulet, seconded by Hernandez-Garcia.

Vote: Motion carried

Yes: Grass, Goulet, Hernandez-Garcia, Joe, Long, Ashby, Sedell

No: -

Absent: Horgan, Roberts

Abstain: -

F. SACRS Voting Delegate for 2023 Spring Conference.

1. Staff Letter by Retirement Administrator.

Ms. Webb said that the Board needed to appoint a Voting Delegate for the upcoming SACRS Conference.

Trustee Ashby volunteered to be the Voting Delegate for VCERA.

Chair Sedell then appointed Trustee Ashby as the Voting Delegate and Ms. Webb as the Alternate Voting Delegate.

G. SACRS 2023-2024 Board of Director Nominations.

1. SACRS Elections Notice.

Ms. Webb noted that the item was basically informational in nature because it was simply a notice regarding the nominations for the SACRS Board of Directors election, and no action was required.

XI. INFORMATIONAL

A. SACRS Spring Conference 2023 – Conference Information.

B. SACRS Legislative Update – February 2023.

C. Abbott Capital 2023 Annual Client Letter.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

XIII. STAFF COMMENT

Ms. Webb said staff had been working with the stakeholders on helping them understand the impact of the pending Resolution regarding Flex Credit. In January, staff had met with VCDSA, VCPFA, SPOVAC, and SEIU, and in February had met with several of the other unions. Staff was working on communication that would assist the larger membership as well.

Trustee Grass said he had taken part in a couple of those meetings, and he believed the staff had done a great job in providing this important information to the stakeholders.

Trustee Long also thanked staff for the time and effort taken in meeting with all of the different organizations.

Ms. Herron reported to the Board that the Auditor-Controller's Office was currently working on the programming needed to implement the normal working hours capping on certain situational pay codes for the Alameda Decision, and they were also jointly testing the programming with their office.

XIV. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Trustee Long asked if VCERA had any updates on the vacant Appointed Member seat on the Board of Retirement. She had spoken with the Ventura County Taxpayers Association and they stated that they had a person from their organization in mind to interview for that position. Therefore, she just wanted to let the other Board members and the public know that the County was working on making an appointment for the position.

Trustee Joe reminded the Board that at their combined meeting in December 2022, there was some discussion regarding Chair Sedell and Ms. Webb's meeting with the County regarding the Assistant CIO position for VCERA. He asked if they were able to meet and what was the status of that meeting.

Ms. Webb said that the classification of a position that was identified by VCERA's CIO was approved by the County and staff would be bringing a request to the Board for the position. To prepare for the recruitment, she would be providing materials to the CIO to assist him in preparing the Job Description.

Trustee Goulet noticed in the Check Register that a large check was recently sent to Gartner, which prompted him to recall that the Board should be receiving periodic reports on the services that were being provided by Gartner. Every other consultant that VCERA had produced a report on the services they had provided.

Ms. Webb reminded the Board that when the 3-year Gartner engagement was approved, Trustees Goulet and Joe had expressed discomfort with aspects of the engagement, including the lack of "tangibles", the timing, and 3-year commitment. They asked that Gartner allow VCERA to withdraw from the contract after one year if the Board believed it was not receiving appropriate value after receiving a report from staff on its interactions and consultation with Gartner up to that date. The CTO had provided that report at that time. The Board's request was not to continually provide an ongoing report.

Trustee Goulet said that he believed that the Board should be receiving quarterly reports from staff because they were not receiving written reports from Gartner.

Chair Sedell then suggested that Trustee Goulet first meet with Ms. Webb and the CTO to discuss the services that Gartner had provided, and if Trustee Goulet still had concerns, then they could bring the issue to the Board.

Trustee Goulet said that there was also supposed to be some proposed legislation to allow the Board to discuss cybersecurity in a Closed Session that was going to be discussed with the County to see if they would like to jointly sponsor it with VCERA. He asked staff about the status of that effort.

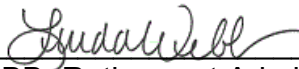
Ms. Webb said that staff had recently met with the County to discuss several issues, one of which was the legislation mentioned by Trustee Goulet, and the County was considering VCERA's request

to collaborate on such legislation, as it would be to their mutual benefit. Other issues discussed were the addition of the CTO to the group of senior management employees, the retiree health stipend benefit discussed by the Finance Committee, and the County obtaining an IRS Qualification Letter on its Safe Harbor Plan to allow members with extra help time to potentially purchase that service. The County had indicated it would need to engage with the CEO's office and possibly the Board of Supervisors before following up with VCERA staff.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

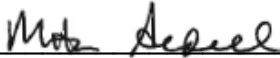
The Chairman adjourned the meeting at, 1:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



LINDA WEBB, Retirement Administrator

Approved,



MIKE SEDELL, Chair