



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EVANSTON FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION FUND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AUGUST 14, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Evanston Firefighters' Pension Fund Board of Trustees was held on Monday, August 14, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fire Department Headquarters Conference Room located at 909 Lake Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201, pursuant to notice.

CALL TO ORDER: Trustee Mortell called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Trustees Daniel Philipaitis, Jack Conner and Jack Mortell

ABSENT: Trustee Aleks Granchalek

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Villamin and Rom Chmara, City of Evanston; Alex Michael, Lauterbach & Amen, LLP (L&A); Members of the Public

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

APPLICATIONS FOR RETIREMENT/DISABILITY BENEFITS: *Approve Regular Retirement Benefits and Retro Payment – Joseph Moskal:* The Board reviewed the regular retirement benefit calculation for Joseph Moskal prepared by L&A. Firefighter Moskal had an entry date of August 15, 1988, retirement date of January 19, 2023, effective date of pension of January 20, 2023, 64 years of age at date of retirement, 34 years and 5 months of creditable service, applicable salary of \$127,276.53, applicable pension percentage of 75%, amount of originally granted monthly pension of \$7,954.78 and amount of originally granted annual pension of \$95,457.36.

The Board also noted that Joseph Moskal was due a retro payment in the amount of \$3,458.52.

A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to approve Joseph Moskal's regular retirement benefit and his retro payment as calculated by L&A. Motion carried by roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Philipaitis, Conner and Mortell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Granchalek

Deceased Pensioner – Leonard Conrad/Approval of Surviving Spouse Benefits – Elsie Conrad: The Board noted that Leonard Conrad passed away on February 16, 2023. The Board reviewed the surviving spouse benefit calculation for Elsie Conrad with an effective date of February 17, 2023 for a monthly benefit of \$4,168.28 with no additional increases. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to approve the surviving spouse benefit of Elsie Conrad calculated by L&A. Motion carried by roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Philipaitis, Conner and Mortell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Granchalek

Deceased Surviving Spouse – Lois Ghiselli: The Board noted that surviving spouse Lois Ghiselli passed away on July 19, 2023. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to cease her benefit. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: *May 22, 2023 Regular Meeting and July 18, 2023 Special Meeting:* The Board reviewed the May 22, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the July 18, 2023 special meeting minutes. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to approve the May 22, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the July 18, 2023 special meeting minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Semi-Annual Review of Closed Session Meeting Minutes: The Board discussed the closed session meeting minutes and corresponding recordings. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to keep the closed session minutes closed and to destroy the eligible recordings. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Review/Approve – Destruction of Remote Meeting Recordings: The Board reviewed the remote open meeting recordings log. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to destroy all eligible remote open meeting recordings. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

INVESTMENT REPORT: *FPIF – Marquette Associates:* The Board reviewed the FPIF Monthly Summary prepared by Marquette Associates for the period ending May 31, 2023. As of May 31, 2023, the one-month total net return is (1.2%) and the year-to-date total net return is 4.9% for an ending market value of \$7,609,253,851. The current asset allocation is as follows: Total Equity at 65%, Fixed Income at 29.1%, Real Estate at 4.7% and Cash at 1.2%.

Statement of Results: The Board reviewed the Northern Trust Statement of Results for the period ending May 31, 2023. The beginning value was \$91,466,059.91 and the ending value was \$90,332,099.60, the net return was (1.24%).

TREASURER'S REPORT – CITY OF EVANSTON: Mr. Villamin informed the Board that the property taxes will be delayed again this year.

Mr. Villamin and Mr. Chmara reviewed the Operation Cash Flow Report with the Board. The projected funds available to the Board for the upcoming months are: August \$6,150,339; September \$5,283,439; and October \$4,416,539. All questions were answered by Mr. Villamin and Mr. Chmara.

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT – LAUTERBACH & AMEN, LLP: *Monthly Financial Report and Presentation and Approval of Bills:* The Board reviewed the Monthly Financial Report for the six-month period ending June 30, 2023 prepared by L&A. As of June 30, 2023, the net position held in trust for pension benefits is \$107,518,254.51, for a change in position of \$8,472,218.80. The Board also reviewed the Cash Analysis Report, Revenue Report, Expense Report, Member Contribution Report, Payroll Journal, Quarterly Deduction Report, Quarterly Transfer Report and Quarterly Disbursement Report for the period April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023 for total disbursements of \$51,051.40. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to accept the Monthly Financial Report as presented and to

approve the disbursements shown on the Quarterly Disbursement Report in the amount of \$51,051.40. Motion carried by roll call vote.

AYES: Trustees Philipaitis, Conner and Mortell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustee Granchalek

Additional Bills, if any: There were no additional bills presented for approval.

Discussion/Possible Action – Cash Management Policy: The Board discussed the Cash Management Policy and determined that no changes are needed at this time.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP/WITHDRAWALS FROM FUND: There were no applications for membership or withdrawals from the Fund.

NEW BUSINESS: *Establish Fourth Quarter Meeting Date:* The Board established the fourth quarter meeting date as November 2, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fire Department Headquarters Conference Room located at 909 Lake Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201. A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to set the fourth quarter meeting date as stated. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS: *Vacant Appointed Member Position:* The Board noted that a new appointed member has not yet been named.

Discussion/Possible Action – Updated Rules and Regulations: The Board noted that this item is still in process. Further discussion will be held at the next regular meeting.

Transfer of Creditable Service – Nicholas Thomas: The Board noted that L&A sent correspondence to Nicholas Thomas outlining the cost of his creditable service. No response has been received to date.

IDOI Annual Statement: The Board noted that the finalized report was filed prior to the June 30, 2023 deadline.

NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED): *FOIA Officer and OMA Designee:* The Board noted that this item was taken care of at the July 18, 2023 special meeting.

Review/Approve – Actuarial Valuation and Tax Levy Request: The Board noted that the Actuarial Valuation is not yet completed. Further discussion will be held at the next regular meeting.

Trustee Mortell apprised the Board on the outcome of the City Council meeting that was held on July 24, 2023. Please refer to the attached memorandum on 100% funding for the Evanston Firefighters' Pension Fund.

Review/Adopt – Municipal Compliance Report: The Board noted that the Municipal Compliance Report is not yet completed and will be available for review at the next regular meeting.

Trustee Mortell confirmed with the Board that he will be in contact with Steve Shetsky with AFFI to collaborate on how to bring the benefits for Tier II firefighters' closer to Tier I benefits.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS: *Affidavits of Continued Eligibility:* L&A informed the Board that pensioner Jobe Smith has not yet returned his completed 2022 Affidavit of Continued Eligibility. The Board confirmed suspending Mr. Smith's direct deposit to a physical check available for pick up at the L&A office in Naperville with the completed 2022 Affidavit of continued eligibility.

Active Member File Maintenance: The Board noted that L&A will prepare Active Member File Maintenance letters for distribution to all active members requesting any additional pension file documents.

TRUSTEE TRAINING UPDATES: The Board reviewed the Trustee Training Summary and discussed upcoming training opportunities. Trustees were reminded to submit any certificates of completion to L&A for recordkeeping.

Approval of Trustee Training Registration Fees and Reimbursable Expenses: There were no trustee training registration fees or reimbursable expenses presented for approval.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT – BURKE, BURNS & PINELLI, LTD.: *Annual Independent Medical Examinations – Sean Heneghan, Jason Perkiser and Dominic Rodriguez:* The Board noted that the independent medical examinations for Sean Heneghan and Dominic Rodriguez and been received and they remain disabled. Trustee Philipaitis will reach out to Jason Perkiser for his completed IME. Further discussion will be held at the next regular meeting.

Legal Updates: There were no legal updates at this time.

CLOSED SESSION, IF NEEDED: There was no need for closed session.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Trustee Mortell and seconded by Trustee Philipaitis to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

Board President or Secretary

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on _____

Minutes prepared by Alexandria Michael, Pension Services Administrator, Lauterbach & Amen, LLP

45-R-23

A RESOLUTION

Adopting the Pension Funding Policy for Public Safety Pension Plans

WHEREAS, the City of Evanston (“City”) funds the Police Pension Fund and the Firefighters’ Pension Fund (collectively, the “Public Safety Pension Plans”); and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Public Safety Pension Plans is to provide long-term benefits promised to participants in the City of Evanston Police Pension Fund and the City of Evanston Firefighters’ Pension Fund; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois requires that municipal governments have Public Safety Pension Plans 90% funded by 2040; and,

WHEREAS, the City’s Finance and Budget Committee desires that the City increase the amount of funding it is committing towards Public Safety Pension Plans to ensure the plans are 100% funded by 2040, and proposes the Pension Funding Policy for Public Safety Pension Plans (the “Pension Funding Policy”) to meet that goal; and,

WHEREAS, the Pension Funding Policy provides direction on long-term funding to systematically eliminate any unfunded liabilities while producing a contribution requirement that is predictable and reflected in the City’s long-term financial forecasts; and,

WHEREAS, the Pension Funding Policy sets forth the objectives, actuarially determined contribution funding principles, and sources of pension contributions as a means for the City to reach its full funding goal; and

WHEREAS, in order to implement the Pension Funding Policy, the City Council has determined it to be in the best interests of the City to adopt this Resolution.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS:

SECTION 1. The foregoing recitals shall be and are hereby incorporated as findings of fact as if said recitals were fully set forth herein.

SECTION 2. The Pension Funding Policy as set forth in Exhibit A, attached, is hereby adopted.

SECTION 3. . That this Resolution 45-R-23 shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

Daniel Biss
Daniel Biss, Mayor

Attest:

Stephanie Mendoza
Stephanie Mendoza, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Nicholas E. Cummings
Nicholas E. Cummings, Corporation Counsel

Adopted: July 24, 2023

Exhibit A
City of Evanston
Pension Funding Policy
Public Safety Pension Plans
 _____, 2023

I. INTRODUCTION

Policy Statement

The purpose of this Policy is to establish how the City of Evanston annually fully funds the long-term cost of benefits promised to the participants in the City of Evanston Police Pension Fund and the City of Evanston Firefighters' Pension Fund (Public Safety Pension Plans). It also defines the calculation of the City's actuarially determined contribution (ADC) to such plans.

Policy Goal- Fully Funded by 2040

The goal of this Policy is to ensure that pension benefits can be paid by adopting a long-term funding plan that systematically eliminates any unfunded liabilities while producing a contribution requirement that is predictable and reflected in the City's long term financial forecasts. It is the goal of this Policy to achieve full funding by 2040 and that on an annual basis 100% or more of the ADC is contributed to the Public Safety Pension Plans.

II. GENERAL FUNDING POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of a public employee defined benefit pension plan is to fund the long-term cost of retirement benefits provided to the plan participants. These benefits include statutory retirement, death and disability payments. To assure the plan remains sustainable, the plan must accumulate adequate resources for future benefit payments in a systematic and disciplined manner during the active service life of the benefiting employees. There are several factors to consider in achieving this:

- 1) **Actuarially Determined Contributions** - This should be determined annually in an actuarially sound manner, based on an actuarially determined contribution that incorporates both the cost of current benefits being earned by the active plan participants and the amortization of any unfunded actuarial accrued liability.
- 2) **Funding Discipline** - Funding should be based on a consistent methodology each year that will ensure that adequate funds are contributed on an annual basis.
- 3) **Accountability and Transparency** - Clearly defined reporting of pension funding, including an assessment of whether, how and when the City will ensure sufficient assets will be available to pay benefits as promised.

III. ACTUARIALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTION FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The annual required contribution will be determined as follows:

- 1) The **Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC)** will be calculated by an enrolled actuary (Actuary). The Actuary shall be engaged by the City of Evanston and the Boards of the Public Safety Pension Plans.
- 2) The ADC will include the normal cost, amortization of any unfunded liability, and an estimate of the annual cost to administer the Public Safety Pension Plans.
- 3) The **Actuarial Accrued Liability**, which is the liability accrued in the fund as of the valuation date, and **Normal Cost**, which is the annual cost of pension accruals by the active employees each year, will be calculated using the Entry Age Normal Level Percentage of Payroll Actuarial Cost Method using the following assumptions:
 - a. The investment rate of return assumption will be recommended annually to the City Council by the Finance and Budget Committee. The Finance and Budget Committee will consider input from representatives of the Public Safety Pension Boards. The rate shall be reviewed by the Actuary for reasonableness.
 - b. Non-economic assumptions, such as rates of separation, disability, retirement, mortality, etc., shall be determined from experience studies to most accurately reflect current experience.
- 4) The **Actuarial Value of Assets** will be determined using a smoothing method to reduce the effects of market volatility on the City's contributions. A **5-year smoothed market value** method, or other method considered reasonable by the Actuary, will be used to recognize variances from the actuarial investment rate of return assumption to actual market returns.
- 5) The **Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL)**, which is the difference between the Actuarial Accrued Liability and the Actuarial Value of Assets shall be eliminated by the end of 2040 (the **Full Funding Date**). Once 100% funding is achieved, the City Council shall consider if funding over 100% is desirable, to help ensure the long-term funding status of the pension plans.
- 6) Periodic Reforecasting-- To help ensure that the City is on a path to 100% funding by the Full Funding Date, the City shall engage with the Actuary to periodically reforecast the required contributions in accordance with this Policy. The City shall reflect those required contributions into its long-term planning.

IV. SOURCES OF PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

Required Contribution based on the actuarial valuation report using 100% funding by 2040 will come from any one or more of the following:

- 1) A Pension Property Tax levy that is at the same dollar value level as the prior year adjusted for allocated PPRT per item 2 below;
- 2) The maximum allowable PPRT allocation.
- 3) Additional unrestricted revenues, net of expenses available in the General Fund.
 - a. If the subsequent year budget, after due consideration of discretionary and non-discretionary expenses such as the ADC, is in deficit, then the ADC may be funded, in

part, by any General Fund Reserves in excess of the General Fund required fund balance.

- b. The City Council may, at its discretion, also consider transferring to the General Fund, for use in making the ADC, any excess fund balances in other unrestricted City Funds.
- 4) If there are not excess reserves available to make the full ADC, then the City Council shall raise the Pension Property Tax levy in order to fund the ADC.
 - a. It is the intent of this Funding Policy that if adequate budget revenues net of expenses or reserves are not available to make the full ADC, then the Pension Property Tax levy shall be raised in order to provide additional funds to achieve the required contribution.
 - 5) The City Council is encouraged to devote a portion of any unrestricted proceeds from asset sales or any other non-recurring revenue sources to fund incremental pension contributions above the ADC for that year. Any incremental contributions shall then be considered in calculating the required future contributions under this Policy.

V. TRANSPARENCY

Funding of the Public Safety Pension Plans shall be transparent to vested parties including plan participants, annuitants, the Pension Boards, the City Council and residents. To achieve this transparency, the following information shall be distributed and/or published on the City's website:

- 1) A copy of the annual actuarial valuation for all plans shall be made available to the City Council and Pension Boards.
- 2) The City's annual operating budget shall clearly state the City's required contribution to the Public Safety Pension Plans. As part of the budget process, the required contribution to the fund shall be reviewed and discussed at an open meeting of the Finance and Budget Committee and City Council and include a 5- year or more historical perspective on recent contributions, asset returns and funding levels.
- 3) The City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report reflects the City's annual required contribution and the value of the outstanding pension liabilities as directed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

V. REVIEW OF FUNDING POLICY

Funding a defined benefit pension plan requires a long-term horizon. Assumptions and inputs into the policy should focus on long-term trends, not year-to-year shifts in the economic or noneconomic environments. Generally, assumptions or inputs should be evaluated and changed if long-term economic or non-economic inputs have fundamentally changed or are no longer reasonable. As such, the City will review this policy every four years to determine if changes to this policy are needed to ensure adequate resources are being accumulated in the Public Safety Pension Plans. The City Council, in consultation with its designated committee, reserves the right to make changes to this Policy at any time if it is deemed appropriate.