

Note: These minutes from the October 5, 2022, Legislative Committee were approved at the January 6, 2023, meeting of the Legislative Committee.

**NHRS Legislative Committee of the Board of Trustees
October 5, 2022
PUBLIC MINUTES**

**New Hampshire Retirement System
54 Regional Drive
Concord, NH**

As the Committee members were participating electronically pursuant to RSA 100-A:14-a, all votes were by roll call pursuant to RSA 91-A.

Committee Members participating: Ken Merrifield, Chair, Sue Hannan, Andrew Martineau.

Other Trustees attending: Germano Martins (via videoconference).

Staff: Jan Goodwin, *Executive Director*; Marty Karlon, *Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs*; Tim Crutchfield, *Deputy Director and Chief Legal Counsel* (via videoconference); Mark Cavanaugh, *Associate Counsel and Compliance Officer* (via videoconference); Diana Crichton, *Hearings Examiner* (via videoconference); Marie Mullen, *Director of Finance* (via videoconference); Nancy Miller, *Director of Member Services* (via videoconference); Tracey Horner, *Assistant Director of Member Services* (via videoconference); Deb Tasker, *Retiree Services Manager* (via videoconference).

Chair Merrifield called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m. Having established a quorum, Chair Merrifield called for a motion to accept the Committee minutes of July 27, 2022. On a motion by Trustee Martineau, seconded by Trustee Hannan, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes, as presented.

Chair Merrifield opened the meeting and asked Mr. Karlon to provide information on the call fire benefit account.

Mr. Karlon began by explaining that when NHRS was created in 1967, the statute included death and disability benefits for call firefighters funded through annual premiums paid by participants. Although these call firefighters were eligible for this statutory coverage, they were not members of the retirement system as they did not meet the statutory definition of a “permanent fireman.” Due to legal concerns over the retirement system managing a benefit for non-members, at the recommendation of NHRS, the Legislature repealed the call fire benefit statute (RSA 100-A:19) in 2014.

As part of the repeal legislation, NHRS continued to use the balance remaining in the call fire benefit account to pay benefits to the two elderly persons who were receiving benefits at the time of the repeal, the youngest of whom is currently 87.

Mr. Karlon said the annual review of call fire benefit account to be presented at the October Board of Trustees meeting indicated the account would be depleted in 2.75 years. GRS, the retirement system's independent actuary, informed staff that the life expectancies for the two remaining beneficiaries are 4 and 7.7 years, respectively.

Mr. Karlon said staff is asking that the Legislative Committee recommend to the full Board that it authorize staff to seek a legislative appropriation to fund the expected future benefits. Staff is recommending an appropriation of \$40,000, which, along with the existing amount in the account, would fund these benefits for at least nine years. Mr. Karlon said that the requested legislation would include language that any funds remaining in the account after the recipients pass away would lapse to the general fund.

Chair Merrifield asked for a motion to recommend to the full Board that it authorize staff to seek sponsorship for legislation addressing funding for the call firefighter benefit account. The motion was made by Trustee Martineau and seconded by Trustee Hannan. The Committee then voted unanimously to support the motion.

With no further business to discuss, on a motion by Trustee Hannan, seconded by Trustee Martineau, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Karlon,
Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs