

**SARASOTA FIREFIGHTERS' INSURANCE TRUST FUND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
December 2, 2024**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairman Vets at 9:27 AM.

Trustees Present:

Matt Scarbrough
Timm Baker
Johnny Rigney
Robert Flynn (Electronic)
Merv Kennel (Consultant)

Trustees Absent:

Phil Vets (Chair)

Also Present:

Scott Baur & Stacie Crout, Administrator
Scott Owens, Investment Consultant (Electronically)
Pedro Herrera, Attorney (Electronically)
Brad Armstrong, Actuary
Walter Menzel, Accountant
Robert Barrett, Plan Member

1. Call To Order

Trustee Scarbrough called the meeting to order at 9:27 AM.

2. Roll Call

Trustee Scarbrough called roll.

3. Public Comment – None

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – Trustee Rigney made a motion to approve the October 28, 2024, minutes. The motion received a second from Trustee Baker and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

5a. Actuary Report – Brad Armstrong, GRS Consulting

Mr. Armstrong presented reports on both the Health Insurance Trust and the Supplemental Disability Benefit Plan. He began with the Annual Review of the Health Trust as of June 30, 2024. Mr. Armstrong reported strong results due to pay gains driving higher contributions. The report uses an assumption of a 2% pay increase and states that the Plan now covers 538 active firefighters, 237 retired members and 8 deferred members as of June 30, 2024. The pay increases should increase contributions by about \$400,000.00 annually. He reported that the Plan had fewer retirements than expected for the year. Mr. Armstrong suggested the Plan establish a “reserve” to cover future administrative expenses as they could potentially be higher than expected.

Mr. Armstrong noted that the Board continues to use conservative assumptions and recommends a benefit range of \$909 to \$1,011. Members are currently receiving a Life Annuity Benefit of \$840.

The Board discussed consideration of increasing the Benefit Allocation. The current cost for the top tier, single medical health with dental and vision coverage is averaging \$1045 and the current single medical plan options are \$675.07, \$729.54 and \$1000.26. He also stated that Sarasota County is expecting to increase staffing by 60 new hires over the next 3 years. The Board discussed increasing the benefit from the current amount of \$840 per month. It was noted that the Plan has been at the same benefit amount for 2 years without an increase and taking the recommended ranges by Mr. Armstrong into consideration, a 15% increase to \$966.00 would be a suitable option.

MOTION – Trustee Flynn made a motion to increase the monthly benefit to \$970.00 as of January 1, 2025. The motion was seconded by Trustee Rigney. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

Mr. Armstrong then reviewed the Biennial Report for the Supplemental Disability Plan. The Plan provides protection to members who might disabled. The benefit is self-funded by Sarasota County. The premium cost will decrease from \$.14 to \$.11. The Resource Centers will take responsibility to report to the county. Mr. Kennell raised the question of how the continued reduction in the cost to the County could potentially impact the Plan should the cost to the County ever reach \$.00. What would happen in the event a tragic event occur and multiple members become disabled at one time causing a substantial increase to the county later. Mr. Armstrong explained that they are assuming multiple firefighters will become disabled and reassured that the plan is very well funded at this time and future assumptions will allow for the additional expected employees over the next 3 years.

MOTION – Trustee Rigney made a motion to accept the \$.11 biennial contribution by the County to the Disability Plan. The motion was seconded by Trustee Flynn. The motion passed unanimously (4-0)

5b. Investment Report – Scott Owens, Mariner

Mr. Owens updated on the plan's assets as of November 29, 2024. He reported that Trust #1 is up 7.95% and Trust #2 is up 8.21%. A combined gain of about 8% for the current fiscal year to date. He stated that the markets have begun to broaden, and they are starting to see other asset classes do well and that is very encouraging. Mr. Owens offered to answer any questions from the Board. The Board did not have any questions.

5d. Attorney Report – Pedro Herrera, Sugarman

Attorney Herrera reported they are up to date and there are not any specific items needing to be reported. He informed the Board that in lieu of a Holiday Gift sent to the Board the Firm traditionally donates on behalf of the Insurance Trust Fund to local Charitable causes, i.e... Food banks & Hurricane Relief Efforts and with the blessing of the Board will do so again this year. The Board thanked the firm.

Trustee Scarbrough raised questions concerning the Human Trafficking and Country of Concerns affidavits. Attorney Herrera confirmed the affidavits were for informational purposes and do not apply to the Health Trust.

Scott Baur asked Attorney Herrera if he would take a minute to speak on the Board's meeting participation expectations. Attorney Herrera assured the Board that he will attend remotely at least 80% of meetings and would like to attend in person when his schedule allows.

5e. Accountant Report – Walter Menzel, Menzel & Associates

Mr. Menzel presented the Accountant Report for the Disability Trust. As the Disability Trust does not have a checking account the Health Trust Pays the bills. He reported that the Health Trust paid out \$16,779.04 for last year which will need to be transferred from the Disability Trust to the Health Trust.

A motion was made by Trustee Flynn to transfer \$16,779.04 from the disability account back to the Health Trust and seconded by Trustee Rigney. The motion passed unanimously (4-0)

5f. Administrator Report – Scott Baur, Resource Centers

Mr. Baur presented the proposed 2025 Meeting Schedule.

Mr. Baur presented the Administrative Agreement as reviewed by counsel and available for Board's signatures.

Mr. Baur presented forms for Signature Authorization Updates. The Administrative Agreement and Signature Authorization forms will be left at the office with Sylvia for Chair Vets and Trustee Flynn to sign.

Mr. Baur presented the 2025 Educational Conference Schedule for the Board's reference.

The 2024 Audit is still pending since Cristini is unable to provide this service. Mr. Menzel asked if the Board or Cristini had any recommendations of firms who could complete the Audit. Attorney Herrera asked if it would be okay to wait

until the January 21, 2025, meeting in terms of filing the 990. Mr. Menzel stated the due date is May 15, 2025. Attorney Herrera recommended confirmation be obtained as to if Cristini filed the extension. Trustee Scarbrough will communicate with Chair Vets to follow up. The Resource Centers are asked to obtain updated pricing to present at the January Meeting.

6. PLAN FINANCIALS

MOTION – Trustee Flynn made a motion to approve the December 2, 2024 warrant as presented. The motion received a second from Trustee Rigney and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Scott Baur discussed the Reimbursement Report. The Board commented on the members and beneficiaries who still have a balance. There was one defaulted self-contributing member reported. The Board accepted the reimbursement reports as presented.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

In response to the request by Chair Vets during the last meeting, Mr. Baur provided the Board with a previously created draft of the history of the plan. Mr. Armstrong pointed out that the Actuary was not included in the list of advisors. Mr. Baur agrees that the actuary is important and will edit to include Actuary.

Mr. Baur provided an updated Agreement for legal counsel. The Board will sign and forward it to Attorney Herrera's office. Resource Centers asked to send Thank you letter to Firms who participated in the RSP.

Trustee Baker addressed a change in the Union Contract Language regarding current Audit and Valuation Report to be forwarded to the County. The Board discussed sending the reports Annually. Attorney Herrera recommended waiting until the audit is complete and sending both reports together.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None

10. NEXT MEETING – January 21, 2025, at 9 AM; Trustee Baker notified he will not be in attendance.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Trustee Rigney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 AM. The motion received a second from Trustee Flynn and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).


Trustee Signature

