

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

JULY 26, 2023 - FINAL



TRUSTEE AND STAFF ATTENDANCE

In Attendance	Dennis Lawson, Chair – Central Pierce Fire and Rescue
In Attendance	Jason Granneman, Vice Chair – Clark County Sheriff’s Office
Teleconference	Mark Johnston – Vancouver Fire Department
Teleconference	AJ Johnson – Snohomish County Fire District #1
Teleconference	Senator Jeff Holy – Spokane Police Department (Retired)
Teleconference	Tarina Rose-Watson – Spokane Int’l Airport Police Dept
Teleconference	Wolf Opitz – Pierce County
In Attendance	Pat McElligott – East Pierce County Fire
In Attendance	Representative Steve Bergquist – WA State Representative
In Attendance	Jay Burney – City of Olympia
	Vacant
In Attendance	Steve Nelsen – Executive Director
In Attendance	Tim Valencia – Deputy Director
In Attendance	Jessie Jackson – Executive Assistant
Teleconference	Jessica Burkhart – Administrative Services Manager
Teleconference	Tammy Sadler – Benefits Ombudsman
In Attendance	Jacob White – Senior Research and Policy Manager
Absent	Karen Durant – Senior Research and Policy Manager
Teleconference	Tor Jernudd – Assistant Attorney General

Call to Order

The LEOFF Plan 2 Retirement Board met in the Washington State Investment conference room in Olympia, Washington on July 26, 2023. A quorum of the members was present at this meeting.

Chair Dennis Lawson called the meeting to order at 9:31AM and requested those present to take a moment of silence to honor those who had fallen since the last the Board meeting.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting are before the Board for consideration.

ACTION | It was moved to approve the Board meeting minutes from June 2023. Motion seconded.
The Board approved the minutes without objection.

2. DRS Public Records Privacy

Shawn Merchant, Legislative and Stakeholder Relations Director from the Department of Retirement Systems presented a preview of proposed legislation regarding member’s public records. A similar presentation was given to the Select Committee on Pension Policy this month and they plan to discuss it further at their October meeting. No action was taken by the Board at this time.

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JULY 26, 2023 - FINAL



3. Overpayment Responsibility

Jacob White, Senior Research and Policy Manager gave an initial presentation on Overpayment Responsibility to the Board. The issue before the Board is who should pay for the error of pension overpayments. Next steps for consideration are:

1. Board may make a motion to receive a comprehensive report on the issue
2. No Action

ACTION | It was moved and seconded to move forward with a comprehensive report. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Lump Sum Special Death Benefit

Jacob White, Senior Research and Policy Manager gave an initial presentation to the Board. The issue is that LEOFF Plan 2 beneficiaries have been denied a one-time special death benefit because they missed the Department of Labor and Industries deadline for application. LEOFF Plan 2 beneficiaries are eligible for a one-time lump sum special death benefit (currently \$287,781) if the member died as a result of a workplace injury or occupational disease. LNI determines the beneficiary's eligibility for this benefit and DRS pays the benefit out of the pension. Options before the Board are:

1. Motion for staff to provide a Comprehensive Report
2. Motion for a Comprehensive Report contingent on DRS and LNI discussions not resolving the issue
3. No action - Board can wait until after an update has been provided on the outcome of the DRS and LNI discussions before making a decision on whether to receive a Comprehensive Report

ACTION | It was moved and seconded to move forward with a comprehensive report contingent on DRS and LNI. Motion passed unanimously.

5. DRS Appeal Deadlines

Jacob White, Senior Research and Policy Manager gave an initial presentation to the Board on DRS appeals deadlines. Some LEOFF 2 members have missed their deadline to file an administrative appeal with DRS and expressed concerns regarding a lack of clarity on the deadline. Options before the Board are:

1. Board may make a motion to receive a comprehensive report
2. No Action

ACTION | It was moved and seconded to move forward with a comprehensive report. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Ombuds Video Premiere

A new video has been created for the Board on the topic of the Ombudsman program and was shown to the Board. The new video can be viewed at this link: [Ombudsman Introduction \(Disability and Survivor Assistance\) - YouTube](#)

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7. Administrative Update

Steve Nelsen, Executive Director gave an administrative update to the Board.

Sarah White, Benefits Ombudsman has accepted a new position with the Department of the Retirement Systems. The agency will be filling this Ombudsman position in the near future.

There are no outreach activities scheduled for the next month.

The August meeting was cancelled and the next meeting of the Board is September 27th.

8. Public Comment

The LEOFF 2 Board welcomes public comment in advance of all meetings and has posted instructions on its website for the submission of written comments. Staff received no comments in advance of today's meeting for distribution to the Board.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:02AM.

The next meeting of the LEOFF Plan 2 Retirement Board is scheduled for September 27, 2023 at the Washington State Investment Board located at 2100 Evergreen Park Drive SW Olympia, WA 98502.