



**MINUTES**

**Benefits and Services Committee**

Public Meeting held in-person and telephonically on August 31, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. CT  
Pursuant to Texas Govt. Code 551.127

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**Committee Members**  
**Present/(Absent)**

Diana Thomas, Committee  
Chair  
Chris Noak†  
(Leslie Pool)  
Anthony Ross  
Brad Sinclair

**Other Board Trustees**  
**Present/(Absent)**

Mike Benson  
Kelly Crook  
(Michael Granof)  
(Dick Lavine)  
(Yuejiao Liu)  
(Amy Hunter)

**Others Present**

Staff:  
Christopher Hanson  
Russell Nash  
Michelle Mahaini  
Sarah McCleary  
Jenni Bonds  
Mehrin Rahman  
Yun Quintanilla  
Teresa Cantu\*  
Amy Kelley\*  
David Kushner\*

Guests:

Paige Saenz, General Counsel\*  
Dr. Harold Skaggs  
Lewis Ward, GRS\*  
Brad Oxford, Clark Hill\*

\*Present telephonically

† present via videoconference

**1 Call roll of Committee members**

Committee Chair Diana Thomas called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. The following Committee members were present in person: Thomas, Ross, and Sinclair. Mr. Noak was present via videoconference

**2 Review order of business and establish meeting objectives**

Committee Chair Thomas reviewed the order of business and meeting objectives with the Committee. Committee Chair Thomas asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak, either now or during an agenda item. There were no comments.

**3 Consider approval of the June 15, 2023 Benefits and Services Committee minutes**

Committee Chair Thomas asked the committee to review the Benefits and Services Committee minutes from June 15, 2023. Mr. Brad Sinclair moved approval of the June 15, 2023 minutes as presented. Mr. Anthony Ross seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**4 Discuss and consider disability retirement applications**

**a. Convene into Executive Session pursuant to Sec. 13, Art. 6243n, Tex. Rev. Civ. Stat. and Sec. 551.0785 Texas Government Code to deliberate on disability retirement applications ref. #2305, #2306, and #2307**

**b. Reconvene into public session and make recommendations as determined appropriate by the Committee regarding disability retirement applications ref. #2305, #2306, and #2307**

Trustees convened into Executive Session at 10:05 a.m.  
*Ms. Crook left the meeting at 10:05 a.m.*

Trustees reconvened into Public Session at 10:25 a.m.  
*Ms. Crook returned to the meeting at 10:25 a.m.*  
*Mr. Benson joined the meeting at 10:26 a.m.*

Mr. Anthony Ross moved to approve Disability retirement application #2305. Mr. Brad Sinclair seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Sinclair moved to approve Disability retirement application #2306. Mr. Ross seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Ross moved to approve Disability retirement application #2307. Mr. Sinclair seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**5 Discuss and consider Benefits Administration Operating Procedures**

Mr. Russell Nash presented draft changes to the Benefits Administration Operating Procedures. Mr. Nash noted that several proposed changes reflected necessary revisions to complement the new legislative provisions contained in SB1444, other proposed changes were necessary to implement new federal legislative changes from Secure Act 2.0, and lastly some proposed changes arose from matters relevant to the day-to-day administration of the plan. Trustees discussed the implementation and communication of the changes related to service purchases and discussed the relevance of certain provisions of the Procedures.

Mr. Sinclair moved to refer to the Board for approval the proposed changes to the Benefits Administration Operating Procedures as presented, Mr. Ross seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**6 Discuss and consider Board Resolution 2023-0921**

Mr. Russell Nash presented draft Resolution 2023-0921 and informed the Committee of the Resolution's importance in keeping COAERS compliant with the Internal Revenue Code and regulations. Mr. Sinclair moved to refer to the Board for approval Board Resolution 2023-0921. Mr. Ross seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**7 Receive report on actuarial service consultant**

Mr. Russell Nash presented a Staff report on GRS Consulting, the System's actuarial consultant. Mr. Nash reported that the Staff viewed the relationship as favorable, with GRS providing timely reports, important actuarial consulting during the legislative process, and critical and timely assistance on retirement matters when needed. He noted that Ms. Janie Shaw will be replacing Mr. Ryan Falls in a supporting role for Mr. Lewis Ward.

**8 Review key meeting takeaways and call for future agenda items**

Committee Chair Thomas summarized the actions taken and the information discussed during the meeting and asked for any future agenda items.

As there were no other items to address, the meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

**These minutes were approved at the November 9, 2023 Benefits & Services Committee meeting.**