

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
BOARD OF PENSIONS AND RETIREMENT
Meeting of January 24, 2019**

MINUTES

On January 24, 2019, Jacqueline Dunn called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Pensions and Retirement to order at 9:50 AM in the Board's Conference Room.

Present: Jacqueline Dunn
 Kellan White
 Christopher Rupe
 Marsha Greene-Jones
 Carol Stukes-Baylor
 Ronald Stagliano
 Brian Coughlin
 Veronica Pankey
 Sharolyn Murphy

Also Attending: Francis Bielli - Board of Pensions
 Shamika Taliaferro – Board of Pensions
 Bill Rubin – Board of Pensions
 Ellen Berkowitz, Adam Coleman – Law Dept.
 Bernard Buckley, Kristyn Bair – Investment Unit
 Jim Cousounis, Tyrone Jordan – Investment Unit
 Dominique Cherry, Abdel-Aziz Ibrahimi – Investment Unit
 Bradley Nyce Jeffrey Francis - Nationwide
 Bina Kumar – Nationwide
 Pam McCue – Financial Investment News
 Samantha Grant, Jesus Jimenez, Kweku Obed – Marquette

Jacqueline Dunn called the meeting to order and stated that the first order of business was the Consideration of the Minutes of December 6, 2018.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve the Minutes of December 6, 2018. Kellan White seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried unanimously 7-0.

CONSIDERATION OF (221) PENSION APPLICATIONS AND (180) WITHDRAWAL APPLICATIONS

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve. Sharolyn Murphy seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried unanimously 7-0.

Ms. Pankey arrived at the meeting.

APPLICATION FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY BENEFITS

Case of James Kuzowsky, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits - Plan B

This is an application submitted by James Kuzowsky, former Police Officer for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan "B".

According to Mr. Kuzowsky on August 20, 2015 his vehicle was struck from behind by a driver under the influence. Mr. Kuzowsky states that the impact caused him to strike his head against the dashboard and door frame while his left hand struck the vehicle's mobile computer.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve. Brian Coughlin seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried unanimously 8-0.

Case of Joseph Sees, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits – Plan B

This is an application submitted by Joseph Sees, former Police Officer for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan "B".

According to Mr. Sees, on March 5, 2015 while in pursuit of a fleeing robbery suspect he fell several times on the snow and ice. Mr. Sees states that following the apprehension he began to feel sharp pains in his right knee. Mr. Sees implies other work-related injuries that occurred over the course of his employment.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve. Brian Coughlin seconded the motion.

The motion to approved carried 5-3.

Case of Deborah Morman, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits – Plan Y

This is an **administrative** application submitted by Deborah Morman, former Correctional Officer with the Department of Corrections for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan "Y".

According to Ms. Morman, on December 8, 2012 while preparing for the afternoon head count, she slipped and fell on a waxed concrete floor. Ms. Morman states that she sustained injuries to her lower back, hands, and a fractured left foot.

Carol Stukes-Baylor made a motion to approve. Veronica Pankey seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried 5-3.

Case of Russell Seawright, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits – Plan Y

This is an application submitted by Russell Seawright, former Correctional Officer/Clerk II with the Department of Corrections for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan “Y”.

According to Mr. Seawright on or about July 27, 2000 while checking the armband of an inmate his right index finger became entangled in the armband; the inmate snatched his arm away from him breaking his finger in the process.

Carol Stukes-Baylor made a motion to approve. Ronald Stagliano seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried 5-3.

APPLICATION FOR SURVIVORSHIP BENEFITS

Case of Charles A. Hart, Deceased, Application for Survivorship Benefits – Plan J

This is an application by Elma Hart for survivorship benefits in Plan J.

Charles A. Hart, a Gardener with Fairmount Park retired effective July 4, 1988. Mr. Hart died on September 14, 2018.

At the time of his retirement, Mr. Hart chose survivorship option 4. When Mr. Hart married Elma Washington on January 10, 1987, he updated his Change of Beneficiary Designation form on January 15, 1987 naming his new wife, Elma Hart. Also submitted at the time was a copy of their marriage certificate as well as the death certificate for his late wife, Ruth Mae Hart.

Elma Hart is applying to have the Board recognize her 31-year marriage with Mr. Hart.

Sharolyn Murphy made a motion to deny. Christopher Rupe seconded the motion.

The motion to deny carried 4-3-1.

APPLICATION FOR SURVIVORSHIP BENEFITS

Case of John Wright, Deceased, Application for Survivorship Benefits – Common Law – Plan “J”

This is an application by Geraldine R. Wright, as common-law spouse of John Wright, for survivorship benefits in Plan “J”.

John Wright, former automotive driver for the Health Department, died on July 24, 2018. Submitted is a copy of his death certificate.

John Wright retired effective June 9, 1983. At the time of his retirement, Mr. Wright elected Survivorship Option #4 and named Geraldine Wright as beneficiary of his life insurance.

In a letter received September 24, 2018, Mrs. Wright requested that the Board reverse the denial of survivor benefits, stating that although they were married June 23, 1984, they lived together since 1968.

The Board reviewed the information and documents submitted by Mrs. Wright.

Sharolyn Murphy made a motion to approve. Carol Stukes-Baylor seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried unanimously 8-0.

APPEAL OF ADMINISTRATION DENIAL OF APPLICATION FOR DROP

Case of Louis A. Di Renzo III, Appeal of Administrative Denial of Application for DROP Enrollment – Plan J

This is an appeal by Louis A. Di Renzo III, Deputy of Probate Services for the Register of Wills, of the Administrative Denial of his application for the DROP program.

Mr. Di Renzo, a member of pension plan J, will turn age 55 on March 17, 2019. He contacted the staff at the Board of Pensions and Retirement and inquired about his ability to enter DROP at age 55 based on the language of the 2017-2020 Sheriffs and Register of Wills contract.

Staff forwarded a letter to Mr. Di Renzo on December 4, 2018 informing him that, based on his position as Deputy of Probate Services, any application for DROP entry whose start date is prior to two (2) years following the attainment of the minimum retirement age of his pension plan would be administratively denied.

Mr. DiRenzo submitted an application for DROP enrollment on December 12, 2018. Staff forwarded a letter dated January 8, 2019 administratively denying his DROP application and informing him of his appeal rights. In a letter dated January 14, 2019, Mr. Di Renzo appealed the Board's decision.

If the Board approves Mr. Di Renzo's appeal, he would be entitled to enter the DROP program effective March 25, 2019.

Carol Stukes-Baylor made a motion to send to a hearing panel. Ronald Stagliano seconded the motion.

The motion to send to a hearing panel carried unanimously 8-0.

Case of Joseph Luce, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits –Plan “B”

This case was **denied** at the Board meeting held on December 7, 2017. A Sammons hearing panel was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2018.

The hearing panel recommendations are as follows:

Jacqueline Dunn:	Approve
Sharolyn L. Murphy, Esq.:	Approve
Carol Stukes-Baylor:	Approve

Case Summary:

This is an application submitted by Joseph Luce, former Police Officer for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan “B”.

According to Mr. Luce, on May 10, 2013 while attempting to arrest a burglar a struggle ensued. During the struggle, he fell striking his knee against the asphalt causing his injuries.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve. Brian Coughlin seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried unanimously 8-0.

Case of Teresa Graves, Application for Service-Connected Disability Benefits – Plan B

This case was **denied** at the Board meeting held on September 28, 2017. A hearing panel was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2018.

The hearing panel recommendations are as follows:

Jacqueline Dunn:	Deny
Sharolyn L. Murphy, Esq.:	Deny
Carol Stukes-Baylor:	Approve

Case Summary:

This is an application submitted by Teresa Graves, former Police Officer for Service-Connected Disability benefits under Pension Plan “B”.

According to Ms. Graves, on September 13, 2012 she her right knee on the door of her patrol car. Ms. Graves states that she continued to work and as the day progressed her knee locked up on her and she was unable to walk.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to approve. Carol Stukes-Baylor seconded the motion.

The motion to approve carried 5-3.

Executive Director's Report

- Mr. Bielli stated that employee pension contributions have increased and the changes for 2019 are posted on the Board of Pensions website. Employees in Plan 16 are subject to a base contribution rate, as well as the tiers, but only pay contributions on their earnings up to the pensionable cap of \$65,000.
- The Business and Education Travel Reports for the 4th Quarter of 2018 were distributed to Board members.
- Business and Education Travel Requests

Christopher DiFusco – Advanced Investments Management Program, Wharton University of PA, April 29 – May 2, 2019

Carol Stukes-Baylor made a motion to approve. Veronica Pankey seconded the motion.

The motion to approve Christopher DiFusco to attend the Wharton Advanced Investments Management Program April 29-May 2, 2019 in Philadelphia, PA carried unanimously 8-0.

- **Litigation Summary** – Ms. Berkowitz stated there are three cases in Commonwealth Court and one in Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Jacqueline Anderson's appeal for service-connected disability benefits was granted.

Ronald Stagliano made a motion to adjourn. Brian Coughlin seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.