



## **FIREFIIGHTERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

3100 Brentwood Drive  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809  
Telephone (225) 925-4060 • Fax (225) 925-4062



### **MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES August 11 & 12, 2021**

Pursuant to Proclamation No. 117 JBE 2021 issued by Governor John Bel Edwards, there are no further restrictions reducing building occupant capacities. Full capacity as authorized by the OSFM, based upon the adopted codes, is now permitted. For that reason, the FRS board meetings are now being held in the FRS board room in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, without regard to the former capacity limitations. Proclamation Nos. 133 JBE 2021 and 137 JBE 2021 provide, in part: "All individuals in the State of Louisiana shall be required to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when indoors in any place outside of a private residence[.]" For anyone who would like to view the meetings by remote means, the meetings will continue to be offered through Zoom audio/video sessions. Any person (including the public) can choose to attend by teleconference and submit comments regarding matters on the agenda.

A two-day meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on August 11, 2021 and continued on August 12, 2021 at the Firefighters' Retirement System building in Baton Rouge. Chairman Perry Jeselink called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman Jeselink gave the invocation and Mr. Romero led the pledge of allegiance.

Ms. Vicknair called the roll. A quorum was present.

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Perry Jeselink

\*Mayor David Amrhein

Mr. Stacy Birdwell

\*Mr. John Broussard (designee of State Treasurer John Schroder)

Mr. Louis Romero

\*Ms. Lindsay Schexnayder (designee of Commissioner Jay Dardenne)

Mr. Jerry Tarleton

\*Mayor Ronny Walker

\*Attended via Zoom

#### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Treasurer John Schroder

Steven Stockstill

Layne McKinney

Jason Starns

Ben Johnson

Michael Becker

Brandon Trahan

Ashley Vicknair

Laura Gail Sullivan

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Greg Curran  
David Barnes  
Brennen LeBlanc  
Scott Perrilloux

Christopher Carroll  
Henry Olinde  
Melissa Cahill

Drew Fox  
Cyril Espanol  
Lindsay Saienni

**EDITORIAL NOTE:** IN THE FOLLOWING MINUTE ENTRIES, ACTION REGARDING EACH VOTE WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY ROLL CALL VOTE. IN INSTANCES WHERE THE VOTE WAS UNANIMOUS, THE MINUTE ENTRY WILL SIMPLY MEMORIALIZE THE RESULT AS UNANIMOUS. IN ANY INSTANCE WHERE THE VOTE WAS NOT UNANIMOUS, THE MINUTE ENTRY WILL MEMORIALIZE THE ACTUAL ROLL CALL VOTE AND TALLY. ALL VOTING CAN BE VERIFIED BY AVAILABLE SOURCES.

**MINUTES**

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to approve the minutes of the board meeting held on July 8, 2021. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**APPLICANTS**

- New Members

PROCEDURE: The FRS enrollment process, including the completion of the applicant forms, the physical examination, and the completion of any waivers of preexisting conditions, must be completed and all documents received by FRS within six months of the date of employment. If the FRS enrollment process is not completed within six months from the date of employment, the applicant will be a member eligible to begin vesting for regular benefits from the date of employment, but not eligible to begin vesting for disability benefits until the completion of the enrollment process. It is the statutory responsibility of the employer to insure that the enrollment process is timely completed or to provide FRS with notice of noncompliance by the applicant. If a member who has not completed the enrollment process becomes injured in the line of duty and applies for disability benefits, then the member must prove that the disabling condition was not preexisting. Each enrollment application is reviewed by staff to determine eligible job classification, date of hire, employer certification, and medical waiver information. Each application for membership was completed and submitted in accordance with all applicable state laws.

Mr. Starns presented the list of new member applicants for the month of August 2021. (see attached Exhibit #1) He stated that all applications were in order.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to approve the new member applicants for the month of August 2021. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

- Retirees

PROCEDURE: To retire, a member must furnish the retirement office with an application for retirement. When the application is received by the retirement office, the member's file is reviewed for proper documentation and to determine that the applicant meets the legal criteria necessary to receive payment in the form of a monthly retirement benefit. Calculations for retirement are performed by the benefit analyst and verified by the system's administrator. All retirement applications were submitted and benefits calculated in accordance with all applicable state laws.

Mr. Starns presented the list of new retirees for the month of August 2021. (see attached Exhibit #2) He stated that all applications were in order.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to approve the retiree applicants for the month of August 2021. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

- Survivor Applications

PROCEDURE: Survivors applying for benefits must furnish the retirement office with a notarized application for survivor benefits, a copy of the member's death certificate, a marriage licence (if beneficiary is a spouse), and the beneficiary's birth certificate. Once received, the deceased member's records are reviewed by staff to determine survivor benefit eligibility and to determine that the survivor's benefit calculation is completed per all applicable state laws and any merger agreements.

[NOTE: Individuals who retired under another retirement system where FRS is a third party administering payments as a result of a merger, and where the individual becomes deceased after the merger, the beneficiary or survivor is still required to submit all necessary documents; however, payment is made as set forth in the merger agreement (contract) affecting beneficiaries and survivors.] (R.S. 11:2256 and R.S. 11:2259)

**Betty Cox Feazel-** Mr. Starns presented the application of Betty Cox Feazel, surviving spouse of Lester Hartmon Feazel. He stated that the application was in order.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to approve the application of Betty Cox Feazel. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

- Disability Applications

PROCEDURE: To obtain disability benefits, a member must furnish the retirement office with an application for disability retirement. For the following applicant(s), the application for disability retirement, current job duties, and all medical records pertaining to the injury or illness were received and reviewed by the retirement office staff. An appointment was scheduled with a State Medical Disability Board doctor specializing in the area of the claimed disability. The doctor submitted a detailed report in laymen's terms of his findings based on the examination performed and the medical records reviewed. Prior to the meeting, the board of trustees was provided with the disability application, job description, State Medical Disability Board doctor's report and all medical records related to each applicant, for their review. (R.S. 11:215, 216, 218, & 2258)

[NOTE: By giving advance notice on its duly posted agenda, the board of trustees reserved the right to enter executive session pursuant to R.S. 42:17(A)(1) for discussion of any privacy protected physical or mental health information related to the disability applicants.]

██████████ Mr. Starns presented the disability application of ██████████. Mr. Starns stated that, based on the report by State Medical Disability Board doctor, Dr. Deepesh Rubin Patel, the staff recommendation was for approval of the Application for Disability Retirement (Non-Job-Related) and suspending the requirement of disability recertification.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to accept the staff recommendation regarding ██████████. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed.

██████████ Mr. Starns presented the disability application of ██████████. Mr. Starns stated that, based on the report by State Medical Disability Board doctor, Dr. Deepesh Rubin Patel, the staff recommendation was for approval of the Application for Disability Retirement (Job-Related) and suspending the requirement of disability recertification.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to accept the staff recommendation regarding ██████████. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**RECESS FRS BOARD MEETING**

**CONVENE FRS-LLC'S FRS-LB, FRS-LB #1, FRS-LB #3, and FRS-GA  
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

[NOTE: The FRS-LLC'S FRS-LB, FRS-LB #1, FRS-LB#3, and FRS-GA Joint Advisory Committees met on August 11, 2021, in Baton Rouge at 8:30 a.m. to discuss the following business set forth in its posted agenda- (i) Discussion and

advice regarding FY 2021-2022 operating budget budgetary for FRS-LB, FRS-LB#1, FRS-LB#3, and FRS-GA, and all related matters. The minutes of that meeting are embedded herein. Committee members present were Mr. Stockstill, manager; Mayor Amrhein, Mr. Birdwell, Mr. Broussard, Mr. Jeselink, Mr. Romero, Ms. Schexnayder, Mr. Tarleton, Mayor Walker. Also present were State Treasurer John Schroder, Layne McKinney, Michael Becker, Ben Johnson, Brandon Trahan, Ashley Vicknair, David Barnes, Scott Perrilloux, Greg Curran, Brennen LeBlanc, Christopher Carroll, Laura Gail Sullivan, Lindsay Saienni, Drew Fox, Cyril Espanol and Melissa Cahill.]

- **FY 2021-2022 Operating Budget**

Mr. Stockstill explained that State Treasurer John Schroder was attending the meeting through Zoom and would be providing an update concerning the Utah property. Treasurer Schroder explained that he viewed the property and met with local government officials and key economic personnel. He added that the locals were excited to have a land owner that wants to work with the local government regarding use and development of the property. Treasurer Schroder recommended that the committee act with patience because the property is located in an area where the population is growing, especially with the property being situated close to the airport. Mr. Stockstill explained that the agenda item was designated as a budget matter, but only as a place holder in the event any action needed to be taken with respect to the budget. No such action was necessary.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

**RECONVENE FRS BOARD MEETING**

**DUNN AND KENNER PFFA v. CITY OF KENNER  
FRS, ET AL v JOSEPH R. GRECO, ET AL**

*Dunn and Kenner PFFA v. City of Kenner*, Suit No. 687-197, Division O, 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, Louisiana; in conjunction with *FRS, et al. v. Joseph R. Greco, et al.*, Suit No. 641387, 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

[NOTE: By giving notice on its duly posted agenda, the board of trustees reserved its right to enter executive session pursuant to R.S. 42:17(A)(2) for discussion of strategy or negotiations with respect to actual or prospective litigation, and where an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of FRS; all pertinent notifications had been provided.]

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to enter executive session. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to resume public session. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

#### **FUND OF ONE - NEPC DUE DILIGENCE**

Mr. Stockstill recalled that FRS previously furnished Hamilton Lane with a copy of the system's standardized due diligence questionnaire and Hamilton Lane provided FRS with answers. But, the answers Hamilton Lane provided needed further clarification. Mr. Stockstill explained that he drew up a list of questions asking NEPC to provide input regarding some of the responses from Hamilton Lane. NEPC was also asked about the due diligence that NEPC performed on Hamilton Lane. He said that, at last month's board meeting, NEPC provided an update about the diligence that NEPC had done, however, some of NEPC's responses were not clear regarding whether NEPC did or did not conduct certain diligence exercises. Mr. Stockstill added that he sent NEPC a follow-up list of questions asking whether NEPC had done certain diligence, which was to be answered on a simple yes or no basis. (see attached Exhibit #3) He explained that NEPC's follow-up responses were included in this month's board book. (see attached Exhibit #4) He further explained that the questions where NEPC answered "no" were highlighted. He said the FRS board now needs to decide if FRS wants to ask NEPC to perform the diligence that NEPC had not done or, alternatively, if FRS needs to retain a third party to do so. Mr. Barnes explained that he will go back to NEPC's research team for answers regarding the questions Mr. Stockstill asked and will report back to the FRS board.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

#### **MONTHLY FLASH REPORT - JULY 2021**

Mr. Barnes presented the monthly flash report for the month of July 2021. (see attached Exhibit #5) The overall fund was up/down as follows: 0.2% for the month of July as compared to the allocation index of 0.2%; 9.7% for the calendar year to date as compared to the allocation index of 8.0%; 22.1% for the trailing 12 months as compared to the allocation index of 20.1%; and 9.9% for the trailing 3 years as compared to the allocation index of 10.3%.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

#### **FRS INVESTMENT REPORT**

- Fund of One - Contract Advisor

Mr. Stockstill drew the board's attention to a brochure from the firm of Proskauer-Rose regarding retaining an advisor to help FRS construct a contract between FRS and the Fund of One manager. (see attached Exhibit #6) Mr. Stockstill recalled that he previously furnished board members with brochures from two other firms named Skadden-Arps and DL Piper (David Parrish). He added that

he disclosed the top side of the estimates for retaining their services. Mr. Stockstill explained that FRS needs an expert who is familiar with constructing Fund of One contracts in order to protect the system's rights. He said, if the board is so inclined, then a decision needs to be made before FRS gets to the contract stage of negotiations.

Mr. Tarleton asked if Mr. Stockstill had a recommendation between the three candidate firms. Mr. Stockstill suggested narrowing the process down to Skadden-Arps or DL Piper. He explained that Skadden seems to have a larger business-finance department than DL Piper. By comparison, the Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System (MPERS) had already retained DL Piper and recommended the firm for FRS. Mr. Stockstill added that, if either firm knows that FRS is seriously considering their retention, then they will probably furnish a closer estimate regarding the hours that will be needed to accomplish the task.

Mr. Romero asked that, if Mr. Stockstill was to give the three choices a star rating, would they all be above five stars? Mr. Stockstill answered explaining that a prospective investor cannot find that type of independent rating online and apparently the expedient way to rate them is to contact people that the firms have done work for.

Mr. Broussard asked whether Mr. Stockstill had asked these firms if they had done any work specifically related to the task that FRS is undertaking. Mr. Stockstill answered in the affirmative. He added that he and Mr. Becker met with each firm by phone or via Zoom to get information. Mr. Stockstill said each of the firms indicated that they had done work specifically comparable to the FRS task and particularly for other public retirement systems. Mr. Broussard then asked for Mr. Stockstill's recommendation. In response, Mr. Stockstill recommending either Skadden-Arps or DL Piper with initial payment authority of \$95,000.

MOTION: After further discussions, Mr. Broussard moved to authorize Messrs. Stockstill and Becker perform diligence and retain either Skadden-Arps or DL Piper with initial budget authority of up to \$97,000 and provide a status report to the board next month. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

- Greenspring Associates - NEPC Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update regarding StepStone's Acquisition of Greenspring Associates. He explained that StepStone announced that it will be taking ownership of Greenspring Associates. He added that StepStone is not expecting any significant changes to Greenspring's employee base but, StepStone is expecting the transaction to give Greenspring access to a broader global team of business development and investor relations. He concluded the update by stating that NEPC does not recommend any action at this point. (see attached Exhibit #7)

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

- Invesco - NEPC Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update regarding Invesco's analyst departures. He explained that Invesco informed NEPC of personnel changes in the Emerging Markets Equity team. He added that NEPC is comfortable with the changes being made and NEPC does not recommend any action. (see attached Exhibit #8)

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

- Landmark Partners - NEPC Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update regarding Ares Management's acquisition of Landmark Partners. He explained that Ares has acquired 100% ownership interest of Landmark. He added that after separate calls with Landmark's teams, NEPC is comfortable with the acquisition and NEPC does not recommend any action. (see attached Exhibit #9)

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

- Rothschild - NEPC Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update regarding Rothschild's announced retirement of the portfolio manager of its U.S. Small and SMID Core strategy. He explained that the portfolio manager had been working at Rothschild for 25+ years and will be retiring at the end of 2021. He added that Rothschild was placed on both NEPC's and FRS' internal watch list in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2019 following the retirement of Rothschild's previous lead portfolio manager. He also mentioned that NEPC will now have more frequent calls with Rothschild. Mr. Barnes said NEPC recommends maintaining Rothschild on the watch list with the retirement of the most recent portfolio manager. (see attached Exhibit #10)

Mr. Stockstill referenced the July 2021 monthly flash report prepared by NEPC, and observed the under performance of Rothschild. He then asked Mr. Becker to prepare for next month's board meeting a quartile chart comparing the performance of Rothschild to its peers in the same asset and style class. He also suggested that FRS do the same comparison as a matter of policy whenever a manager is placed on the FRS watch list.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

- Wellington - NEPC Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update regarding the transition of lead portfolio managers for the Wellington Blended Opportunistic EMD portfolio. He explained that the founder of the strategy will be retiring at the end of 2021. He said the co-portfolio manager is now transitioning to be the lead portfolio manager. Mr. Barnes added that NEPC had already placed the Wellington Blended Opportunistic



EMD strategy on its own Watch List and NEPC recommends FRS do the same. (see attached Exhibit #11)

MOTION: Mr. Tarleton moved to accept NEPC's recommendation to place Wellington on the FRS Watch List. Mr. Birdwell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FIDUCIARY NET POSITION - PRELIMINARY AND  
STATEMENT OF FIDUCIARY NET POSITION - PRELIMINARY FOR FIRST QUARTER  
OF 4Q FY2019-20**

- Statement of Changes in Plan Net Assets - Preliminary - 4Q FY2020-21
- Statement of Plan Net Assets - Preliminary - 4Q FY2020-21

Mr. McKinney presented the Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position - Preliminary for the fourth quarter of FY2020-21 (see attached Exhibit #12) and the Statement of Fiduciary Net Position - Preliminary for the fourth quarter of FY2020-21. (see attached Exhibit #13) He explained each report on a line-by-line basis.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to accept the Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position - Preliminary for the fourth quarter of FY2020-21 and the Statement of Fiduciary Net Position - Preliminary for the fourth quarter of FY2020-21 as presented by Mr. McKinney. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**FRS BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON - 4Q FY 2020-21**

Mr. Ben Johnson, FRS Accountant, drew the board's attention to a report titled FRS "Budget to Actual Comparison" for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of FY 2020-21. (see attached Exhibit #14) He highlighted pertinent line items of the report and explained certain variances related thereto. Mr. Johnson summarized by saying that the close of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter is also the close of the 2020-21 fiscal year and, as such, FRS ended the year at 84% of total budgeted expenses.

MOTION: Mr. Romero moved to approve the FRS Budget to Actual Comparison for 4Q FY 2020-21 as presented by Mr. Johnson. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**RECESS FRS BOARD MEETING**

Chairman Jeselink stated that the meeting will recess and reconvene tomorrow morning.

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August 12, 2021

**RECONVENE FRS BOARD MEETING**

Chairman Jeselink reconvened the FRS board meeting which had previously stood in recess.

Ms. Vicknair called the roll. A quorum was present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Perry Jeselink

\*Mayor David Amrhein

Mr. Stacy Birdwell

\*Mr. John Broussard (designee of State Treasurer John Schroder)

Mr. Louis Romero

\*Ms. Lindsay Schexnayder (designee of Commissioner Jay Dardenne)

Mr. Jerry Tarleton

\*Mayor Ronny Walker

\*Attended via Zoom

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Steven Stockstill

Layne McKinney

Michael Becker

Ashley Vicknair

Ben Johnson

Jeff Williams

Matthew Powell

Greg Curran

Laura Gail Sullivan

Joey David

David Barnes

Christopher Carroll

Drew Fox

Brennen LeBlanc

Terry Stuard

Chris Kaufmann

Mark Waniewski

Cyril Espanol

Scott Perrilloux

**FRS PERSONNEL MATTERS**

MOTION: Mr. Romero moved to add to the agenda an item regarding the replacement of the Firefighters' Retirement System's Benefits Manager, Jason Starns upon his retirement and all other related matters. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Romero moved to enter executive session. Mr. Tarleton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Birdwell moved to resume public session. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Based on discussions had in executive session, Mr. Tarleton moved to make the following annual salary adjustments- Ben Johnson to \$70,000, Ashley Duhe Vicknair to \$52,500, Brandon Trahan to \$70,000, and a newly hired Benefits Analyst at \$65,000. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no further action being needed or taken.

**SEGAL ADVISORS - ACTUARIAL AUDIT (PHASE I)**

Jeff Williams, Vice President and Consulting Actuary with Segal Advisors, addressed the board. He introduced his colleague Matthew Powell. Mr. Williams referenced the Firefighters' Retirement System's Actuarial Audit. (see attached Exhibit #15) He explained that the company was very pleased to present the results of the full-scope (Level One) audit. He added that the purpose of this audit was to replicate the results presented in the Actuarial Valuation Report prepared by the system's actuary G.S. Curran & Company, Ltd and to determine whether the system is being funded on an adequate basis using actuarial assumptions that are reasonable, consistent and meet generally accepted actuarial principles. He added that the purpose of the audit was also so determine whether the system is in compliance with State law and the policy of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Williams noted that this report completed Segal's study for Phase I and he then concluded by answering questions that arose from the board.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

**SEGAL ADVISORS - VALUATION OF POTENTIAL PLAN CHANGES (PHASE II)**

Jeff Williams and Matthew Powell with Segal Advisors both addressed the board. Mr. Williams referenced the Firefighters' Retirement System's Valuation of Potential Plan Changes. (see attached Exhibit #16) He provided information concerning potential plan changes, the benefit multiplier, average final compensation, retirement eligibility, benefit maximum, and associated risks. Mr. Williams noted that this report completed Segal's study for Phase II and he then concluded by answering questions that arose from the board.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

**HR166 STUDY COMMITTEE**

[The HR166 Study Committee met on August 11, 2021 in Baton Rouge at 3:00 p.m. to discuss the following business set forth on its posted agenda - (i) Discussion and action regarding HR166 requiring the formation of a FRS study committee to submit a report to the House of Representatives prior to the beginning of the 2022 regular session of the legislature, and all related matters. The minutes of that meeting are embedded herein. Committee members present were Mr. Jeselink, Mayor Amrhein, Mr. Birdwell, Mr. Broussard, Mr. Romero, Ms. Schexnayder, Mr. Tarleton, and Mayor Walker. Others present were Mr. Stockstill, Ben Johnson, Brandon Trahan, Ashley Vicknair,

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Brennen LeBlanc, Laura Gail Sullivan, Robert Klausner, Mr. Adams, Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Istre, Mr. Lyons.]

Mr. Adams addressed the committee. He explained that three years ago he approached Mr. Chad Major about the possibility for certain fire departments located on the west side of Jefferson Parish to become members of FRS. He further explained that, at that time, it was not in favor for those departments to join. Mr. Adams said that those departments are now made up of mostly paid personnel and they are interested in joining the retirement system. He added that most personnel leave these referenced departments and get hired by departments that are in FRS and he would like to have the opportunity to add that benefit to these departments. Mr. Adams then explained that a resolution was passed at the Jefferson Parish council meeting to give him the flexibility to look at three departments and let him give a reason on why those three departments should be consolidated. He added that he knows what the end needs to be but he is looking for a solution from the committee on how to get there. Mr. Stockstill recalled to the committee that, a few years ago, he had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Bergeron who asked if the firefighters could be a part of the system. Mr. Stockstill responded affirmatively. Mr. Stockstill added that he did not have all the facts at that time and afterwards learned that the firefighters were employees of a private non-profit corporation, not governmental employees, which might be problematic to the IRS if they were to become members.

Robert Klausner addressed the committee. He said the central issue is who controls the fire department. He added that many years ago, the IRS looked into volunteer fire departments and asked if a volunteer firefighter could participate in a governmental pension plan. The answer was yes, generally, but then they explained the specifics of the organization of the firefighting company and it was a not-for-profit corporation. He said, that alone is not a problem, because under Louisiana law, fire protection districts are considered public corporations. He also added that all of the state and statewide retirement systems are considered public corporations. Mr. Klausner explained that the problem is a firefighting company is not a public corporation, unless it has some measure of control exercised by the governing authority which, in this case, would be the parish council in Jefferson Parish. He then referenced R.S. 33:1991 where the term firefighter actually already includes members of a not-for-profit fire company. He further explained that Firefighters' Retirement System is a "qualified" plan. That means, as a governmental plan, it is partially exempt from ERISA (the Employee Retirement Income Security Act). Mr. Klausner added that the challenge here is whether there is a way to reform the current governance of the fire companies in a way that satisfies the definition of government. He concluded by stating the he will send FRS a summary of the issues arising from this meeting, the background information needed, and a recommended amendment, if necessary.

The discussion of this matter was concluded with no action being needed or taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Tarleton moved to adjourn. Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed.

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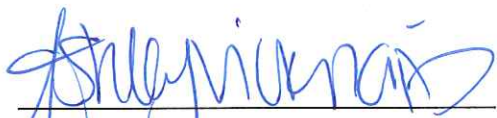
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**FUTURE MEETINGS**

**FRS Board of Trustees  
Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.  
3100 Brentwood Dr. Baton Rouge, LA**

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ashley Vicknair, FRS Board Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Perry Jeselink, FRS Chairman