

**HOWARD COUNTY POLICE AND FIRE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT PLAN
HOWARD COUNTY RETIREMENT PLAN**

**JOINT MEETING OF THE RETIREMENT PLAN COMMITTEES
April 29, 2021**

A joint meeting of the Retirement Plan Committees for the Howard County Police and Fire Employees' Retirement Plan (the "Police and Fire Plan") and the Howard County Retirement Plan (the "Employees Plan") (jointly, the "Plans") was held on Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via a WebEx conference.

Police and Fire Plan:

Members Present:

Human Resources Administrator: Wanda Hutchinson
Director of Finance: Rafiu Ighile
Budget Administrator: Holly Sun
Representative, Police Department Supervisory Employees:
Jason Luckenbaugh (Non-voting Member in Fiscal Year 2021)
Representative, International Association of Firefighters, Local 2000:
Richard Ruehl
Representative, Fire and Rescue Supervisory Employees:
Vincent Baker (Voting Member in Fiscal Year 2021)
Representative, Howard County Police Officers' Association, Lodge 21:
Nicolas Holocker

Member Absent

Chief Administrative Officer: Lonnie Robbins

Employees Plan:

Members Present:

Human Resources Administrator: Wanda Hutchinson
Chief Administrative Officer Designee: John Peterson
Deputy Director of Finance: Angela Price
Budget Administrator Designee: Janssen Evelyn
Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal
Employees Local 3085: Dale R. Chase
Employee Representative: Jeff Bronow
Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal
Employees Local 3080: Melanie Avery

Member Absent

None.

Also present for all or a portion of the meeting were:

Margaret Belmondo, NEPC
Will Forde, NEPC
Francesca LoVerde, NEPC
Lori Buchman, Department of Finance
Jamar Herry, Office of Law
Scott Southern, Retirement Coordinator
Karen Gerald, Assistant Retirement Coordinator
Nike Yahaya, Retirement Assistant
Sima Taghavi, Department of Finance
Paul W. Madden, Whiteford, Taylor & Preston L.L.P.

Wanda Hutchinson acted as Chair of the meeting and Paul Madden acted as secretary.

The minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting of the Joint Committees were corrected; following correction, the minutes were approved by the members of each Committee.

Margaret Belmondo presented the March 2021 Flash Report. The total fund returned +0.9% for the month. The fiscal year to date return is strong at +17.5%. The market value of the fund as of February 28 was \$1.32 billion. Margaret noted that value stocks have made a comeback. The fund's value managers, LSV and ICM have outperformed their growth counterparts over the past month, quarter and year.

Will Forde presented a correlation & stochastic analysis showing the relative risk and performance profiles under the new asset allocation as compared with the prior asset allocation. The new asset allocation increased the fund's expected 30-year returns from 6.4% to 6.9% and increased the standard deviation measure of risk from 11.9% to 13.8%.

Margaret Belmondo reviewed NEPC's high yield fixed income manager search. NEPC has three high-conviction managers, Artisan High Income, Wellington Core High Yield Bond and Barings U.S. High Yield Bonds. In addition, NEPC presented information on Mesirow High Yield Bond Fund at the request of a committee member. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee decided that a subcommittee should schedule interviews with Artisan, Wellington and Mesirow. The Committees also approved an investment subcommittee consisting of Cole Holocker, Richard Ruehl and John Peterson to make recommendations.

Angie Price and Rafiu Ighile reported on their review of the investment monitoring policy and the Investment Policy Statement (IPS) requirements for visits by the managers. Angie and Rafiu noted that the investment monitoring policy and the IPS overlapped in some respects. They recommended decommissioning the investment monitoring policy, adding items from the investment monitoring policy to Finance's desktop procedures. Angie and Rafiu noted that with 36 managers, visits with each manager every two years is not practical and recommended changes to the IPS. After discussion, the Committees approved the recommended decommissioning of the investment monitoring policy and the recommended changes to the Investment Policy Statement.

Paul Madden provided a fiduciary review and update.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Madden

Paul Madden

Secretary of the Meeting

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**EXHIBITS
TO
MINUTES OF HOWARD COUNTY POLICE AND FIRE EMPLOYEES'
RETIREMENT PLAN
AND HOWARD COUNTY RETIREMENT PLAN
JOINT MEETING OF THE RETIREMENT PLAN COMMITTEES
April 29, 2021**

1. NEPC Meeting Materials:
 - March 2021 Flash Report
 - Correlation & Stochastic Analysis
 - High Yield Search Book Review
2. Proposed amendments to Investment Policy Statement
3. Fiduciary Review & Update