

**Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board
Meeting of March 27, 2020
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
being held at:**

Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System
500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210, Charlestown, MA
and via conference call

Agenda for March Board meeting

Regular Matters of Business Tab 1
Open and Executive Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 28, 2020

Applications for Accidental Disability Retirement* Disability Folder
Executive Session, Physical Condition or Mental Health – Purpose 1

Forfeiture-Review of Stipulation* Tab 2
Executive Session, Charges Against a Public Employee – Purpose 1

Executive Director's Report

**To be considered in Executive Session*

Next meeting scheduled for
April 24, 2020
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Minutes of the Meeting of March 27, 2020

of the

MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' RETIREMENT BOARD

I. Regular Matters of Business

In attendance at this regular meeting of the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board ("the Board") were Chairman Ventura Rodriguez, Vice Chair Nicola Favorito, Jacqueline A. Gorrie, Richard L. Liston, Dennis J. Naughton, Michael Ruane, Anne Wass, Executive Director Erika Glaster, General Counsel James O'Leary, Associate Legal Counsel Ashley Freeman, and Executive Assistant Helen Petruzzello.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Rodriguez who stated that in accordance with the Governor's recent Executive Order in response to COVID-19, all Board members were participating remotely. The MTRS Executive Director and General Counsel were at the Board room at the main MTRS office in Charlestown, which was open to the public. The disability applicant and her counsel, as well as other MTRS staff were participating remotely in the same manner as the Board. Chairman Rodriguez asked for all Board members to state their names before speaking and stated that all votes would be conducted via roll call.

This being Chairman Rodriguez's first Board meeting since his appointment to replace retiring Chairman Jeff Wulfson, he offered a brief introduction to Board members and staff. He provided background on his family and work experience, including his duties in his current position as Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Initiatives with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The minutes of the previous Board meeting, held on February 28, 2020 were reviewed and approved as submitted. Mr. Ruane made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Wass, to approve the minutes. On roll call, the vote was as follows:

VOTED: Vice Chair Nicola Favorito	Yes
Jacqueline A. Gorrie	Yes
Richard L. Liston	Abstain
Dennis J. Naughton	Abstain
Michael Ruane	Yes

Anne Wass	Yes
Chairman Ventura Rodriguez	Abstain

Mr. Liston, Mr. Naughton and Chairman Rodriguez abstained due to their absence from the March meeting.

The Open and Executive minutes of the Board meeting held on February 28, 2020 are hereby approved as submitted.

II. Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Liston, and seconded by Mr. Ruane, to enter executive session to consider an application for disability benefits and to review a stipulation for forfeiture. On roll call, the vote was as follows:

VOTED: Vice Chair Nicola Favorito	Yes
Jacqueline A. Gorrie	Yes
Richard L. Liston	Yes
Dennis J. Naughton	Yes
Michael Ruane	Yes
Anne Wass	Yes
Chairman Ventura Rodriguez	Yes

At 9:07 a.m. the Board went into Executive Session. The Chairman stated that the Board would return to Open Session.

At 9:42 a.m. the Board reconvened in Open Session at which point the door to the Board room at the MTRS main office in Charlestown was again opened to the public.

III. Open Session

A. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Glaster summarized the steps the agency has taken since the end of February in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. In addition to following common contagious disease prevention practices, the management team had prepared a plan for all staff to report to the office only two or three days per week while working from home on the alternate days. However, once the

Governor issued the order that all non-emergency personnel should work from home through April 7th, the agency immediately accelerated the ramp up of our remote work capabilities and severely limited the number of staff working in the Charlestown and Springfield offices. Ms. Glaster reported that a skeleton crew of approximately three to five staff have been coming in to perform essential services that must be performed on site, and 85 staff have remote access to perform their normal work functions from home. Ms. Glaster noted that although the phone system does not allow for offsite call forwarding, the agency set up a menu of topic-specific extensions where callers can leave a voicemail message. Those voicemails are being returned within 24 hours. In addition, members are encouraged to send their questions via email to our GenInfo email address. Those emails are checked daily and distributed to various staff for timely response. Ms. Glaster praised the staff for their ongoing efforts and noted the extraordinary work by Network Services Director David Wright and his team in establishing secure remote access for the majority of staff in such a short time.

Ms. Glaster further informed the Board that, after listening to new information from medical experts on the impact of COVID-19, not only on the most vulnerable demographics, but also on relatively younger and healthier individuals, she plans to close both offices to all staff members for the week of March 30th through April 3rd. The agency has already taken care of this month's pension checks that required special instructions, and has arranged for the US mail to be forwarded to Ms. Glaster's home for processing during this time period. Forwarding will not be necessary at the Springfield office location as its secure mail facility is separate from its staff offices. The plans are to be back in the office by April 7th but only with a couple of staff members to perform essential functions that cannot be done remotely.

The Board commended the agency on the recent communication sent to retirees and survivors assuring them of the security of their pensions. Mr. Naughton asked if similar reassurance could be sent out to the active membership regarding the status of creditable service during this period of school closures. Ms. Glaster agreed to forward a draft to Chairman Rodriguez for review and approval before posting on the website.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Ms. Glaster and Mr. O'Leary for their guidance and assistance as he transitioned to his role as MTRS Board Chair, and stated he was

impressed by the “whatever it takes” leadership demonstrated during these difficult times. Ms. Glaster replied that she is surrounded by an incredible team and thanked the Board for their support in this unprecedented challenging period.

On a motion made by Mr. Liston and seconded by Mr. Naughton, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting. On roll call, the vote was as follows:

VOTED: Vice Chair Nicola Favorito	Yes
Jacqueline A. Gorrie	Yes
Richard L. Liston	Yes
Dennis J. Naughton	Yes
Michael Ruane	Yes
Anne Wass	Yes
Chairman Ventura Rodriguez	Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erika M. Glaster,
Executive Director

Date

Documents used in MTRS Board meeting of March 27, 2020

- Agenda for March 27, 2020 MTRS Board meeting
- Cover letter from Executive Director
- Open and executive session minutes of February 28, 2020 MTRS Board meeting