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Patrick Dello Russo ______ Kelly Cogavin ______ Michael Lyle ______ 683
Scott Colborne ______ John McLaughlin, Jr. ______

Melrose Retirement Board Meeting
October 26, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Melrose Retirement Board duly posted to be held in the Retirement Office, City Hall, Melrose, MA on the above date was called to order at 9:00 AM by Chairman Dello Russo by telephone, with Board Members Lyle, and McLaughlin, Jr. present. Board member Colborne joined on Zoom. Also in attendance was Executive Director Adam Travinski.

New Business:

1.On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to approve the Regular Session minutes of the September 28, 2022 meeting and sign them into record.

Board Member Cogavin:	She wasn't at the last meeting.
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	He wasn't at the last meeting.
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

2. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to issue payment for Cash Disbursements Warrant #10-2022 and Retirement Payroll Warrant #10-2022.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

3. On a motion made by Board Member Colborne and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to read and sign the following certificates and include them for Membership in the Melrose Retirement Board:

- Certificate #3595: Claire Caloiero. Ms. Caloiero is a Paraprofessional for the School Department. She is a Group 1, hired on August 31, 2022.
- Certificate #3596: John Zebrowski. Mr. Zebrowski is a Desktop Support Technician for the School Department. He is a Group 1, hired on September 22, 2022.
- Certificate #3597: Janice Miller. Ms. Miller is a Paraprofessional for the School Department. She is a Group 1, hired on August 31, 2022.

- Certificate #3598: Matthew Dorothy. Mr. Dorothy is a Building Sub for the School Department. He is a Group 1, hired on August 31, 2022.
- Certificate #3599: Allison Walsh. Ms. Walsh is a Paraprofessional for the School Department. She is a Group 1, hired on August 31, 2022.
- Certificate #3600: Husna Mateen. Ms. Mateen is a Paraprofessional for the School Department. She is a Group 1, hired on September 21, 2022.
- Certificate #3601: Tyrell Liles. Ms. Liles is a Laborer for the DPW. He is a Group 1, hired on October 11, 2022.
- Certificate #3602: Jenna Bolognese. Ms. Bolognese is a High School Nurse for the Health Department. She is a Group 1, hired on October 17, 2022.
- Certificate #3603: Thomas Bilbilian. Mr. Bilbilian is a Health Inspector Trainee for the Health Department. He is a Group 1, hired on October 17, 2022.
- Certificate #3604: Michael Carlino. Ms. Carlino is a Health Inspector Trainee for the Health Department. He is a Group 1, hired on October 17, 2022.
- Certificate #3605: Melanie Ebert-Winberg. Ms. Ebert-Winberg is a Data Processing Clerk for the School Department. She is a Group 1, hired on October 17, 2022.
- Certificate #3606: Nicholas Koytikh. Mr. Koytikh is a Laborer for the DPW. He is a Group 1, hired on October 19, 2022.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

4. On a motion made by Board Member Colborne and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to accept and process the following received Applications for Withdrawal of Accumulated Total Deductions and Transfers.

- Daniel Tavor. Ms. Tavor was the Election Administrator for the Clerk's Department with 5 months of creditable service. The total amount of the refund is for $2,292.78
- Fadime Icin. Ms. Icin was a Paraprofessional for the School Department with 3 years of creditable service. The total amount of the refund is for $4,568.90.
- Jillian Smith. Ms. Smith was a Paraprofessional for the School Department with 4 years and 6 months of creditable service. The Board will transfer her account of $11,600.71 to the Saugus Retirement Board.
- Haley Ackerman. Ms. Ackerman was a Paraprofessional for the School Department with 1 year and 2 months of creditable service. The Board will transfer her account of $2,388.85 to the Essex Regional Retirement System.

Patrick Dello Russo PD	**Kelly Cogavin** KC	**Michael Lyle** ML 685
Scott Colborne S.C.	**John McLaughlin, Jr.** JM	

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

5. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to review and approve the Cashbooks for September.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

6. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr , it was unanimously **VOTED** by the Board to review and approve the reconciliation of the MMDT and Eastern Bank statements for September.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

7. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr, it was **VOTED** by the Board to discuss and sign the 2022 Budget. The Director stated that at last meeting he was asked to get other quotes for square footage from real estate agents and got in contact with John Bulman at Brad Hutchinson. He stated that retail downtown is about $30-$35 per square foot. We are paying just under $27 here. Allison at Leading Edge and another real estate agent Jay stated it is about $30-$32 downtown for an office this size, but around $24 per square foot for a bigger space. So if you get a bigger office, the square foot price goes down and the smaller offices downtown are right around $30-$32. So she said the estimate for this office here is correct at about $1,100/month and we are paying $1,000. The Chairman thanked the Director. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr, it was **VOTED** by the Board to sign and accept the budget.

Patrick Dello Russo ____ **Kelly Cogavin** KC **Michael Lyle** ____686
Scott Colborne S.C. **John McLaughlin, Jr.** ____

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

8. On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was **VOTED** by the Board from last month's meeting to discuss evaluating the role of Chairman on the Retirement Board. Board Member Colborne stated "that in light of the PERAC exit audit, it appears that some of their recommendations were to maybe have Patrick step aside as Chairman. It almost appeared that they were saying that because of his dual role, it was almost a conflict of interest. So, my recommendation to the Board would be that Patrick step aside as Chairman. I don't know if Mike is Vice Chair. Maybe Patrick and Mike could switch positions. There were a couple of other items that he took exception to. Mainly, the information that Patrick provided regarding the administrative costs that they were mandated to do that, which PERAC also stated that we were not mandated. He stated that he's really going to speak his peace while he has the opportunity. The thing that really bothered him the most, was regarding that meeting back in July 2016, when Joe Connarton and John Parsons had a meeting with Patrick. Not sure if City Solicitor Van Campen was present or not. I look back at that and I really have a problem on how that was handled. That was supposed to be a total board involvement. For those administrative costs to be discussed in private without full board participation, I have a real problem with that. So in the best interests of the Board and everybody else going forward, my recommendation would be to do a little restructuring. Chairman Dello Russo asked if there were any other discussion, or we'll take it to a vote. Board Member Lyle stated that this letter is dated October 26, 2022, to the entire Board. "I am submitting this document for the record, explaining the justification for my vote to remove the Chairman given the recent information from the PERAC audit, finding that the Chair misrepresented himself to this board. Specifically on the mandate back in 2020, when we asked why are we doing these expenses, and the comment from the Chair at the time was that these were a mandate and a requirement, and I voted based on that statement from the Chair. I ask that other board members support this order based solely on the facts and PERAC findings and not on any personal opinions for any individual board member. Item number 8 was placed on the agenda based on the MRB September 2022 meeting, in particular agenda item number 9, to finalize the budget and to review the findings of the PERAC preliminary Audit Exit report, presented to Members Colborne and Lyle August 9, 2022. During the meeting, members of PERAC presented their preliminary findings and brought reference to indirect administrative cost expenditures, leases, credit cards, expense reclassification, negative pension fund accounts, monthly financial reporting as well as recommendations. Most concerning was that they stated that the indirect administrative costs are not authorized by statute. This board has a fiduciary responsibility to our members to operate with the highest level of integrity and disclosure. We as a collective board voted to approve these expenditures over several years based on the Chairman's claims, "...that these costs are

mandated and that PERAC says they are allowable." PERAC stated to the contrary that "...these payments are not authorized in the statute." Ultimately it is clear that the findings of the PERAC audit are a direct result of the review of our minutes from prior MRB meetings, discussions with the Director during the audit. He then asked the Director if he had discussions with them. The Director stated that he had to give them everything. Also emails, as well as prior exclusive meetings between the Chairman, PERAC and Powers and Sullivan (2016). All unbeknownst to board members. Subsequently, these Audit findings were reviewed by MRB Council Attorney Michael Sacco, and he provided an unsolicited legal opinion that supports PERAC's findings relative Human Resources payments. That was in an email we received recently. Let there be no mistake, when the final Audit Report is disclosed, it will find its way to the community as well as the media, as we have seen recently with the Quincy Retirement Board. PERAC's mission is to provide regulatory oversight and guidance for the effective, equitable, and ethical operation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Public Pension Systems'. Please keep in mind we are all responsible members of this community, and as the longest tenured member of this board I do not want my reputation tarnished in any way by the unethical decisions of another. When the final report comes out, does it come to us, the media, where does it go. The Director stated that it goes on their website and the Board get s a copy. Board Member Lyle then stated that we have a fiduciary responsibility to address and resolve these disreputable actions. I am voting to support the order and I urge you all to vote in kind." Chairman Dello Russo stated that I have followed as Chairman, all the directives of PERAC, of the outside auditors as provided by law. I stand 100% behind all decisions that have been made based on the information I received in writing from Powers & Sullivan and PERAC. I have nothing to apologize for. And I'm disappointed that after I submitted these documents countless times to this Board, that for whatever reason they chose not to accept. On that note, I'll ask for a motion. Board Member Colborne asked if it is still open for discussion because he didn't know if John or Kelly had anything to say before we take a vote. Board Member McLaughlin, Jr. stated that he had nothing to say. Board Member Cogavin stated no comment. Board Member Colborne stated ok, I guess it's up for a vote. Chairman Dello Russo asked Board Member Colborne to re-state the motion for the record. Board Member Colborne stated that he made the motion to discuss restructuring the Board, specifically asking that Patrick and Mike switch places, where Patrick would step down as Chairman and become Vice Chair and Mike becomes Chair. To keep it simple, he stated that he's requesting Patrick step down as Chairman, we'll worry about restructuring later. Chairman Dello Russo stated that a Yes vote would be that he step down as Chairman. Board Member Colborne stated yes. A yes vote would be for Patrick to step down as Chair. The motion was seconded by Board Member Lyle. Chairman Dello Russo stated that the motion fails. Thank you.

Patrick Dello Russo ______ **Kelly Cogavin** KC ______ **Michael Lyle** ______ 688
Scott Colborne S.C. ______ **John McLaughlin, Jr.** ______

Board Member Cogavin:	No
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	No
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	No

The Director asked if he could bring up something under new business that he was asked yesterday but couldn't get on the agenda. The Chairman said sure. The Director stated that there was a school committee meeting last night and due to exits needed to be open, my office was unlocked and left unlocked all night. So, Diane Hogan of the school committee requested that she get a key to my office to have it unlocked for the meeting and locked after the meeting. He stated that Andrew, clerk of committees has a key for when city council has meetings. He does that, but he's not here for the school committee meetings. Board Member Cogavin asked if that's only when the capacity is over 44. The Director stated that he does not know. The Chairman asked what the Director recommends the Board do. The Director stated that he does not know, but he doesn't like the office unlocked all night since he has ballots, sensitive information, files, disabilities, and all sorts of stuff. The Chairman said it's all confidential information. The Director stated yes, either we give her a key which he's not sure if he likes that either, or we buy a big safe or something to store boxes of ballots and all sorts of stuff. Board Member Colborne asked if we're required to give them a key. The Director stated that we aren't, but if we don't give them a key, the door would unlocked at 4 o'clock and locked again the next morning, so the whole night the office would be unlocked. Board Member McLaughlin, Jr. stated that can't the other office on the other side of the chamber operate as the second means of egress. The Director stated you need to have two. The Board discussed ways to exit the chamber. Chairman Dello Russo asked if the Board would like to take any action. Board Member Lyle stated that we pay $12,000/year and need a secure office. Some of the real sensitive stuff should be in a safe. He stated that he's looking at ballots. The Chairman asked the Director if he thinks they will leave it unlocked again. The Director stated yes, it was confirmed yesterday. Chairman Dello Russo stated that we can work something out because we can't leave the office open. Board Member Lyle stated that since we have a lease with the city for the space, we're paying a lease that's not in a secure area, so we have all confidential stuff in here. Should we even stay in the office anymore. Chairman Dello Russo stated that you never know who's going to walk in there. The Director stated that he does not feel secure in the office. The Chairman stated that he agrees 100%. Board Member Colborne stated if we're required to give them access, the office would be unlocked during their meeting and then locked after. The Director stated that if we give her the key, it would be her responsibility to lock the door. She would also have access to the office. The Board discussed options for locking the door during meetings and office security.

Patrick Dello Russo ____ **Kelly Cogavin** KC **Michael Lyle** ____ 689
Scott Colborne S.C. **John McLaughlin, Jr.** ____

On a motion by Chairman Dello Russo and seconded by Board Member Colborne, it was **VOTED** by the Board to work with Chief Lyle to make the office more secure.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

<u>Other Business:</u>

- The candidates for the upcoming election are Board Member Colborne and HR Coordinator Diane Barrett. Their bio's are posted on our website. The Director stated that after this election, I would like to have Attorney Sacco involved, to come up with an election policy so the Board can vote on a process for the next election. Chairman Dello Russo stated that's a great idea. Board Member Lyle stated that he had heard complaints that Ms. Barrett was going door to door to different departments asking for signatures. That needs to be addressed too.

-Our Request for Proposal (RFP) for legal services has been approved and submitted to PERAC. It will be posted on their website, our website, the secretary of state's goods and services, the Melrose weekly and on our bulletin board in City Hall. The Director stated that he had to post it in a local paper, so he's dealing with the Melrose Weekly, and we'll have a two-week ad in there for about $375. He stated that he thinks its posted in all legal areas. Chairman Dello Russo asked what's the duration of the contract. The Director said 7 years, and the Board will all be included in the evaluation process of the bids, ranking them most advantageous on a spreadsheet.

-To review the PRIT Fund activity for September 2022.

-<u>Memo #24-2022</u>: Mandatory Retirement Board Member Training- 4th Quarter, 2022.
-<u>Memo #25-2022</u>: Tobacco Company List.
-<u>Memo #26-2022</u>: Appropriation Data Due October 31, 2022.

-The Director will be on vacation from November 4-12.

The date of the November meeting will be Wednesday, November 30th at 9:00 AM.
The date of the December meeting will be Wednesday, December 28th at 9:00 AM.

The Director asked if the Board would like to continue hybrid meetings. The Board said yes.

Patrick Dello Russo PD **Kelly Cogavin** KC **Michael Lyle** ML 690
Scott Colborne SC **John McLaughlin, Jr.** JM

On a motion made by Board Member Lyle and seconded by Board Member McLaughlin, Jr., it was unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 AM.

Board Member Cogavin:	Yes
Board Member Colborne:	Yes
Chairman Dello Russo:	Yes
Board Member Lyle:	Yes
Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.:	Yes

Melrose Retirement Board Meeting
October 26, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Executive Director

Chairman Dello Russo

Board Member Cogavin

Board Member Lyle

Board Member McLaughlin, Jr.

Board Member Colborne