



**Agenda Item 1:** J. Elliott stated this meeting will follow the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and a copy of the Act is located physically, at the NPERS office, electronically, via a link on the final agenda posted on NPERS website, and on the Attorney General's website.

**Agenda Items 2 and 3 – Meeting Called to Order:** J. Elliott called the April 20, 2020, Board Meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. Present at roll call: J. Derr, J. Elliott, K. Ackerman, J. Schulz, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, M. Jahnke, and M. Walden-Newman. Absent: None.

**Agenda Item 4 – Approval of February 24, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes:** M. Jahnke moved for approval of the minutes of the February 24, 2020, Board Meeting. J. Schulz seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Abstain: J. Derr. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 5 – Approval of February Budget Status Report and February 2020 Retirement Report:** J. Schulz moved to approve the February Budget Status Report and February 2020 Retirement Report. K. Ackerman seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 6 – Approval of March Budget Status Report & March 2020 Retirement Report:** K. Ackerman moved to approve the March Budget Status Report and March 2020 Retirement Report. J. Schulz seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 7 – Public Comments or Correspondence from Citizens:** Kevin Petska presented his emergency Deferred Compensation Plan request for distribution to the PERB.

**Agenda Item 8 – Ameritas Annual Report:** N. Reimer presented the Ameritas Annual Plan Review, for year ending December 31, 2019. The full report is available on the NPERS website.

N. Reimer reviewed the report, which includes an overview of contributions, distributions, and year-end balances for NPERS' State, County, Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP), and Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) retirement plans. The report includes member information such as average account balances and the average member years of service in each plan; along with historical returns and annuity statistics. N. Reimer also noted Ameritas 2019 accomplishments and notes regarding Ameritas and NPERS' work together over the year.

N. Reimer stated Ameritas has continued to work with the Nebraska Investment Council and NPERS staff to prepare for investment fund additions and deletions which are scheduled to take effect January 1, 2021, in the Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensations Plans.

J. Schulz moved to approve the Ameritas Annual Report. A. Simpson seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 9 – Internal Auditor Quarterly Report:** T. Baker presented the Internal Auditor Quarterly Report for the months of December 2019, January 2020, and February 2020, which compiled results from audits of School, County, and Public Health employers.

T. Baker announced the Auditing Department welcomed new Auditor, Oliver Blaha, to the team, on February 21, 2020.

T. Baker reported seven School audits were issued, and noted that six of the seven School employers had audit findings. There were 12 County audits issued, and two Public Health District audits issued.

T. Baker stated auditors participated in the Legal Compliance Audit, development of the DCP open enrollment project, and the January 27, 2020, School, Judges, and Patrol exit meeting. He reported participating in three webinars over this period of time, relating to the SECURE Act, Electronic Workpaper Solutions, and the Coronavirus.

He reported he continues to obtain additional, and higher quality, data from MassMutual.

M. Jahnke moved to approve the Internal Auditor Quarterly Report. P. Lancaster seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 10 – Legal/Legislative Update:** O. Hill reported the State Legislature is on recess due to the Covid-19 pandemic. NPERS will continue to monitor when they may conclude the session for the year, and will continue to monitor retirement legislation, including LB1054, currently on final reading, which will bring our plans into alignment with the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act.

O. Hill stated new federal legislation regarding the Coronavirus, such as the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), is addressed on NPERS website. A memo concerning the coronavirus and retirement issues was sent to School reporting agents. O. Hill presented on retirement changes to attendees of a dual National Association of State Business Officers (NASBO) and Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) webinar via Zoom on April 15, 2020. K. Ackerman stated there were 122 attendees of the webinar, and commended O. Hill on his presentation. He thanked J. Winkelman for his assistance in preparing the presentation.

He stated his thanks to NPERS Director, Managers, Leads, and employees for their work during the pandemic.

K. Ackerman moved to approve the Legal/Legislative Update. P. Lancaster seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 11 – Investment Officer’s Update:** M. Walden-Newman presented the Nebraska Investment Council’s (NIC) 2019 Annual Report. He stated the March PERB meeting would usually feature the Investment Officers Report for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, but as the PERB’s March meeting was cancelled, due to the pandemic, he would offer the NIC’s 2019 Annual Report during the April meeting. He made note of his cover memo for the Annual Report, which addresses the current global health crisis and global market uncertainty.

He stated the plans had a 19% return for calendar year 2019. He stated markets are volatile in 2020, due to the Covid-19 health crisis and market uncertainty. He reported that State liquidity needs are being met and retirement payments are being made, while keeping the plans in balance with long-term strategies, already in place, which are not reactionary.

He reported an in-house meeting scheduled with MassMutual will be rescheduled.

J. Schulz moved to approve the Investment Officer’s Update. A. Simpson seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 12 – Director’s Report:** R. Gerke presented the Director’s report.

R. Gerke commended NPERS IT Department for their work during this time. He stated there are only 17 NPERS employees working in-office, with the remainder of the agency working remotely. The innovations and accomplishments within the agency during the Covid-19 crisis have been numerous, with the safety of staff being paramount.

- Three priorities for the agency are timely benefit payments, payroll, and receipt of money. Remote workers have adjusted exceptionally, and benefit payments are uninterrupted and timely. Personnel Officer, Vick Huber, continues to process payroll remotely, with Teresa Zulauf, Controller, auditing remotely. He stated some of the receipt of checks occur via paper checks and on-site accounting staff are processing those items, but future improvements will include additional electronic functioning.
- The IT Department adjusted disaster preparedness processes swiftly to the demands of the pandemic crisis. During the first week of March, IT outfitted the agency with equipment to work remotely. The print-to-mailroom function has proved invaluable during this time and continues to expand. IT continues to assist the agency with Webex meeting functions. Additional laptops have been purchased to respond to mobility needs. Security remains a top priority. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) Audit had security questions for IT. The department continues to explore website design.
- Under R. Gerke’s direction, Education Services has cancelled the remaining School seminars for the season, through June 2020, due to the Covid-19 health crisis and safety guideline recommendations. Over 500 refunds to attendees will occur within 1-2 weeks, utilizing a new template which will shorten the refund timeline. He commended J. Winkelman on the school retirement video produced to assist members remotely, which is featured on the NPERS website. Education Services completed the NPERS 2019 Annual Report to the Legislature, and although the

hearing to present it has been canceled, due to Covid-19, the report has been given to the Legislature. The department continues development of the DCP online enrollment project, set to be a part of State employee open enrollment in May.

- In the Data Services Department, the mailroom employees are in-office and are very busy with print-to-mailroom processing. Remote working employees have completed a large beneficiary project and are instrumental in timely benefit processing.
- He announced the Benefits Manager, Patty Pierson, retired on March 13, 2020. The Governor issued a hiring freeze in response to Covid-19, so the position has not filled. During this time, O. Hill has stepped in to guide production matters with the Benefits team and T. Zulauf is providing personnel processing for the Benefits staff. School estimate processing is being completed at a record pace because of the efforts of the Benefits team, even though the number of new retirees is higher than last year. Death processes are caught up. State and County annuities are being completed in record time, as well.
- Accounting Department deposits and invoice payments are handled in-office. The state and County Audit is now occurring.
- The Call Center is working remotely while answering member calls and addressing other member services matters. Due to health and safety concerns, due to Covid-19, all office visits for retirees are cancelled through the end of May. Margaret Fintel is answering phones and is assisting any members who visit the office. All visiting members are assisted with heightened safety precautions in place. One member of the team who is in the National Guard reserves, has been called up to serve in a food distribution capacity.
- Management meetings are held via Webex services. Electronic signatures are being utilized to support safety and remote working abilities.
- The Biennial Budget process has begun.
- NPERS and Linea Solutions draft of the LB31 study regarding the Omaha School Employees Retirement System will be ready in May.
- R. Gerke stated he believes the May PERB meeting will be held remotely. The Actuary Report will be presented in May, and the actuaries are also assisting with the Experience Study, to be presented at a future time.

P. Lancaster moved to approve the Director's Report. M. Jahnke seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 13 – Board Committee Reports:** There were no reports.

**Agenda Item 14 – Board Education/Travel Requests:** There were no requests.

**Agenda Item 15 – Future Meetings/Agendas:** The next PERB meeting will be Monday, May 18, 2020.

**Agenda Item 16 and 17 – Executive Session:** At 11:16 a.m., M. Jahnke moved the Board exit Regular Session and convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing applications of plan members, personnel matters, and legal matters: Case Review No. D-20-

5: Prevention of Needless Injury to the Reputation of an Individual, Case Review No. E-20-1: Prevention of Needless Injury to the Reputation of an Individual, , Personnel Matters, Protection of Public Interest, Prevention of Needless Injury to the Reputation of an Individual; and Update on Pending Legal Matters; Protection of Public Interest. P. Lancaster seconded the motion. J. Elliott repeated the motion for the record. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

At 12:09 p.m., J. Derr moved the Board exit Executive Session and reconvene in Regular Session. A. Simpson seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

J. Derr moved for approval of D-20-5. A. Simpson seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

J. Derr moved for approval of E-20-1, in the amount of \$4758.12, plus appropriate adjustments for taxes, per NPERS policy. A. Simpson seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Adjournment:** J. Derr moved that the meeting adjourn. P. Lancaster seconded the motion. Members voted as follows: For: K. Ackerman, J. Derr, J. Elliott, M. Jahnke, P. Lancaster, A. Simpson, and J. Schulz. Against: None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.



Randy Gerke  
Director