

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF ILLINOIS
May 11, 2017

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois was held on Thursday, May 11, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. in the System's Springfield office at 2101 S. Veterans Parkway.

Committee Members:

Loren Iglarsh, Chairman
David Morris, Vice Chairperson
Timothy Blair, Executive Secretary

Others Present:

Steve Bochenek, SERS Attorney
Kathy Yemm, Manager, Claims Division
Don Williams, Supervisor, Disability Section
Cory Mitchell, Acting Supervisor, Pension and Death Section
Jessica Blood, Recording Secretary
Vickie Adkins, Claimant
Scott Spooner, Claimant's Attorney

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the April 13, 2017 meeting of the Executive Committee were presented by Chairman Iglarsh for approval. Copies of the minutes were previously mailed to Committee members for review. There being no additions or corrections, on motion by Chairman Iglarsh, seconded by Executive Secretary Blair and by unanimous vote, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Routine Claims Report

The Routine Claims Report for the month of April, 2017 was presented. Following review and discussion, Vice Chairperson Morris made a motion to receive the report. The motion was seconded by Chairman Iglarsh, all were in favor and the Routine Claims Report for the period of April, 2017, as prepared by staff, was received by the Executive Committee.

Old Business

Jennifer Lee – Occupational Disability 12 Month Filing Limitation

Jennifer Lee worked as a Conservation Police Officer II for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. She has two prior service connected leaves of absence and has been paid temporary total disability (TTD) by Workers' Compensation for both absences.

The first LOA was for an injury occurring on January 19, 2014. She was on Extended Benefits through January 28, 2015 and began her service connected leave of absence on January 29, 2015 due to a medical condition. She began receiving TTD February 1, 2015 and returned to work April 20, 2015.

The second LOA was for the same injury that occurred January 19, 2014. She last worked October 8, 2015 and began her service connected leave on October 9, 2015 due to a medical condition. She received TTD benefits from October 1, 2015 through October 15, 2015.

Ms. Lee is applying for occupational benefits for the two periods of disability (February 1, 2015 – April 19, 2015) and (October 1, 2015 – October 15, 2016). She is asking SERS Executive Committee to waive the 12 month filing period for both periods of disability. She was unaware until recently that she was eligible to apply for disability benefits through SERS.

Following some discussion and review of the case, a motion was made by Chairman Iglarsh to approve Ms. Lee's request to waive the 12 month filing period. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Morris and all were in favor.

James Shales – Denial of Temporary Benefits – Deferred

New Business

Vickie Adkins – Remand – Denial of Survivor Benefits

William Adkins, an active state employee, died in May, 1999.

A non-occupational lump sum death benefit was paid to his spouse, Vickie Adkins, in the amount of \$105,571.14.

Ms. Adkins claims she was never given the option between a monthly survivor benefit and a lump sum benefit including the state's portion.

SERS was unable to locate any paperwork regarding the application for the death benefit.

SERS denied Ms. Adkins' appeal and Ms. Adkins filed for administrative review in circuit court. Subsequently SERS staff located Ms. Adkins' file. The court remanded Ms. Adkins' matter back for further consideration based on the newly found file.

A hearing on remand was held on May 11, 2017 with Ms. Adkins and her attorney, Scott Spooner. Ms. Adkins indicated she did not have the information in 1999 to make an educated decision.

After some discussion, the Executive Committee agreed to defer the case and refer it to SRS Attorney Bochenek for recommendation.

Whitney Burnett – Appeal to Receive Pension

Whitney Burnett retired April 1, 2017.

Prior to his retirement, he visited the SERS office on January 23, 2017 and met with a field services representative. He was provided with a Rule of 85 retirement date of April 1, 2017 assuming he purchased his paid sick and vacation days.

This estimate was incorrect however because the representative did not subtract the payable sick days from the total sick days and instead used both full amounts. The member had enough service credit for 9.50 months of service credit, not 11.00 months. This leaves the member 1.50 months short of meeting the Rule of 85.

Mr. Burnett is requesting a pension effective April 1, 2017 as he was told by a representative of the Field Services Division that he was eligible to retire on this date.

Following a review of the file and some discussion, a motion was made by Chairman Iglarsh to approve Mr. Burnett's request, but with no additional service credit. Vice Chairperson Morris seconded the request and all were in favor.

Rebecca Flynn – Request to Receive a Refund

Rebecca Flynn retired reciprocally with the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) effective April 1, 2017.

In June, 2015, she purchased 9.50 months for short periods she worked from August, 2001 through August, 2010. During this time, she was employed with IMRF and receiving a full month of service credit with them. As this service is all concurrent, it does not benefit Ms. Flynn's pension. She is requesting a refund of the service purchase in the amount of \$355.23.

Based on the facts of the case and the information submitted, a motion was made by Chairman Iglarsh to approve Ms. Flynn's request for a refund. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Morris and all were in favor.

Daniel Williams, Jr. – Reinstatement of Account

There are two accounts for Daniel Williams due to one payroll in September, 1985 being paid with an incorrect Social Security number. The account with the incorrect number became eligible for write-off in June, 1996. Contributions in the amount of \$36.54 and 0.00 months of creditable service were written off.

Daniel Williams retired effective January 1, 2017.

The Pension and Death Section is requesting the Executive Committee to approve reinstatement of this account so it can be transferred to the correct Social Security number. This will not change Mr. Williams' pension payment.

Following a review of the file and some discussion, a motion was made by Vice Chairperson Morris to approve Mr. Williams' request for reinstatement of his account. The motion was seconded by Chairman Iglarsh and all were in favor.

Angela Devine – Occupational 12 Month Waiver – Gainful Employment

Angela Devine worked as a Support Service Worker II for Shapiro Developmental Center. She last worked on June 20, 1997. She began a service connected leave on August 10, 1997 due to a medical issue.

Ms. Devine was receiving occupational disability benefits from SERS for a period of over two years ending December 31, 2000.

The member is requesting a waiver of the 12 month filing period.

The member was awarded a permanent wage differential from January 1, 2000 through the present. At the time of the award the member was making \$202.07 a week or \$2,626.90 for 13 weeks which would represent a quarter. She would be over the earnings limit. She has recently scaled back her hours and is no longer exceeding her earnings limitation. Ms. Devine is also inquiring about collecting an occupational disability benefit going forward.

Based on a review of the case, a motion was made by Executive Secretary Blair to deny Ms. Devine's request to waive the 12 month filing period. Vice Chairperson Morris seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Joseph Gordon – Non-Occupational 90 Day Waiver

Joseph Gordon works as an Account Tech I for the Department of Human Services. He last worked on October 14, 2016. He began a medical leave of absence on October 17, 2016 due to medical issues.

Mr. Gordon has requested that the Executive Committee waive the 90 day filing limitation.

After reviewing the facts of the case, a motion was made by Chairman Iglarsh to approve Mr. Gordon's request to waive the 90 day filing limitation. The motion was seconded by Executive Secretary Blair and all were in favor.

Betty Kannady – Requesting Reduced Repayment Plan

Betty Kannady was receiving a non-occupational benefit from SERS until her benefit ended due to ½ time cease effective July 1, 2015.

With the assistance of Midwest Disability, Mrs. Kannady was approved for a retroactive Social Security disability benefit. The retroactive benefit created an overpayment with SERS totaling \$19,608.00 for the period of November 1, 2013 through May 31, 2015.

SERS began notifying the member of the overpayment in July of 2015 but she did not respond until December of 2015. She signed a contractual agreement with SERS to pay \$1,000 per month on December 27, 2015.

Mrs. Kannady sent a payment of \$8,825.66 in February of 2016 reducing the balance owed. She continued to send \$1,000 per month until September of 2016 when she requested that her payment amount be reduced. A verbal agreement was made to reduce the amount to \$500 per month. She has been making sporadic payments and the last payment received was April 19, 2017 for \$250.00. The current balance, as of this date, is \$5,882.34.

Mrs. Kannady is requesting a new contract of \$500 per month for the months of May through September and then increase to \$800 per month.

Following some discussion, a motion was made by Chairman Iglarsh to approve Mrs. Kannady's request for a reduced repayment plan. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Morris and all were in favor.

Paul Pryor – Non-Occupational Requesting Longer Repayment Period

Paul Pryor is currently receiving a non-occupational disability benefit from SERS.

With the assistance of Midwest Disability, Mr. Pryor was approved for a retroactive Social Security disability benefit. The retroactive benefit created an overpayment with SERS totaling \$56,640.00 for the period of April 1, 2014 through November 30, 2016.

Mr. Pryor entered into a contractual agreement to send SERS \$40,000 and enter into a monthly payment plan of \$280.00 per month. Mr. Pryor did send the \$40,000 reducing the overpayment to \$16,640.00.

Mr. Pryor is appealing for a longer repayment period. His current amount of \$280.00 per month will repay the overpayment within the 60 month guideline.

After reviewing the facts of the case, the Executive Committee agreed to defer the case pending further discussion with the member.

Kenneth Remo – Non-Occupational Requesting Reduced Repayment Plan

Kenneth Remo is currently receiving a non-occupational disability benefit from SERS.

Mr. Remo was approved for a retroactive Social Security disability benefit. The retroactive benefit created an overpayment with SERS totaling \$4,920 for the pay period of December 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017.

Mr. Remo is appealing the monthly amount that was agreed based upon a telephone conversation with SERS. By paying the \$250 per month, SERS will recoup the overpaid benefit in less than 19 months. He is appealing to reduce the monthly payment to \$150 per month in which the overpayment will be paid in 29 months.

After reviewing the facts of the case, the Executive Committee agreed to defer the case pending further discussion with the member.

Andre Miller – Non-Occupational Re-appeal to Waive Repayment of Overpayment

Andre Miller is currently receiving a non-occupational disability benefit from SERS.

With the assistance of Midwest Disability, Mr. Miller was approved for a retroactive Social Security disability benefit. The retroactive benefit created an overpayment with SERS totaling \$32,338.00 for the period of February 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016.

Mr. Miller appealed to waive the repayment of the overpayment and was denied by the Executive Committee in November of 2016. He is appealing a second time and has now provided a copy of his expenses.

Mr. Miller signed an agreement on February 11, 2017 to deduct a monthly amount of \$539 from his disability annuity to repay the overpayment.

Based on the facts of the case and following some discussion, a motion was made by Executive Secretary Blair to deny Mr. Miller's request to waive the repayment of his overpayment. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Morris and all were in favor.

Semeli Yousif – Occupational Disability 12 Month Waiver

Semeli Yousif works as a Juvenile Justice Specialist for the Department of Juvenile Justice. Her last day of work was November 22, 2014 and she began her service connected leave of absence on November 23, 2014 due to illness. She returned to work December 7, 2015.

Ms. Yousif is appealing the one year filing limitation.

Based on the information submitted, a motion was made by Vice Chairperson Morris to approve Ms. Yousif's request to waive the 12 month filing limitation. The motion was seconded by Chairman Iglarsh and all were in favor.

Revised Collections Policy

Executive Secretary Blair presented the revised Collections Policy to the Executive Committee. After some discussion, a motion was made by Executive Secretary Blair to adopt the policy. The motion was seconded by Chairman Iglarsh and all were in favor.

There being no further business to be brought before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for June 8, 2017, in the Springfield office, with video conferencing in Chicago.

Loren Iglarsh, Chairman

David Morris, Vice Chairperson

Timothy Blair, Executive Secretary