



Seattle City Employees' Retirement System

Administrative Committee Meeting
Pacific Building, 720 3rd Avenue, Suite 900, Seattle, WA
(206) 386-1293

Minutes, Thursday, October 31, 2024

AC Members Present: Judith Blinder (Chair), Maria Coe, Sherri Crawford, Joseph Hoffman

SCERS Staff Present: Jeff Davis, Paige Alderete, Nina Melencio

Others Present: Andrew Robinson (FAS)

Call to Order

Judith Blinder, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Minutes

Approved Minutes from the September 26, 2024 Administrative Committee.

Motion: Upon motion by Judith Blinder, seconded by Joseph Hoffman, the Administrative Committee approved the minutes from the September 26, 2024 Administrative Committee meeting. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Deep Dive – Employee Satisfaction Survey Results

Paige Alderete provided a high-level recap of the results of SCERS's anonymous, 2024 staff survey.

Staff participation in the 2024 survey was the highest it has ever been (90% in 2024, 87% in 2023, and 73% in 2019). The overall satisfaction rating also increased from the prior year, with ratings going up to 4.36 in 2024 (with 5 being highly satisfied). In 2023 the overall satisfaction rating was 4.20 and in 2022 the rating was 3.95.

Staff continue to be the most satisfied with inclusion and belonging (“The people I work with treat me with respect.”) This is closely followed by SCER providing staff with the resources they need to do their job.

The area that staff are least satisfied with is staff advancement (“There are opportunities for advancement.”) Management continues to work with staff to identify opportunities for growth and advancement, while also acknowledging that SCERS is a small department with limited position openings each year. SCERS will continue its efforts to identify additional avenues to promote and support staff.

Ms. Crawford congratulated staff on the satisfaction ratings going up. She asked if there were specific examples that were done in the last year that have made a positive difference for staff. Ms. Alderete responded that there

have been more regular touchpoints with the Member Services team to work through the biggest obstacles. They prioritized the top ones and came up with a plan to bring the queues down. The team also likes the new call center platform that was recently implemented.

Ms. Blinder gave kudos to staff. She encouraged management to find ways to collaborate more with staff and to remind staff there are online resources for training.

Deep Dive - Modernization

Ms. Alderete provided a deep dive into SCERS's modernization efforts in its workplace and customer service.

Workplace modernization has included: implementing an Electronic Document Management System in 2016; implementing a Pension Administration System (PAS) in 2019; offering hybrid work schedules to staff starting in 2020; and conducting organization wide data and security risk assessments.

Customer service modernization has included: allowing members to vote electronically for trustee elections starting in 2012; implementing a Member Self-Service (MSS) Portal in 2021; adding an expanded online calculator tool to the MSS Portal in 2024; offering virtual seminars and appointments starting in 2020 and access to a pre-recorded retirement seminar since 2021; providing Adobe Sign forms that members can fill out from the website starting in 2021; and implementing a new call center phone system in 2024.

SCERS's current modernization projects include upgrading the Pension Administration System to Vitech's strategic cloud-based platform, V3locity, which will provide more access to members and an upgraded user experience through the MSS Portal; expanding the call center functionality and tracking; expanding and evolving the security of SCERS; reducing paper mailings; and expanding online educational opportunities.

SCERS currently mails monthly pay slips to anyone receiving a monthly benefit and uses returned mail to help trigger additional outreach to verify if a member is alive. Ms. Blinder asked if that would be a problem if there was a living survivor at the address and the advice wasn't returned. Ms. Alderete acknowledged that it would be a problem, but overall, the returned mail still significantly helps SCERS identify benefits that need to be suspended or stopped. All members are now on direct deposit. Banks do reject the deposits if the account is closed, but if it is a joint account with a spouse, the account would not be closed. There is no perfect solution to identifying deceased members. SCERS also works with a third-party vendor to identify deceased members and is currently exploring other options that could replace the paper mailings.

Ms. Coe asked if educational opportunities would be on demand or schedule and noted that it would be great to have an on-demand videos on SCERS's website. Ms. Alderete replied that the plan is to hire a communications consultant to assist with member communications, including videos. SCERS's 2025-26 budget included funds for this work and staff have started assessing which videos will be most useful to members.

Ms. Crawford liked the idea of on-demand videos and is a supporter of hiring experts to help with this work. Ms. Crawford asked what are the top topics / questions that SCERS hears from members. Ms. Alderete replied that staff receive a lot of questions from new hires and that is one of the first videos that will be produced.

Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) Appointment

Jeff Davis stated that Dwight McRae's term is expiring, and he has agreed to serve again if reappointed. Joseph Boateng, a long-term member, has chosen to roll off the IAC. Mr. Boateng has been a stellar member of the IAC. Staff will talk about Mr. Boateng's service more at the November joint meeting with IAC.

Motion: Upon motion by Judith Blinder, seconded by Sherri Crawford, the Administrative Committee recommended that the Board of Administration reappoint Dwight McRae to the Investment Advisory Committee for a three-year term commencing December 31, 2024. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Adjourn Meeting

Motion: Upon motion by Judith Blinder, seconded by Sherri Crawford, the Administrative Committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 1:46 pm. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).