

**TOWN OF ELSMERE
PENSION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 6th, 2023
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 p.m.**

Call to Order: Chairman Neal Strauss called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Moment of Silent Prayer for Those Wishing to Do So:

Roll Call:

CHAIRMAN	NEAL STRAUSS	PRESENT
SECRETARY	ROMAN FRANZONE	ABSENT
MAYOR	ERIC THOMPSON	PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN	MARY STEPPI	PRESENT
COMMITTEE MEMBER	SCOTT ALLEN	PRESENT
COMMITTEE MEMBER	VACANT	
COMMITTEE MEMBER	VACANT	

Town Manager, Steven Martin - Present
Finance Director, Valarie Strzempa - Present
Attorney, Tim Snyder - Present

Approval of Minutes:

1. Minutes from June 21, 2023, Pension Committee Meeting.

ACTION: A motion was made by Councilwoman Mary Steppi to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2023, Pension Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Eric Thompson.

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 Absent Motion carried

Review of Financial Activity Occurring Since Last Committee Meeting:

1. Monthly Statement of Accounts.
2. Monthly Payment Reports.

Town Manager Steven Martin summarized the monthly statement of accounts and monthly payment reports.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

1. Items for the Elsmere Police Pension Plan.

a. Review and approval 2023 Actuarial Report.

Chairman Neil Strauss stated that there is a 20% drop from the previous year. As of January 1, 2023, 53% funded compared to 72% funded the year prior. Chairman Strauss questioned where we will be in the upcoming year. Chairman Strauss questioned Parker regarding this concern but there is no definite answer. Chairman Strauss stated the national average is in the 70s. Chairman Strauss stated the funds that are available are in the best place, being invested. Chairman Strauss would like to meet with the Mayor and Council before budget time to discuss further funding options. Chairman Strauss is concerned for current pensioners and future pensioners. Chairman Strauss reviewed that in years past the pension was budgeted through the Town.

Councilwoman Mary Steppi stated that the period ending with December 2022 was down. Councilwoman Steppi stated the market has now climbed. Councilwoman Steppi is hopeful that this time next year we will reflect and see a rise.

Councilwoman Steppi stated the after reviewing and seeing that we are 16% down, she stated that with what the market was last year it was dark.

Councilwoman Steppi is hopeful that things aren't as bleak as the report shows.

Chairman Neil Strauss expressed the concern that we are hoping and hoping won't work with current pensioners benefits. Chairman Strauss is looking to the Mayor and Council to research different ways of funding the pension.

Mayor Eric Thompson commented that when we were at 72% everything was fine, but the stock market has taken a dive, we're at 52% and now there is major concern. Mayor Thompson stated that the market fluctuates.

Chairman Neil Strauss stated he is hoping that in 2024, things go back up. He states that the pension funds need to be paid one way or another.

Councilwoman Mary Steppi stated that she agrees but also agrees with the Mayor.

When there is a drop, it drops with everything else including the 401K and other things in the market. It will continue to fluctuate, and the market looks promising. She understands that it affects everything.

Chairman Neil Strauss stated he understands what Councilwoman Steppi is saying but the Mayor and Council are responsible for the pension.

Councilwoman Mary Steppi stated that she is aware they are responsible for the pension and everything else under the Town.

Chairman Neil Strauss stated there needs to be a discussion about funding the pension. He is hoping that the market has gone up.

Councilwoman Mary Steppi stated yes, the market has gone up from her research.

Councilwoman Steppi stated that the information that they have in front of them is a year old. Councilwoman Steppi stated the current report is alarming but its from a year ago when the economy was different.

Mayor Eric Thompson stated that there is nothing wrong with a conversation about where the pension could fit in along with other obligations that Mayor and Council have.

Chairman Neil Strauss stated that there have always been issues with the pension and there have been many changes to it in the past. Again, he brought up that there needs to be a discussion about funding for the pension. Chairman Strauss stated that Parker is available tonight if anyone has any questions for him, he wants to have Parker come in and do a presentation prior to budget time. Chairman Strauss asked Attorney, Tim Snyder if a motion is needed to accept the report. Tim Snyder, Attorney replied no.

b. Authorization of payment to Odyssey Advisor by First State Trust for 2023

ACTION: A motion was made by Mayor Eric Thompson to approve payment in the amount of \$6,300.00 to Odyssey Advisors by First State Trust. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mary Steppi

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 Absent Motion carried

c. Authorization to transfer funds from DELGRIP to First State Trust to cover expenses from January 2024 through June 2024.

ACTION: A motion was made by Committee Member Scott Allen to authorize the amount of \$157,275.37 to be transferred from DELGRIP to First State Trust to cover expenses from January 2024 through June 2024. The motion was seconded by Mayor Eric Thompson

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 Absent Motion carried

d. Authorization and approval to pay First State Trust Second and Third Quarter Asset-Based fees, check disbursement fees, and distribution of cash.

ACTION: A motion was made by Councilwoman Mary Steppi to approve both the Second and Thirds Quarter Asset Based fees, distribution of check fees and cash in the amount of \$3,376.00. The motion was seconded by Mayor Eric Thompson.

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 Absent Motion carried

2. Items for the State of Delaware County/Municipal Police Pension Plan.

None

Chairman Neil Strauss questioned Town Manager Steven Martin about when we typically receive information regarding an increase. Town Manager Steven Martin replied that it is received the First Quarter of next year.

3. Items for the Elsmere Police Secondary Pension Plan.

a. None

4. Items for the Town of Elsmere Employee Retirement Plan.

a. None

Review of Reports:

None.

Statements Submitted by Committee Members:

Town Manager Steven Martin asked a question requested by Chief Giles regarding insurance on the pension. Town Manager Steve Martin stated that he will have Chief Giles discuss this further with Attorney Tim Snyder. There was a brief discussion regarding pension insurance.

Public Comment:

None.

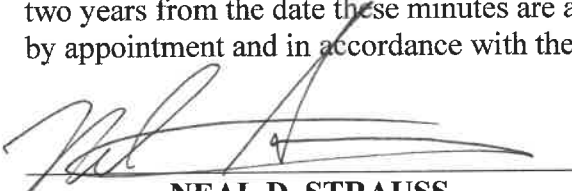
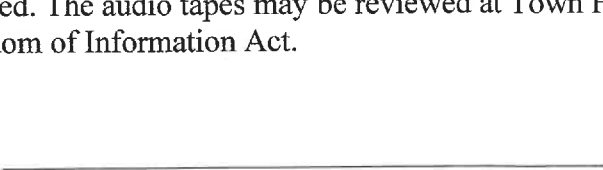
Adjournment:

ACTION: A motion was made by Mayor Eric Thompson to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mary Steppi.

VOTE: 4 – 0 – 1 Absent

Motion carried

These minutes summarize the agenda and other issues discussed at this meeting. Votes are recorded accurately. The audio tape(s) of this meeting will be available at Town Hall for a period of two years from the date these minutes are approved. The audio tapes may be reviewed at Town Hall by appointment and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.


NEAL D. STRAUSS
CHAIRMAN
ROMAN FRANZONE
SECRETARY