



Meeting minutes | Board of Directors

Wednesday, August 05, 2026 | 2 p.m.

202 Arbor Lake Dr., Columbia, SC 29223 | First Floor Conference Room

Minutes approved October 21, 2026

Board members present for all or a portion of the meeting: Ms. Jennifer Blumenthal, Mr. Calvin Elam, Mr. Steve Heisler, Mr. Steve Matthews, Sheriff Steve Mueller, Chairman Joe “Rocky” Pearce, Mr. John Sowards, and Mr. Ed Walton.

Board members present for all or a portion of the meeting via virtual means: Ms. Amanda Blankenship, Ms. Paige Lewis, and Mr. Alex Shissias.

Others present for all or a portion of the meeting: Lee Allen, Ashley Brindle, Justin Ellis, Heather Muller, Laura Smoak, Justin Werner, and Heather Young from the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA); Nancy Ornduff from Empower; Alex Taylor from Tandem Diabetes Care; Noah Barker from The Mullikin Law Firm; Mike Madalena, PEBA Consultant; Sam Griswold and Rebecca Rochester from the State Retirees Association of South Carolina; and William Tomes from the College of Charleston.

Others present for all or a portion of the meeting via virtual means: Bryan Dingle from Federated Investors.

I. Call to order

Chairman Rocky Pearce called the PEBA Board of Director’s (Board) meeting to order at 2 p.m. and stated that the public meeting notice was posted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

II. Approval of meeting minutes- June 3, 2026

Mr. John Sowards made a motion, which was seconded by Sheriff Steve Mueller, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2026, meeting.

III. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board

Mr. Sowards made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Steve Heisler, and passed unanimously, to nominate, and elect by acclamation, Mr. Rocky Pearce as the PEBA Board Chairman for the current term ending June 30, 2028.

Mr. Sowards made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Heisler, and passed unanimously, to nominate Mr. Calvin Elam, and elect by acclamation, as the PEBA Board Vice-Chairman for the current term ending June 30, 2028.

IV. OPEB investment performance update

Ms. Peggy Boykin, Executive Director, introduced Mr. Bryan Dingle, Vice President, and Senior Portfolio Manager for Federated Investment Counseling, to present an Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) portfolio overview.

Mr. Dingle reviewed a performance summary and portfolio composition for the Retiree Health Insurance Trust Fund and the Long-Term Disability Insurance Trust Fund. It was noted that the PEBA Board is the Trustee of the Funds, the South Carolina Treasurer is the Custodian of the Funds, and Federated Investment Counseling invests the Funds on behalf of the Treasurer. Mr. Dingle stated that as of June 30, 2026, the Long-Term Disability Insurance Trust Fund has a total market value of \$33.6 million in assets, and the Retiree Health Insurance Trust Fund has a total market value of \$1.88 billion in assets.

Mr. Dingle concluded his presentation by reviewing an economic outlook, including CPI change year-over-year, and a U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) quarter-over-quarter annualized.

V. Committee reports

A. Health Care Policy Committee

Committee Chairman Alex Shissias reported that the Health Care Policy Committee met in the morning and stated that Mr. John Sowards was elected to serve as the Committee's Vice-Chairman.

Chairman Shissias advised that Ms. Laura Smoak, Insurance Policy Director, reviewed the State Health Plan benefits and contributions for plan year 2027 and advised that there are no changes in employer and employee premiums for the State Health Plan for the 2027 plan year.

Chairman Shissias noted that the 30-day fill limit for all GLP-1 (Glucagon-like Peptide 1 agonists) that became effective for the Plan's Commercial (non-Medicare) membership January 1, 2025, will also be effective for Medicare members effective January 1, 2027.

Chairman Shissias stated that the Health Care Policy Committee made a motion that the PEBA Board approve the 2027 State Health Plan Approval of Benefits and Contributions as presented. Chairman Pearce reminded the Board that a committee motion does not require a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Shissias also noted that Ms. Smoak provided a report on 2026 strategic key measures for the State Health Plan, and Ms. Heather Kirby, Analytics and Planning Director, discussed PEBA's annual Health Initiatives and Value-Based Benefits report.

B. Finance, Administration, Audit and Compliance (FAAC) Committee

Committee Chairman Jennifer Blumenthal reported that the FAAC Committee met in the morning and stated that Ms. Amanda Blankenship was elected to serve as the Committee's Vice-Chairman.

Chairman Blumenthal advised that the FAAC Committee made a motion to recommend that the full Board accept the proposed fiscal year 2028 agency administrative budget as

presented. Chairman Pearce reminded the Board that a committee motion does not require a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Blumenthal stated that Ms. Lee Allen, Director of Internal Audit, presented the August Internal Plan Update, the Internal Audit report for the MyBenefits Program Controls, and the Internal Audit report for the Member Access Program Controls.

C. Retirement Policy Committee

Committee Chairman Paige Lewis reported that the Retirement Policy Committee met that afternoon and stated that Mr. Ed Walton was elected to serve as the Committee's Vice-Chairman.

Chairman Lewis advised that Mr. Justin Werner, General Counsel, reviewed Plan document amendments for the State's Defined Contribution Retirement Plans, which incorporate the applicable mandatory provisions of federal legislation. Mr. Werner advised that the restatements also include several technical and other corrective revisions intended to replace obsolete provisions, increase consistency of provisions across the plans, and ensure plan administration roles and responsibilities are aligned with plan document language.

Chairman Lewis stated that the Retirement Policy Committee made a motion to recommend that the PEBA Board amend and restate the State ORP, Deferred Comp 401(k), and Deferred Comp 457(b) plan documents, as presented. Chairman Pearce reminded the Board that a committee motion does not require a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Lewis added that representatives from Voya Financial provided a service overview of the State ORP administered through Voya. It was noted that Voya Financial is one of four service providers for the State ORP.

VI. Old business

Director's report

Ms. Boykin provided the Director's Report and stated that the Retirement System Investment Commission (RSIC) reported a 14.53 percent return for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, noting that this is a tremendous return and is more than double the assumed rate-of-return of seven percent.

Ms. Boykin advised that the General Assembly Conference Committee has adopted the Budget Conference Report, which will be taken up by the Senate and House Ways and Means on Tuesday, August 11, 2026. Ms. Boykin noted that the Budget Conference Report includes fully funding the State Health Plan, and a \$36 million annualization for premiums that went into effect January 1, 2026. Ms. Boykin noted that the budget includes a proviso to increase family court judge's salaries to those of circuit court judges, which has an impact of \$3.8 million on the judicial retirement system and is fully funded in the budget.

Ms. Boykin stated that the budget also includes an elimination of the proviso that allowed PEBA to suspend the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) sweep of the State Health Plan that would normally occur at the end of each year. Ms. Boykin reminded the Committee that the sweep was

previously suspended to mitigate any higher medical claims that the State Health Plan incurred due to COVID in 2020.

VII. Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel Matters and Legal Advice Pursuant to S.C. Code of Laws § 30-4-70(a)(1)(2)

At 2:30 p.m., Mr. Sowards made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Heisler, and passed unanimously, to recede into executive session to discuss personnel matters and receive legal advice.

At 2:36 p.m., the meeting reconvened in open session. Chairman Pearce announced that no action was taken by the Board while in executive session.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, and upon a motion by Mr. Sowards, which was seconded by Mr. Heisler, and approved unanimously, the Board meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.