**Maine Retirement Savings Board**

**Date: February 19, 2025**

**Cross State Office Building**

**111 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME 04333**

**Minutes**

Treasurer Perry called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM. This meeting was conducted in person at the Burton Cross State Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, August, Maine and virtually through Zoom.

**Welcome and Ascertainment of Quorum**

Treasurer Perry opened the meeting and welcomed those attending in person and virtually.

**Board Members present:**

* Joseph Perry
* Rebecca M. Wyke, Vice Chair
* Jessica Linzer
* Daniel Piltch
* Matthew Colpitts
* Nate Moody
* Gigi Guyton-Thompon (virtually due to being on island)
* Deborah Adams Neuman (virtually due to longer than 2 hour drive)
* Tina Wilcoxson (virtually due to a scheduling conflict)

A quorum was present.

**Staff present:**

● Elizabeth Bordowitz, Executive Director

* Ariel Carron, Program and Communications Manager

**Others Present:**

* Courtney Eccles, Vestwell (Virtual)
* Mika Malone, Meketa (Virtual)
* Ellen Breslow, AKF Consulting (Virtual)
* Hossam Hamdan, State Street Global Advisors (Virtual)
* Victoria Schmidt, Georgetown Center for Retirement Initiatives (Virtual)
* Elise Thiemann, State Street Global Advisors (Virtual)
* Sonya Park, State Street Global Advisors (Virtual)
* Grace Sullivan, Davis & Harmon (Virtual)

**Approval of Minutes of the December 18, 2024 Board Meeting.**

Treasurer Perry asked if there is a motion to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2024 Board meeting.

***Dr. Wyke moved approval of the December 18, 2024 Board meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Colpitts. The minutes were approved unanimously.***

**Election of Officers**

Treasurer Perry announced that the next Agenda item is the election of officers.

*Dr. Wyke nominated Treasurer Perry as the Chair. Ms. Linzer seconded the motion. The nomination was approved unanimously.*

Chair Perry sought a nomination for Vice Chair.

*Mr. Piltch nominated Dr. Wyke. Chair Perry seconded the motion. The nomination was unanimously approved.*

**Executive Director’s Report**

Chair Perry invited Beth to give the Executive Director’s Report.

Beth introduced Ariel Carron and noted that the members will get to know her better towards the end of the meeting when she will lead a marketing exercise.

Beth noted that in addition to the joint procurement for a Program Consultant, the PDR is working on a joint procurement for an Investment Advisor. Because of the nature of undertaking a single procurement process for multiple states this may take a while.

The Domestic Equity Fund should be available in the first quarter of 2025. The Program Description will need to be updated before that can go live.

With the postponement of the 1st anniversary event scheduled for February 12th, Ariel conducted videotaped interviews with Eloise Vitelli and Treasurer Perry.

There was discussion about the data on the dashboards and additional data that the Board would like to see, in particular additional breakdowns such as employer compliance by county and particular industry registration by county.

There was discussion about the withdrawal information provided, including the reasons provided for making withdrawals.

Beth reviewed the proposed legislation concerning MERIT. There was discussion about the approach to the testimony and the timing of the legislation that we are bringing. Ms. Linzer shared the actions she has taken in support of the Program and the legislation. Mr. Moody noted that employers are currently handling several new items. There was further discussion of the importance of businesses being on board with the Program.

Beth noted that AARP is supportive of the legislation and the Program. Their volunteers, who are at the State House weekly, have been briefed on it.

**Program Update - Vestwell**

Chair Perry invited Courtney Eccles of Vestwell to provide the Program Update.

Ms. Eccles reviewed the Program Update that is in the Board materials. She provided the most up to date numbers for the Program, which has just crossed $10 million in assets. She reviewed and answered questions about the auto escalation that took place in January. 3,371(28%) accounts had an auto escalation. The new Know Your Customer process has started. We will be able to assess results after a few months of implementation. Vestwell is working on a webinar focused on employees. It will be referenced in future communications to employees when it is ready.

Chair Perry thanked Ms. Eccles for her report.

**Meketa Update**

Mika Malone presented the Investment Advisor Report from Meketa. The story for the end of 2024 is that US exposure was strong, non-U.S. exposure trailed. She stated that there continues to be uncertainty that will be priced into the fixed income and equity markets.

She noted that the Target Date Funds in the Program have a lot of US exposure. The US stock market was dominated by seven tech stocks which had an outsize influence on returns in 2024.

Ms. Malone reviewed the performance of the funds in the Program, noting that some of our funds are in the lower quintile. This is because the funds are designed to get younger savers to the objective over time. Meketa remains confident that the funds are suitable across the board. The large cap equity exposure is influencing the relative rankings of the funds. There have been strong absolute results for the Target Date Funds, but we need to continue to monitor them. The Bond fund continues to track the index. It was a weak quarter generally for international equity. The Capital Preservation Fund had unusually high returns.

Chair Perry thanked Ms. Malone for her presentation.

**Q4 Financial Report**

Beth provided the year end financial report for the Board. She noted that the year ended consistently with the estimates she provided in December. We had a total of $83,000 in income compared to the $53,000 budgeted. This was largely the result of higher than expected investment income, as well as higher than expected program income. Beth reviewed the divergences from the budget.

**Building the MERIT Brand/2025 Marketing Plan**

Ariel led the Board in an exercise to consider the MERIT brand, which will inform the marketing plan she is developing.

Chair Perry asked for a Motion to Adjourn

***Mr. Colpitts made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Moody and approved unanimously.***

The meeting adjourned at 3:06.