

# Wisconsin Coalition of Annuitants

January 29, 2024 Minutes

[www.wicoa.org](http://www.wicoa.org)

Meeting called to order by the Chair Diane Wilcenski at 9:31a.m.

**DIRECTORS & ALTERNATES PRESENT:** Willie Backes, AFSCME24; Robert Beglinger, AFT-R; Barbara Bird, DOT; James Blank, Bay Lakes United Educators-R; Robert Brooks, Central Wisconsin Center Retirees; Jean Grosklaus, West Allis Retirees; Brian Holmes, Epsilon Sigma Phi; Bruce Johnson, SWIB Retiree; Rick Klemme, Epsilon Sigma Phi; Allen Knop, WEAC-Retired; Dick Kratz, WI Retired Corrections Personnel; Kathy Kreul, WFT/AFT Retirees; Tara Leithold, Kettle Moraine Retirees; John Maydak, West Allis Retirees; Fred Nepple, OCI; Elaine Reiter, Kettle Moraine Retired; Robert Schaefer, WI Assoc of Retired Conservationists and State Engineering Association; Roger Springman, WFT/AFT Retirees; Jeanne Stangl, Dodge County Area REA; Joe Strohl, Retired Professional Fire Fighters of WI; Diane Wilcenski, WREA; Rick Wojciak, DNR; Christopher Wren, Wisconsin State Attorneys Association; and [wicoa.org](http://wicoa.org)

**DIRECTORS & ALTERNATES NOT PRESENT:** Dave Bosanko, Retired Professional Fire Fighters of WI; Tom Broman, UW Madison Retirement Association; Sandy Drew, SWIB Retiree; Ed Frank, WI Assoc of Retired Conservationists; Paul Haubrich, UW Milwaukee Retiree's Assoc.; Jack Lawton, ACE; Lucrecia Mattson, UW-Eau Claire Emeritus; Jim Palmer, WI Professional Police Association Retired; Dee Pettack, SAA; Tom Speranza, Retired Professional Fire Fighters of WI; and Clara Welch, Beloit Area REA

**DIRECTORS & ALTERNATES EXCUSED:** Jim Thiel, Association of Career Employees;

**Roll Call:** Taken on Zoom by Rick

**Approval of the December Minutes:** Approved as printed.

**Guest introduction:**

Chris Preisler, Senior Communications Specialist, SWIB

Tara Hunter, Director of Budget and Management, ETF

Racheal Rolli, Customer Engagement and Education Specialist, ETF

**Guest: Chris Preisler, Senior Communications Specialist, SWIB**

Preliminary numbers as of December 31, 2023

Core 11.4%    Benchmark 11.0%

Variable 22.2%    Benchmark 23.1%

Assets Under Management as of December 31, 2023

Core \_\$122.5 billion    Variable \_\$9.8billion

For a total of **\$132.3 billion** of retirement funds are under SWIB management.

Portfolio Performance as of Dec. 31, 2023

Inflation Sensitive: 3.92% (Benchmark: 3.90%)

Public Equities: 21.61% (Benchmark: 22.62%)

Public Fixed Income: 8.82% (Benchmark: 8.51%)

Real Estate: -7.18% (Benchmark: -12.89%)

SWIB News:

The latest podcast has been released. It features Edwin Denson, SWIB Executive Director and Chief Investment Officer. Edwin will present an overview of 2023 and insights on what 2024 may look like. <https://www.swib.state.wi.us/podcasts> **CONTROL + CLICK to open**

Barb Bolens was named to the SWIB Board of Trustees to replace Barb Nick. Barb has over 35 years of experience in strategy, capital raising and deployment, retirement and pension plan management, M&A, and investor relations operations at publicly traded global companies with revenues of \$600 million to \$20 billion. She is currently the director of the Nicholas Center for Corporate Finance and Investment Banking at the University of Wisconsin School of Business full-time MBA program. Prior to this role, she was the executive vice president of strategy and investor relations/communications at Enerpac Tool Group. She was also vice president and treasurer of Komatsu America, Joy Global Inc., and Brady Corporation and director of investor relations/assistant treasurer at Quad. Barb served on the Advisory Board of Alto Shaam for five years and currently is the vice president/treasurer of the Skylight Music Theater and is on the advisory board of Milwaukee Women Inc. Barb has completed the Women's Director Development Program at Northwestern's Kellogg University. She holds an MBA with a specialization in finance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and BBA in marketing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2009, the Milwaukee Business Journal named her a Women of Influence at the Corporate Executive Level. In her free time, she enjoys training for and competing in triathlon events.

**GUEST: Tarna Hunter, Director of Budget and Management, ETF**

Annuity projections for our annual adjustments are Core Fund 3.4% to 3.8% and for the Variable Fund 15% to 19%. These are just projections. Final numbers will be determined at a later date.

Matt Stohr resigned from ETF. He was the Division Administrator of Retirement Services for the ETF and has been with ETF for 16 years. Matt resigned to take a new job as Director of Total Awards for MG&E. ETF will begin recruiting for his position in the near future.

There are two pieces of legislation that have been introduced since the last meeting. The first bill is Return to Work AB 1018 and SB 908, which allow all annuitants to go back to work full time and be able to keep their annuity. The bill provides a time limit of 60 months (not consecutive) and requires the employer to pay the employer contribution into the employer reserve. The rehired annuitant is not required to pay the employee contribution. Rep Wittke (R-Racine District 62) asked ETF to assess the impact on WRS. The actuaries input supported the changes, to make sure that ETF remained strong and can't be gamed. A hearing on these bills has not been scheduled.

The other legislation that the WCOA may be interested in was presented by Senate and Assembly leadership. It is a stand-alone bill which pertains to retirement state income subtraction. The new proposal provides, beginning in tax year 2024, up to \$75,000 of payments or distributions received from qualified retirement plans or certain individual retirement accounts may be subtracted annually from an individual's taxable income, if the individual is at least 65 years of age. If the individual and individual's spouse are both at least 65 years of age, the sum of the amount that the couple may subtract annually from their combined taxable income may not exceed \$150,000.

Finally, she provided information on future board meetings.

Board Meetings: GIB- February 21, Deferred Compensation – March 7, and the Retirement Board – March 28.

**Correspondence:** None

### **Annual WICOA Conference**

Bob Schaefer contacted Doug Poland to see if he would be able to present at the WICOA Annual Conference. Doug replied that he would be pleased to present at our meeting. He mentioned that in addition to gerrymandering and redistricting, he would also like to speak on voting and absentee voting. Doug mentioned that the Madsion Downtown Library would be an excellent place to meet if we hold a hybrid meeting. The library has a meeting room on the third floor with excellent technology. They allow food to be catered, also. Bob will visit the library to check it out

The issue of hybrid model was brought up.

Brain Holmes stated that he would vote for the hybrid model. Roger Springman and Willie Backes also voiced that they would support the hybrid model.

Bob Schaefer mentioned that everyone should be vaccinated.

Willie Backes questioned if John Voelker and Edwin Denson would be able to make the meeting if we held it downtown. Chris and Tarna stated that it was possible.

Two dates were mentioned for the hybrid model (May 16 and May 23). Tarna pointed out that May 23 is the Group Insurance Board Meeting.

Discussion took place to only have the conference on May 16<sup>th</sup>. It was agreed upon.

Chris pointed out that Edwin will bring Todd Mattina along to the meeting. The SWIB calendar is filling up quickly but still has some wiggle room to accommodate our dates.

Dick Kratz moved that we set the dates for the Annual Conference for May 9 and May 16.

Willie Backes seconded the motion.

Dick Kratz asked the question if we really need two days.

Discussion followed that if we have only one day, we can have speakers from SWIB, ETF and a guest speaker. Time was discussed to have the meeting from 9 to noon. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Dick amended the motion by striking May 9. Willie Backes seconded.

Chris Wren stated that it was an incorrect motion. James Blank made a motion to amend the main motion to May 16<sup>th</sup>. Willie Backes seconded it. Motion passed.

Bob Schaefer called the Madison Library. The only date that was available was Friday, May 24.

It was decided that that date would not work for the group. We will stay with May 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Old Business:**

Roger Springman reported that the Medicare committee met recently with Dr. Ed Weisbart. Dr. Weisbart informed the committee that there are two major initiatives in play currently regarding Medicare. Dr. Weisbart reported that several Republican Senators have been circulating a bill in the Senate to support Medicare as is. Only 39 senators supported this bill this time as opposed to the 66 that supported it the last time. Legislators are starting to view Medicare Advantage as not as good as it was before. Democrat leaders Sen Elizabeth Warren, D-Massachusetts, and Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Washington District 7, are getting ready to release a bill that includes improvement and modifications to Medicare Advantage. There will be a 30-day review. Dr. Weisbart would like us to support that bill. The Medicare committee will draft a letter in support of this bill as soon as they get notice that the bill is being circulated. The committee will then send the letter to the entire Wisconsin Delegation. Chris Wren mentioned that the WICOA Board could call a special meeting if needed for this.

Jack Lawton is working on the internal initiatives. Jack is working with GIB and ETF on some bothersome issues. One of the initiatives is the ninety-day announcement letter that lets annuitants know that their banked sick time will expire within ninety days. The committee feels that this announcement lacks information and that more time should be allowed before decisions have to be made. The second initiative is to investigate why a death of spouse is not considered as a life event within It's Your Choice.

Here is the link from Sandy Drew that Roger mentioned.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-01-18/humana-cuts-2023-earnings-outlook-on-high-medicare-costs>    **CONTROL + CLICK to open**

### **New Business**

Tarna introduced Racheal Rolli, Customer Engagement Specialist from ETF. Racheal commented that ETF has been working on improving the customer experience over the past two years. They want retirees to have a better experience and have developed Voice of Customer Program (VOC). Racheal presented a slide show that showed the transformation that is being made in keeping the customer in mind. The ETF vision is for our customers feel empowered and trust us to meet their needs through personalized, convenient, and helpful interactions. Several staff has been employed to see that the goal is met to have a Customer Centered Culture at ETF. Racheal reached out and asked our group what our experiences have been. An open discussion followed. Please ask any annuitants that you know about what their experiences with ETF have been.

Please send their remarks to [racheal.rolli@etf.wi.gov](mailto:racheal.rolli@etf.wi.gov)

### **Back to the Annual Conference**

Bob Beglinger raised the question if we are going to consider returning to a two-day Conference through Zoom only as we are running out of time. Bob made a motion to reconsider and have the virtual annual meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Seconded by Dick Kratz. Motion passed.

Rick was asked if he would be available for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. He will not be available on 9<sup>th</sup>. Jeanne Stangl suggested a one-day(16<sup>th</sup>) meeting with three speakers.

Bob Beglinger moves to reconsider his earlier motion. It was seconded by?

We started looking at two dates later in May. We chose May 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> as the two dates. Diane suggested that we decide today.

Willie Backes called the question. Motion to reconsider was passed.

New motion was made by Bob Schaefer to have a zoom meeting on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Willie Backes seconded the motion. Motion passed.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, John Voelker, ETF will speak. Someone with Medicare Advantage/Medicare, will speak also. The Medicare subcommittee will deal with getting this speaker.

On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Edwin Denson, SWIB will speak along with Todd Mattina. Doug Polland will be the additional speaker on the topics of gerrymandering, fair maps, and voting.

Brian Holmes made a motion that a subcommittee be formed to find locations that can be used for next year. Roger Springman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Start thinking of a recipient of the Blair Testin Award.

### **Treasurer Report:**

There have not been any expenditures or deposits during December.

As of December 1, 2023, the balance was \$7644.53.

A deposit was made for 19 memberships totaling \$950.00 has been made in December.

The balance in our account as of December 31, 2023 is \$8594.53

A total of 22 WICOA Dues checks have been received.

Treasurer's report accepted.

### **Next Meeting:**

**February 19, 2024 at 9:30 AM**

Stand Adjourned at 11:23AM

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Stangl, WICOA Secretary

### **Additional Notes:**

Places that have been suggested for in-person or hybrid meetings for next year:

Madison Downtown Library (Bob)

SWIB Conference room

WEAC meeting room (Allen)

Extension Office (Rick K)

Upstairs of the Alliant Center (Bob)

MATC

Bob's church