

**Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System
Minutes of the Legislative Committee Meeting
April 1, 2026**

The Legislative Committee of the Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System held a meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at the system's office at 7722 Office Park Boulevard in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Asst. Chief Jason DiMarco (Chair) at 10:05 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present

Major Raymond Burkart, Jr.
Asst. Chief Jason DiMarco (Committee Chair)
Lt. (Retired) Chad King
Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake

Members Absent

Chief Edwin Bergeron, Jr.
Major (Retired) Kelly Gibson

Others Present

Mr. Benjamin Huxen II, MPERS, Executive Director and General Counsel
Ms. Taylor Camp, MPERS, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Melissa Frazier, MPERS, Benefits Administrator
Ms. Emily Thurston, MPERS, System Analyst
Mr. Julius Roberson, State Treasurer's Designee
Mayor Jonathan Taylor, Town of Livingston, MPERS Board member
Lt. Tyrone Warren, MPERS Board member
Chief Christopher Wilrye, MPERS Board member
Mr. Gregory Curran, Curran Actuarial Consulting, Ltd., Actuary
Mr. Tyler Brannan, Curran Actuarial Consulting, Ltd., Assistant Actuary
Ms. Sheri Morris, Daigle, Fisse, & Kessenich, Attorney
Ms. Laura Gail Sullivan, Attorney
Mr. Kenny Brewer, Retired Officer (BRPD)
Mr. Andre Westlake, Retired Officer (Rosepine PD)
Mr. Kenny Herbold, LLA, Director of Actuarial Services (remote)
Mr. Stephen Brouillette, LLA, Associate Actuary (remote)
Ms. Erin Estilette, Curran Actuarial Consulting, Ltd. (remote)
Mr. Joey David, LA House of Representatives (remote)
Ms. Sarah Daniel, MPERS, Accounts Analyst (remote)

Ms. Karen Correll, MPERS, Membership Analyst (remote)
Ms. Christie Ziadeh, MPERS, Benefits Analyst (remote)

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

IV. Approval of the March 13, 2026, and March 20, 2026, Meeting Minutes (Action Items)

Motion by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, seconded by Lt. (Retired) Chad King, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 13, 2026. Without objection, the motion carried.

Motion by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, seconded by Lt. (Retired) Chad King, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 20, 2026. Without objection, the motion carried.

V. New Business

A. Review and Recommendation on Legislation Affecting MPERS for the 2026 Regular Legislative Session, Including Prefiled Bills, Proposed Amendments, and Potential Additional Legislation (Action Item)

Ms. Sullivan stated that the committee would review the bills expected to be heard on April 9th. She noted that some of the bills were system-sponsored, while others were not, and that the Board had already taken positions on several of them. Staff was instructed to contact the author of House Bill 31 to obtain additional information before the committee determined its position on the bill. Ms. Sullivan further explained that the primary matter for discussion was a revised proposal, now referred to as the "Nickel Plan," which is intended to address and eliminate many pending lawsuits. She noted that an executive session could be held to discuss the matter further. The committee was advised that under the current process, when an employee signs an affidavit to opt out, neither the employee nor the employer makes contributions, and the employee receives no related benefit. Under the proposed Nickel Plan, the employee would still make no contributions; however, the employer's contribution would be capped at no more than 5%.

The committee had discussions on the details of the nickel plan with Mr. Curran and Ms. Sullivan giving detailed information. It was explained that under the proposed nickel plan there is the expectation that there would be a provision for employers who provide social security to pass an ordinance for their employees to not have the option to opt out. The employer could make a one-time decision that all future employees are enrolled in the nickel plan automatically or the employer could decide that all future employees are enrolled with no opt-out. In theory this would eliminate affidavits for those municipalities that decided to pass the

ordinance for no opt-out. The affidavits would only remain in those municipalities that wanted to continue to let the employee have the choice. The choice would then be between automatic enrollment in the hazardous-duty subplan or submitting an affidavit within 30 days stating that the employee did not want the full defined-benefit plan, which would place the employee into the nickel plan providing line-of-duty death and disability benefits. The ordinance would have to be in place by June 30, 2027, and it would apply to all new hires July 1, 2027, or later.

The committee then discussed changes to the board sponsored House Bills 45 and 49. Ms. Sullivan reminded the committee that the Board voted to repeal the statute on partial dissolution but instructed staff to meet with employer groups on this statute that is meant to protect employers from each other. If the employers want protection, the Board needs to know what level of protection because there have been constant complaints about that statute. Different scenarios and situations were discussed regarding partial dissolution and what the current law is, and what would change. Ms. Sullivan stated there were many reasons why a municipality might reduce the number of officers or employees that were making contributions and if requested, they can receive help with understanding how many participating employees they need to have in order not to trigger a partial dissolution. Mr. Curran stated that this partial relief is a big deal in terms of its potential impact. He explained that by spreading the cost over 15 years and delaying the first payment, they are given a chance to not have to pay the partial dissolution. The increase to allow a drop of three employees without triggering will limit how many small municipalities trigger and it means they don't have to get all the way back to the original number to get some relief.

Motion by Lt. (Retired) Chad King, seconded by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, to recess at 11:48 a.m. Without objection, the motion carried.

Motion by Lt. (Retired) Chad King, seconded by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, to resume the meeting at 12:06 p.m. Without objection, the motion carried.

Mr. Huxen spoke to the committee regarding the service credit correction program. This program applies to employees who work for employers who provide social security, or for employees of towns below certain population size. Coincidentally this happens to include the Village of Varnado. The time period this covers is from July 1, 2010, to February 28, 2026. Mr. Huxen explained the provisions, like eligibility terms. This wouldn't include leave conversions or partial dissolutions, or anything else that does not meet the requirements of this program. The program would basically allow people to file an application no later than December 31, 2026, showing that they had service and were not enrolled or that their compensation was not reported correctly. MPERS can only accept late applications with good cause through March 31, 2027. Once an application is accepted it will be reviewed. If it is found that the applicant was entitled to their service credit, MPERS will award it. Mr. Huxen stated this would eventually get paid for in the employer contribution rate over a 15-year time frame. He indicated that the applicants would have to pay

the principal amount of their contributions. This proposal aims to resolve the majority of the current litigation.

Mr. Huxen discussed the DROP rate of return provisions within the existing HB 35. He clarified that the applicable return would be the actuarial rate of return less one-half of one percent.

Then, Mr. Huxen discussed the purchase of out of state or federal law enforcement service credit that Chief Bergeron brought to his attention. It copies the state police bill that was passed a couple years earlier that states that officers may purchase at their own expense service credit for out of state or federal law enforcement employment, as long as employees don't have credit for it somewhere else.

Mr. Huxen then discussed the survivors benefits for officers killed in the line of duty who were not properly enrolled. The time frame they are looking at is July 1, 2010, through March 1, 2026. He stated it is pretty much the same as the other program where if the employee wasn't enrolled and did not get the benefits, they can apply after the fact. If approved, it would be added to the employer contribution rate over the 15-year period. Mr. Curran stated that he did not think the increase would make a material difference in the employer contribution rate once spread over a 15-year period, but he has not done any analysis of this at this point. The impact would depend on the number of people who apply.

Mr. Huxen then wanted to clarify the employer enrollment and contribution remittance requirements to the committee. This says that MPERS is not required to pay any benefit until the employer reports the contributions. If they do not pay it will go through the process of getting certified through the Treasurer and then rolled into the employer contribution rate. This is to prevent future lawsuits.

Mr. Huxen explained an idea the committee had previously discussed regarding a future COLA funding adjustment. It would not increase the rate any more than it can already be increased. Mr. Huxen explained that instead of putting additional funding towards paying down the UAL, the proposed change would allow the system to incrementally put more towards COLAs. There could be a cap in place to make sure employers don't pay more than current rates because of the change. Mr. Curran explained he calls this the ratchet method because the maximum COLA funding could increase when costs go down but would not decrease in other years. He gave some examples. Essentially, employers would have assurance that the proposal would not increase contribution rates above current levels in order to fund COLAs. MPERS is going to increase funding as employers see cost decreases. This will all be done out in the open and in a transparent way, but the cities will have to be educated to understand that the only way out of doing this is to not offer retirees any COLAs.

Mr. Huxen discussed an IBO option for certain long-serving post-DROP members. He gave an example of an employee who is active after DROP and still working. Currently, the employee would not be able to use the IBO if they had already participated in DROP. This program would allow an exception that the employee

could get up to 24 months in an IBO if they participated in the old 36-month DROP. The committee then discussed scenarios and examples.

Restoration of service credit for certain vested members under R.S. 11:157 was then discussed by the committee. Mr. Huxen stated that there was at least one member who had a benefit with a town and would receive it the day he turned 55. It was then discovered that he was working for social security towns and had to complete an affidavit, refunded all of his contributions, and now he is not going to get a benefit when he turns 55. The restoration program would essentially allow this to be reversed. He would not be an active MPERS member, but he would be permitted to receive the benefit previously earned, less any employee contributions that had been refunded.. The committee continued discussions with Ms. Sullivan giving input.

Ms. Sullivan stated to the committee that they could link any of the bills that affect the system to each other so that if one either does not get through the process or is vetoed, then they both fail. The committee discussed scenarios and it was stated that to link any bills, an amendment would need to be filed. The amendment could be filed as long as the bill is still in process.

Motion by Lt. (Retired) Chad King, seconded by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, to approve all recommendations as discussed in the committee meeting. After a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Executive Session to Receive Legal Advice and Discuss Strategy Concerning Pending and Prospective Litigation Affecting MPERS (La. R.S. 42:17(A)(2)) (Action Item)

The committee decided that an executive session was not needed.

VI. Other Business

There was no other business.

VII. Adjourn at 12:30 p.m.

Motion by Chief (Retired) Beth Westlake, seconded by Major Raymond Burkart, Jr., to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m. Without objection, the motion carried.

The next meeting date is May 13, 2026.

To the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes accurately represent the actions taken at the meeting held April 1, 2026.


Asst. Chief Jason DiMarco
Legislative Committee Chairman


Ben Luxen,
Executive Director and General Counsel