

**Statewide Volunteer Firefighter Plan
Advisory Board Meeting Notes
January 29, 2025**

Members Present

- Anne Finn, Cities Representative
- Steve Fenske, Townships Representative
- Jay Wood, Volunteer Firefighters Representative
- Anthony Scavo, Volunteer Firefighters
- Justin Sorenson, Fire Chief Representative
- Rose Hennessy-Allen, State Auditor's Office

Staff Present

- Doug Anderson, PERA Staff
- Gladys Rodriguez, PERA Staff
- Amy Streng, PERA Staff
- Heather Schoenberger
- Jaime Voight, PERA Staff
- Sarah Broton, PERA Staff
- Jill Voss, PERA Staff

Member Excused

- Cal Larson, Cities Representative
- Steve Shykes, Volunteer Firefighters Representative
- Justin Nielsen, Volunteer Firefighters Representative
- John King, Volunteer Firefighters Representative

1. Meeting called to Order and Introductions

Streng called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Members participated in person and interactive technology as permitted in Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.015. Roll call was taken to establish quorum. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of Meeting Notes from January 23, 2024

Hennessy-Allen moved to approve the meeting notes as presented. Motion was seconded by Wood and passed by roll call vote.

3. Review of 2025 Control Book

Anderson gave an overview of the Control Book, which included a detailed summary of membership statistics, plan asset data, funding status, and other key information about the overall structure and administration of the plan.

4. SVF Incentive Plan Amount

Doug Anderson provided an update on the SVF Incentive Plan, noting that 23 plans joined in 2024 and 53 plans joined in 2025. He reminded the board that the initial incentive amount is \$10,000 per plan, plus \$1,000 per active member. This incentive structure applies to plans that joined in 2023, 2024, and 2025, or until the \$5 million allocation is fully used.

Doug further explained that if funds remain in the incentive pool after allocations to the 2023-2025 entrants, PERA has the ability to increase the incentive for 2026 entrants to \$10,000 per plan, plus

\$1,000 per active member, and an additional \$X per active member. Plans that joined in 2023, 2024, and 2025 would also receive the same additional \$X per active member.

After discussion, the Board reached consensus to maintain the current formula without changes.

Board members expressed appreciation for the detailed information provided and encouraged staff to continue promoting the plan to firefighters. They suggested developing a one-page letter to highlight the benefits of joining the plan, and including relevant participation data to strengthen the message.

Doug also introduced several topics for board discussion, including:

- PERA's administrative fee: He noted that SVF-related work is currently distributed across various areas of the organization. Staff are still evaluating which functions might be more efficiently outsourced or centralized. Last year, the administrative fee increased from \$30 to \$60 per member, and the team continues to assess the overall administration process for potential improvements.
- Addressing overfunded plans: Doug discussed possible options for managing overfunded plans, including implementing automatic triggers based on funding levels.
- SBI investment review and considering whether the current investment return assumption.
- Annual communication requirements
- Consider Vesting schedule review

5. Next meeting date: to be determined.

The board will reconvene in the summer or fall to discuss potential administrative changes for inclusion in the 2026 legislative agenda.

6. Adjournment

Finn moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Fenske and passed by roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm