



**BOARD MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING  
HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026, AT 8:30 A.M.  
RETIREMENT TRUST ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 1039 CHELSEA**

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**Members in Attendance:**

Robert Studer, Chairman  
Karl C. Rimkus, Vice Chairman, in at 8:37 AM  
Isaura Valdez  
Matt Kerr  
Deborah G. Hamlyn  
Rene Peña  
Rep. Chris Canales  
Rep. Art Fierro, in at 8:49 AM

**Members Absent:**

Karina Brasgalla

**Others in Attendance:**

Adrian Sanchez, Deputy Executive Director  
Karina Chavez, Administrative Assistant  
David Garcia, Benefits Supervisor  
Eduardo Miranda, Legal Counsel  
Margarita Marin, Office of the Comptroller  
Jose Espino, Office of the Comptroller  
April Shamy, Office of the Comptroller  
Alex Browning, Callan LLC

- Item 1. Benefits Supervisor David Garcia called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM. Garcia noted that a quorum was met.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Retirement Trust Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

Benefits Supervisor David Garcia read the Notice to the Public.

All matters listed under the CONSENT AGENDA will be considered by the Retirement Trust Board to be routine and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless members of the Retirement Trust Board or persons in the audience request specific items be removed from the CONSENT AGENDA to

the REGULAR AGENDA for discussion prior to the time the Retirement Trust Board votes on the motion to adopt the CONSENT AGENDA.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Item 2. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 21, 2026.

Item 3. Consideration and action on the following retirements:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Service Time (estimated)</u>
A. Age & Service Retirement:		
1. Chavez, Jose L.	Environmental Services	14 years 07 months
2. Gandarilla, Jesus A.	Sun Metro	25 years 09 months
3. Lawson, Victor M.	Sun Metro	32 years 06 months
4. Martinez, Daniel	Streets and Maintenance	18 years 10 months
5. Martinez, Miguel	Sun Metro	14 years 04 months
6. Medrano-Cruz, Hector	Environmental Services	09 years 11 months
7. Quinones, Sonia A.	El Paso Water	23 years 01 month
8. Rodriguez, Florencio G.	Sun Metro	21 years 02 months
9. Romero, Eddie Jr.	International Bridges	42 years 05 months
10. Sanchez, Alberto	Sun Metro	33 years 04 months
11. Sylvester, Kevin M.	Environmental Services	24 years 01 month
B. Proportionate Retirement Program - Age & Service Retirement:		
1. Oshiro, Joe P.	Fire	17 years 02 months
C. Deferred Retirement:		
1. Barksdale, Jonathan	Zoo	11 years 04 months
2. Born, Daniel J.	Information Technology	16 years 06 months
3. Garcia, Javier M.	El Paso Water	18 years 06 months
4. Harkness, Richard A.	El Paso Water	08 years 01 month
5. Parra, Adan E.	Animal Services	18 years 03 months
6. Pedroza, Steve C.	Police	14 years 10 months
7. Singleton, Sally	Animal Services	20 years 00 months

Item 4. Consideration and action on survivor benefit applications for:

- A. Candelaria, Sofia E., survivor of Fray P Candelaria, retiree.
- B. Magana, Maria E., survivor of Jorge C Magana, retiree.
- C. Paz, Beatriz G., survivor of Lorenzo Ortega, retiree.
- D. Rincon, Italia, survivor of Ruben Rincon Jr, retiree.
- E. Tejeda, Yolanda, survivor of Conrado Tejeda, retiree.
- F. Vita, Martha, survivor of Vicente J Vita, retiree.

Item 5. Consideration and action on the following Committee reports/appointments:

- A. Ad Hoc Selection Committee
- B. Administrative Services Committee
- C. Executive Committee
- D. Facility and Maintenance Committee
- E. Financial Oversight Committee
- F. Investment Committee

**Motion made by Deborah Hamlyn to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Matt Kerr. The motion required polling:**

<b>Isaura Valdez</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Matt Kerr</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Deborah Hamlyn</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Rene Peña</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Rep. Chris Canales</b>	<b>aye</b>

**Motion carried.**

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

Item 6. Discussion and action regarding the Treasurer's Report for the month ended January 31, 2026.

Jose Espino of the Office of the Comptroller ("OTC") presented on behalf of Deputy Chief Financial Officer/Comptroller Margarita Marin; the Board received the Treasurer's Report for the month of January 2026.

The Treasurer's Report is prepared monthly by the Office of the Comptroller based on information received from the Trust's custodian. Espino noted that audited totals for fiscal year 2025 have been incorporated.

The report consists of two statements ("Statement of Net Assets Available for Benefits" and the "Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Benefits"), three schedules ("Quarterly Statements of Changes in Net Assets Available for Benefits", "Investment Income Analysis", and "Pension Administration Actual/Budget Comparison"), and seven graphs ("Net YTD Investment Income", "Net Investment Income Rate of Return", "Refunds & Administrative Expenses", "Benefits Paid to Retirees", "Net Assets Available for Benefits Monthly", "FY26 Pension Retiree Population", and "FY26 Retiree Benefit Paid").

The information in the report includes (i) receivables, which include amounts due to the Trust as of the date of the report; (ii) liabilities, which include amounts owed by the Trust as of the date of the report; and (iii) unrealized/realized investment income, which is an estimate of the value of the portfolio as of the reporting dates.

Espino reviewed the statements, schedules, and graphs. The unaudited totals are for the periods ended January 31, 2026, including month, quarter, and fiscal year (five months). Net assets available for benefits were about 1.134 billion dollars, a net increase of about 73.8 million dollars for the fiscal year. Contributions were approximately 27.9 million dollars (averaging about 5.5 million dollars per month for the fiscal year). Benefits paid to retirees were about 35.6 million dollars. The rate of return, which is the fiscal net investment loss/gain over the average net assets available for benefits, was approximately 7.74 percent, exceeding the target rate of return for the fiscal year of 7.25 percent.

Deputy Executive Director Adrian Sanchez noted the trend of increased refunds for the fiscal year and advised that additional funding may be necessary.

**No action was taken on this item.**

- Item 7. Discussion and action regarding the receipt of investment performance reports for the month of January 2026 and for the quarter ended December 2025 and related matters from Callan LLC (Alex Browning, Callan).

Alex Browning of Callan LLC presented; the Board received and reviewed the investment performance reports for the month of January 2026 and for the quarter ended December 2025.

Browning reviewed the quarterly report. Browning provided a market overview. Unemployment remained flat toward the end of the year, while GDP growth for the third quarter was strong at 4.4 percent. The Federal Reserve implemented three rate cuts during 2025, contributing to fixed income returns of approximately 7.0 percent for the year. Equity markets were characterized by high valuations in the "Magnificent Seven" and significant private sector investment in AI. Gold saw a near-record annual return of 64.4 percent, whereas Bitcoin lost over half its value.

Browning reviewed portfolio performance and strategy. The Trust's performance exceeded the 7.25 percent actuarial discount rate over most cumulative periods. The Trust moved the Private Equity benchmark from Public Market proxies to the Cambridge Global Private Equity and Venture Capital Index to ensure an "apples-to-apples" comparison. The Trust is currently overweight in Private Equity and underweight in Domestic Equity relative to its peer database. Following the termination of Alliance Bernstein, the portfolio rebalanced its small-to-mid cap portion to a new target of 25 percent (with 75 percent in large cap). Browning discussed manager updates. David Rogal, a portfolio manager for BlackRock's SIO strategies, left the firm; no immediate action is recommended. TA Realty Co-Portfolio Manager Sean Ruhmann will be departing; however, the remaining manager is considered stable, and no action is currently required.

Browning reviewed the January 2026 "flash report". Browning reviewed current allocation and liquidity. The portfolio remains very close to its targets for most asset classes, with the exception of Private Equity due to the nature of capital calls. The Master Limited Partnerships have been reduced to a de minimis amount of 51 dollars. Browning noted that the 14 million dollars held in Cash is sufficient to cover a full quarter of benefits and expenses. Browning reviewed performance. The portfolio saw a preliminary return of about 2.6 percent for the month of January, representing a gain of approximately 28.5 million dollars, and is currently roughly 4.0 to 5.0 percent above the annualized actuarial rate of return. Domestic equities outperformed the Russell 3000 Index, largely driven by Wellington. International equities outperformed U.S. markets significantly during the month. For the first time in a significant period, the 5-year return for Real Estate moved above the benchmark.

Browning reviewed education and compliance. Board Members recently completed Private Equity education provided by Callan and should have received certificates from the Texas Pension Review Board. Deputy Executive Director Adrian Sanchez advised that the Trust and Callan are cooperating with RVK on a formal review, with a presentation of findings expected in April.

**No action was taken on this item.**

- Item 8. Discussion and action regarding the selection of an executive search firm for the recruitment of an Executive Director.

Board Chairman and Ad Hoc Selection Committee Chair Robert Studer addressed the Board. Studer advised that the Selection Committee recently met to review five proposals received for executive search services. The Committee recommended moving forward with the highest-rated firm, CBIZ.

**Motion made and amended by Karl Rimkus that the Executive Director/Legal Advisor be authorized to enter into contract negotiations with CBIZ Talent and Compensation Solutions for executive search services for the position of Executive Director; and if contract negotiations are unsuccessful, that the contract negotiations begin with the second highest-rated firm as recommended by the Ad Hoc Selection Committee; and that the Board Chair or Executive Director be authorized to sign related documents; and that the Executive Director or their designee be authorized to make associated budget transfers; seconded by Deborah Hamlyn. The motion required polling:**

<b>Isaura Valdez</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Matt Kerr</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Deborah Hamlyn</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Karl Rimkus</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Rene Peña</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Rep. Chris Canales</b>	<b>aye</b>
<b>Rep. Art Fierro</b>	<b>aye</b>

**Motion carried.**

Item 9. Discussion and action on a report from the Deputy Executive Director regarding:

Deputy Executive Director Adrian Sanchez reported on the following:

A. Duplicate Form 1099-R

1099-R forms were mailed to retirees and beneficiaries on January 28th. The City inadvertently sent out duplicate forms during the first week of February. The Trust sent letters to all retirees explaining the error and instructing them to report pension income only once. An informational banner was added to the website. A message regarding the duplication was added to the incoming phone system, though many calls still require manual handling.

B. We Are Hiring

The Trust is currently recruiting for two positions, both posted on the Trust website and through the City:

Benefits Research Assistant: The City's posting has reached its 100-applicant limit and is closed, but resumes can still be emailed directly to Sanchez through February 27th.

Benefits Supervisor: The City's posting remains open until the 100-applicant cap is reached or until the closing date of February 27th.

C. Upcoming Conferences

Trustees interested in the following events should contact Benefits Supervisor David Garcia for registration:

TEXPERS Annual Conference: Galveston, TX (April 26–29).

NCPERS Annual Conference & Exhibition: Las Vegas, NV (May 17–20).

Callan Annual Conference: Scottsdale, AZ (April 20).

Trustee Isaura Valdez requested a timeline for the annual employee statements. Sanchez advised that the target for distributing annual benefit statements to employees is the end of March and noted ongoing discussions regarding transitioning to electronic distribution via PeopleSoft (similar to W-2s). Sanchez advised that while electronic delivery is the goal to reduce manual requests, it would not be ready for the current cycle due to the IT coordination required between the PTG and PeopleSoft systems.

**No action was taken on this item.**

Item 10. For Notation:  
 A. Refund of Contributions:

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Total Refund</u>
1.	Arreola, Clarissa	Parks and Recreation	\$ 5,783.14
2.	Arriaga, Eric	Streets and Maintenance	\$ 10,911.97
3.	Benavides, Alberto	El Paso Water	\$ 38,641.14
4.	Carpio, Paul	Sun Metro	\$ 1,043.76
5.	Estrada, Monique	Fire	\$ 641.73
6.	Garcia-Romaine, Isaiah	Capital Improvement	\$ 6,941.94
7.	Gipson, Perla	Fire	\$ 1,505.40
8.	Gonzalez, Cristian	Fire	\$ 7,454.42
9.	Lewis, Jon	Sun Metro	\$ 22,873.06
10.	Lopez, Jesus	El Paso Water	\$ 1,309.68
11.	Lujan, Olivia	Public Health	\$ 17,637.03
12.	Luna, Lindsay	Code Enforcement	\$ 5,495.60
13.	Moncada, Jacob	Streets and Maintenance	\$ 1,966.16
14.	Muela, Alec	El Paso Water	\$ 1,753.15
15.	Munoz, Alan	Capital Improvement	\$ 14,346.18
16.	Norte, Ricky	Code Enforcement	\$ 1,646.46
17.	Paz, Joey	El Paso Water	\$ 104,488.02
18.	Rangel, Natalie	Fire	\$ 1,544.66
19.	Rivera, Mayra	Public Health	\$ 7,526.61
20.	Rivera, Samantha	Streets and Maintenance	\$ 3,563.75
21.	Rocha, Jamie	Public Health	\$ 17,091.88
22.	Santiesteban, Edgar	Sun Metro	\$ 16,746.05
23.	Tiscareno Jr., Manuel	Public Health	\$ 14,366.53
24.	Torres, Angel	Animal Services	\$ 3,682.72
25.	Vallejo, Alexis	El Paso Water	\$ 9,295.81
26.	Villegas, Sara	Streets and Maintenance	\$ 18,891.03
			<b>\$ 337,147.88</b>

**Item for notation only. No action was required on this item.**

**OPEN COMMENT PERIOD**

The Board of Trustees allowed speakers from the public to comment on any pension-related issue that was not on the agenda. During the Open Comment Period of the meeting, the public was given an opportunity to address the Board.

There were no speakers to comment on any pension-related issue that was not on the agenda.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board will retire into EXECUTIVE SESSION pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071-551.076 and Section 551.078 to discuss any of the following:

Section 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY

Section 551.072 DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY  
Section 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS  
Section 551.075 CONFERENCE WITH EMPLOYEES  
Section 551.076 DELIBERATION REGARDING SECURITY DEVICES  
Section 551.078 DELIBERATION REGARDING DISABILITY APPLICANT'S MEDICAL RECORDS

**No action was taken on this item.**

Item 11. Adjournment.

**Motion made by Rene Peña to adjourn the City of El Paso Employees Retirement Trust Board Meeting on February 18, 2026; seconded by Matt Kerr. None opposed. The motion was carried at 9:24 AM.**

  
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Secretary

  
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Chairman