1	BEFORE
2	THE RETIREMENT BOARD
3	FIREMEN'S ANNUITY AND BENEFIT FUND OF CHICAGO
4	
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6	
7	IN THE MATTER OF)
8	BUDGET COMMITTEE)
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10	STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had at
11	the videoconference meeting of the above-entitled
12	matter, held at 20 South Clark Street, Suite 300,
13	in the City of Chicago, County of Cook, State of
14	Illinois, on January 19, 2022, commencing at the
15	hour of 9:00 a.m.
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1	APPEARANCES
2	BOARD MEMBERS:
3	DODEDE EEDDENG Actions Envector
4	ROBERT TEBBENS, Active Trustee
5	WILLIAM MURPHY, Secretary and Active Trustee
6	ANTHONY MARTIN, Active Trustee
7	RESHMA SONI, City Comptroller
8	MARY SHERIDAN, Active Trustee ATTORNEYS FOR THE BOARD:
9	BURKE, BURNS AND PINELLI, LTD.
10	BY: MS. SARAH A. BOECKMAN
11	ALSO PRESENT: KELLY WELLER, Executive Director
12	JACLYN VLAHOS, Comptroller
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1	MEMBER SONI: I hereby convene this						
2	Budget Committee meeting for January 19, 2022.						
3	Kelly, can you kindly call the roll?						
4	MR. WELLER: Chairperson Soni is present.						
5	Secretary Murphy.						
6	MEMBER MURPHY: Here.						
7	MR. WELLER: Trustee Sheridan.						
8	MEMBER SHERIDAN: Here.						
9	MR. WELLER: Trustee Martin.						
10	MEMBER MARTIN: Here.						
11	MR. WELLER: Trustee Tebbens.						
12	MEMBER TEBBENS: Here.						
13	MR. WELLER: All members of the committee						
14	are present, Madam Chairman.						
15	MEMBER SONI: Thank you. We have a						
16	quorum for today's meeting.						
17	Public Act 101-0640 and the Governor's						
18	recent Disaster Proclamation dated January 7, 2022						
19	allows this meeting to be conducted by audio and						
20	videoconference. The Act requires a roll call vote						
21	on each matter acted upon.						
22	We are proceeding by videoconference						
23	because we continue to believe that due to the						
24	pandemic it is prudent not to be physically present						

1 in the same space.

We have posted notice of this meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the meeting is being recorded. A transcript of the proceedings will be prepared and ultimately, after approval, will be available on the Fund's website.

Moving on now to public comment.

MR. WELLER: If there is public comment, please press star six on your phone.

MEMBER SONI: Consistent with Public Act 91-0715 and reasonable constraints determined by the Board of Trustees, at each regular meeting of the Board or its committees that is open to the public, members of the public may request a brief time to address the record on relevant matters within its jurisdiction.

Kelly, do we have any public comment today?

MR. WELLER: Madam Chairperson, I do not see any public comment.

MEMBER SONI: Hearing none, we will move on. I'd like to now turn things over to Executive Director Kelly Weller to proceed through our agenda.

MR. WELLER: I know we went through the Budget with each of you individually. This morning our procedure and process is to review this Budget amongst the committee and to seek a recommendation to the full Board to approve the Budget at the next meeting on the 26th.

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Our goal here is to review, ask questions, and then prepare a recommendation for approval for the Board on the 26th.

I have asked Jackie to gather some information. Unfortunately, she has not been able to get that back to me so I am going to slow walk this a second here and give everyone the preamble. In that, we approached this year's Budget with the expectation of keeping the overall year-over-year expenses between what I think is the broader what I would call inflationary pressures of what we are seeing outside of this building and outside of this office somewhere under 7 percent. I asked Jackie to keep the budget items somewhere between 4 and 6 percent. She has done a great job. Our original Budget came in around 5.1. Some Trustees brought us some additional items they wanted us to include in the Budget and commit to. With that, we have

put that in its final version. Right now we're at
about 5.6.

So Yeoman's job given the broader economic circumstances keeping this Budget under what I think is more broad based inflation.

So jumping in right off the bat here I have got office salaries. We are going to move past that item pretty quick because I want to do that under executive session because we have some specific things regarding salaries that we want to talk about there.

Moving next to line item Employee

Benefits. You are seeing a 9.4 percent increase,
that is really not the true accurate increase.

What we looked at I think is a better expectation
is to look at the estimated expenditures for 2021
at 383 and then looking at our budget of 389. I
think that is more in line with the 4 percent that
was approved at I believe it was the November
meeting to move forward with our health insurance
increase.

A very nominal increase as far as I am concerned but a small marginal increase in health insurance. I think it is well within what we

1 talked about. 2 Moving down to Legal. We can see we are 3 under budget in Legal. We don't anticipate those 4 expenses moving outside of this range so we 5 continued with the estimated figure on the Budget. This is the last year on 6 Leasehold. 7 our lease abatement so we're moving forward with rent as we have it at \$252,200. 8 9 Jackie is now on. I am going to turn 10 this over to Jackie right now. 11 I am at Leasehold Improvement. I am 12 going to bring this adjusted piece up. 13 I do apologize to the committee. We had 14 a small correction that needed to be made this 15 morning that was brought forward and we prefer to have the most accurate version in front of you as 16 17 we move forward. 18 I am going to go ahead and make this switch and turn this over to Jackie. 19 I am at Leasehold Improvements, Jackie, if you want to 20 21 start from there.

24 MR. WELLER: I am just dropping down

MS. VLAHOS: Are you going through each

22

23

individual line?

quickly and seeing if there is any questions on anything. I think there is only a couple places where there is going to be questions but I prefer us to walk through this page one Budget.

MEMBER MARTIN: Go ahead and go through it, I think that is probably the right thing to do. I was just wondering if any trustees had any comments because I think most of us -- I think Kelly pretty accurately reflected -- I think he did a very thorough job of going through this I think with each one of us individually.

I am very positive on the changes. I am very positive on the Budget. I had a chance to review it pretty thoroughly and I was kind of curious what other trustees felt if they haven't had the opportunity to go through it as thoroughly.

MS. BOECKMAN: Trustee Martin, maybe, if it is okay, just for purposes of the record, before the committee, Jackie could continue what Kelly was doing and quickly run through the remainder of it.

I don't think there is much left and then we can get comments from the committee, if that is okay, just to establish the record for the committee.

1 MEMBER MARTIN: I think that is where I 2 was going. I have no objection. 3 MS. VLAHOS: Do you just want me to hit the highlights then? 4 5 MR. WELLER: Yes, just hit the 6 highlights. 7 MS. VLAHOS: The highlights I would 8 probably hit the major changes and then see if 9 anyone else has questions. Otherwise, it is kind 10 of the same from the previous years. There is 11 nothing really to comment on, unless they want to know what is in the accounts, I can do that. 12 13 From Leasehold, like Kelly was saying, 14 basically, there is a couple of things in our 15 lease. In the next year, we do have one month of 16 abatement left. This savings is offset a little 17 bit by -- I was actually talking with Trustee 18 Tebbens, they are fighting it, but our portion of the taxes for the building, they are estimating to 19 go up from about \$200 a month to about \$1,000. 20 21 We just found out about this in January. 22 It is reflected in our budget, though. Even though they are contesting this, that is the increase that 23

we are seeing as of right now. But this increase

24

in expense is offset by a savings of one month of abatement for 2022.

that we were over budget and this is just basically due to the fact that when our previous Executive Director had left, that basically we had contracted with Burke Burns and Pinelli to do the interim Executive Director position from I believe February to June and this is just where that expense is reflected in there, that we couldn't have budgeted for previously because we didn't know that this was going to happen.

For Actuary for 2021, we are under budget and it's just because that we had basically projected to have more service purchase calculations and we also thought there would be more impact statements that didn't occur for 2021.

And then we also have kind of a catchall, kind of like in 2020, for basically computer equipment, computer maintenance, printing, printing education. A lot of these accounts basically are under budget and this is just due to the fact that with Covid and with a lot of the restrictions on Illinois, as well as our country, a lot of things

weren't open or able for us to do. For example,
like traveling and continuing education.

We have in our 2022 Budget reflected the fact that we are anticipating this current year to be more reflective of the pre-Covid conditions.

I am going to hit the highlights very quickly from the 2021 to 2022 Budget.

The first change is going to be salaries. We are going to talk about that in more detail and most likely probably in executive session. You can see there is an increase of \$53,600, which is approximately 3.4 percent.

We're going to speak about that a little bit in the future so we're going to skip over that.

Employee Benefits Budget from 2021 to 2022. There is an increase here and this was basically just due to the fact that there was life event changes that are not foreseeable where people had some changes in their coverage in 2021 in our office.

I think the more reflective thing to see where that expense is at is to see from the 2021 actual expense, which is \$383,500. We are actually budgeting for employee benefits to be \$389,000.

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     Basically, that is an increase of approximately
     $5,000. If you look at it in that regards, our
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     expense for employee benefits are relatively flat.
               The Consulting budget from 2021 to 2022
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     is increasing quit largely by 137 percent, which is
     $44,000.
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 7
               I am going to let Kelly talk about that
     in more detail but this is kind of encompassing our
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     future goals for IT and computer safety.
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               Do you want to talk a little bit about
11
     that, Kelly?
                                    Thanks, Jackie.
12
               MR. WELLER:
                             Sure.
                                                     Ι
13
     will keep this quick.
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               As many of you know, we have got some
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     initiatives on the horizon. One of them is to
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     implement a one, three and five year strategic IT
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     plan.
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               Part of that is looking at essentially
     the end goal being a benefits administration
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     upgrade and a member portal that integrates with
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21
     that benefit administration software.
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               In order to do that, we are going to have
     to have a series of internal, what I would call,
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     foundation building blocks that need to be put in
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place and we have made a nice kind of thought around what those building blocks need to be. But what we are going to do this year is bring in a consultant to help us identify what those specific steps should be and help us identify RFPs that need to be written and issued for upgrades in our system. Whether that be through SQL, whether that be through website development. There is many, many things. DocuSign. The goal being an application to administration link between all of the IT components so that we have one essentially holistic system operating. Right now we have two or three different pieces that are all kind of bolted together. This is the first step of that.

The original, as you can look over there, \$32,000 is the original amount that was in there, that was essentially our lobbyist and our payroll software consultant who helps us. I think the payroll software and the administration payroll side is up to speed. This additional 44 is for what I would call SQL work, cloud work, strategic operational planning and website work, that we want to get started in 2022.

It is not a large amount in the real

world of IT but it is an important strategic step
for us. I have talked to each of you individually
about this so I think that is about enough, unless
there is specific questions.

Okay, Jackie.

MS. VLAHOS: We will move on then from the Consulting and then we are going to go on with the Auditing budget. Basically, we do a Department of Insurance audit, that happens every other year. In 2021, we performed the Department of Insurance audit. Therefore, in 2022, we don't have to do that this year and therefore you see a savings in that line item.

Printing and Postage, it is kind of a combination together. We are going to see in 2022 we're going to be producing the Popular Report. We also are going to have some increase of the newsletters.

What I do want to point out, if you see in the 2021 Budget, where you see the \$33,000 is for printing and the \$39,800 for postage.

Basically that number reflects the things that are required by statute.

And then if you look on to the 2022

Budget, you can see the increase. This is just
basically for communications and stuff that we feel
are important for our membership.

I think with the newsletter, the Popular Report, those kind of things are going to increase. Later on we can discuss distribution of that, those kind of things, but that you will see reflected in those two.

The next is Training and Education.

Training and Education, what you can see here is we try to look at what the pre-Covid numbers looked like. So when you look at the five year, you can see we took basically a look at what the travel looked like and this number reflects what it would appear to look like before the travel restrictions occurred.

We do have a one year where it seems quite a bit high. I know I talked to some Trustees about that in 2019 at \$62,000. That was just due to the fact that we had an increase amount in preretirement seminars. Through discussions with other Trustees, they felt comfortable that one preretirement seminar would be good. So that is where we come up with the \$38,000, which is more

1 reflective of what we did in the 2018 year.

The last thing I want to point out is for Election budget. This is increased and the increase is basically just due to as of right now we have two elections that are going to occur in 2022. In 2021, we only had one election at that time. So there is going to be an increase there.

Surprisingly, I reached out to them, you would think that this amount would double, but when I reached out to the auditing firm that does this service for us, they gave us a quote and surprisingly it is only a little bit extra. We will accept any savings where we can get it.

Are there any questions?

MR. WELLER: Jackie, one thing I want you to hit on at the bottom is the Investment Evaluation. Why it is set down below and just a quick comment on that.

MS. VLAHOS: Investment Evaluation we kind of kicked around back and forth. We wanted to make sure everything is disclosed properly.

Investment Evaluation was included in the operating budget portion before. We had discussions of whether that is part of the

1 operating, whether it is not.

Just to make everybody aware, and I think to put it on here, and I guess this is a discussion we can have further, if it is appropriate or not to be included, but it is a \$310,000. That is basically for Callan for their contracted service as well as for the Bloomberg quarterly fee makes up that \$310,000.

There is no increase that we are anticipating for the 2022 year. And, honestly, with including this investment expense, if we did decide to that, it is kind of nice because it does bring our actual overall budget increase to 5.14 instead of 5.6.

It's up to you if you want to see it included or not. I wanted to put it out there that we are still going to be paying that quarterly Bloomberg. I believe it is like \$6,750 a quarter as well as our contract with Callan.

MEMBER MARTIN: Quick question, Jackie.

Is that Bloomberg subscription accessible by trustees or is that just by our CIO and staff?

MS. VLAHOS: That is a Lorna question.

MR. WELLER: Trustee Martin, I will get

1 back to you on that. 2 MEMBER MARTIN: Thank you. 3 MR. WELLER: With that, Chairperson Soni, that I think concludes essentially the open portion 4 5 of this. 6 I'd ask that maybe you see if there is 7 any questions for us. If not, maybe we could look 8 to go into executive session for the salary 9 component. 10 MEMBER SONI: Are there any questions 11 regarding the non-personnel portion of the Budget? 12 Hearing none. 13 Thank you, Kelly and Jackie. 14 I would like to now make a motion to go 15 into executive session pursuant to Section 2(c)1 to 16 discuss compensation of specific employees. 17 Is there a second? 18 MEMBER TEBBENS: I will second it. MEMBER SONI: Seconded by Trustee 19 20 Tebbens. 21 Kelly, please call the roll call vote. 22 MR. WELLER: Trustee Soni. 23 MEMBER SONI: Yes. 24 MR. WELLER: Trustee Martin.

1	MEMBER MARTIN: Yes.					
2	MR. WELLER: Trustee Sheridan.					
3	MEMBER SHERIDAN: Yes.					
4	MR. WELLER: Secretary Murphy.					
5	MEMBER MURPHY: Yes.					
6	MR. WELLER: Trustee Tebbens.					
7	MEMBER TEBBENS: Yes.					
8	MR. WELLER: Vote passes.					
9	(Whereupon, the Board went into					
10	Executive Session off the record.					
11	No action was taken in Executive					
12	Session.)					
13	MEMBER SONI: We are now out of the					
14	Executive Session.					
15	Are there any final comments from the					
16	committee regarding the Budget?					
17	I'd like to thank Kelly and Jackie again					
18	for presenting the 2022 Operating Budget.					
19	Do any trustees have any other comments?					
20	If not, I'd like to ask for a motion to approve the					
21	recommendation of the 2022 Operating Budget to the					
22	full Board, including a 3 percent increase for both					
23	Kelly Weller, Executive Director, and Lorna Scott,					
24	our Chief Investment Officer.					

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1	MEMBER MURPHY: I would like to make a					
2	motion.					
3	MEMBER MARTIN: Second.					
4	MEMBER SONI: Motion was made by Trustee					
5	Murphy. Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote,					
6	please.					
7	MR. WELLER: Trustee Soni.					
8	MEMBER SONI: Yes.					
9	MR. WELLER: Secretary Murphy.					
10	MEMBER MURPHY: Yes.					
11	MR. WELLER: Trustee Sheridan.					
12	MEMBER SHERIDAN: Yes.					
13	MR. WELLER: Trustee Tebbens.					
14	MEMBER TEBBENS: Yes.					
15	MR. WELLER: Trustee Martin.					
16	MEMBER MARTIN: Yes.					
17	MR. WELLER: Unanimous.					
18	MEMBER SONI: The vote is approved. We					
19	will be making the recommendation to the full Board					
20	in our next meeting.					
21	Thank you all again for your time on					
22	this.					
23	I am going to old business and new					
24	business. Is there any old business to discuss or					

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1
     any new business?
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               Hearing none, is there a motion to
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     adjourn today's meeting?
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               MEMBER MURPHY: Motion to adjourn.
               MEMBER SONI: Motion to adjourn made by
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 6
     Trustee Murphy.
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               Is there a second?
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               MEMBER TEBBENS: I will second it.
               MEMBER SONI: Seconded by Trustee
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10
     Tebbens. All in favor?
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                    (Chorus of ayes.)
12
               MEMBER SONI: The Budget Committee
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     meeting is adjourned.
14
               Thank you all for your time today.
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16
                (WHICH WERE ALL THE PROCEEDINGS
17
                IN THE ABOVE-ENTITLED MEETING
18
               AT THIS DATE AND TIME.)
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1	STATE OF ILLINOIS)) SS.
2) SS. COUNTY OF DU PAGE)
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5	
6	DEBORAH TYRRELL, being a Certified Shorthand
7	Reporter, on oath says that she is a court reporter
8	doing business in the County of DuPage and State of
9	Illinois, that she reported in shorthand the
10	proceedings given at the taking of said cause and
11	that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript
12	of her shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid; and
13	contains all the proceedings given at said cause.
14	
15	
16	Pebbie Tyrrell
17	DEBBIE TYRRELL, CSR
18	License No. 084-001078
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