

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT COMMISSION
MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

FEBRUARY 2, 2024 MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM
CONVENED AT 9:03 a.m.

Dr. Sachin Parekh
Dr. Mike Gerstenfeld
Dr. Eric Shore
Robert Helfand, Retirement Services Division
Helena Bartolomeo, Retirement Services Division
William Cassada, Retirement Services Division
Cindy Cieslak, Rose Kallor LLP

TRANSCRIPTIONIST: Karin A. Empson

1 (Proceedings commenced at 9:03 a.m.)

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5 MS. CIESLAK: Dr. Parekh, you can proceed
6 when you're ready.

7 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Okay. Good morning,
8 everyone. The February 2nd, 2024 meeting of the Medical
9 Exam Board is now in session. I, Dr. Sachin Parekh,
10 will serve as Chairperson. Present are Dr. Michael
11 Gerstenfeld and Dr. Eric Shore. Present from the
12 Office of the State Comptroller, Retirement Services
13 Division, are staff members William Helfand, William
14 Cassada, and Helena Bartolomeo, as well as General
15 Counsel for the Retirement Commission and Medical
16 Examining Board, Cindy Cieslak.

17 I make a motion to go into executive session
18 and request that the members of the Retirement Services
19 Division and counsel be allowed to remain. Is there a
20 second?

21 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

22 MS. CIESLAK: Any discussion? There being
23 none, all in favor, say aye.

24 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Aye.

25 DR. GERSTENFELD: Aye.

1 DR. SHORE: Aye.

2 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
3 motion passes.

4 So for the members of the public, I'm going
5 to place you back in the waiting room. The doctors are
6 going to discuss your medical information in a private
7 executive session. And those who are on
8 reconsideration will be invited in to make their
9 statement. After the doctors have reviewed all of the
10 medical information, they will reenter public session,
11 at which point you will be able to come back to the
12 meeting.

13 So stay in the waiting room, and then once we
14 go back into public session, I will bring you back in.
15 And then, you'll be able to hear the decisions today.
16 Okay? Thank you.

17 (The Board was in executive session from 9:04
18 a.m. until 11:37 a.m.)

19 MS. CIESLAK: Dr. Parekh, you can proceed
20 when you're ready.

21 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board will be making
22 determinations and voting on those determinations, but
23 would like to remind the members that only the final
24 vote will be given today and not the reason for the
25 vote. In those instances, there may not have been

1 enough medical information to make a determination, or
2 perhaps a non-service-connected disability is more
3 likely a service-connected disability.

4 You may seek reconsideration of an initial
5 denial. You will receive the Board's written decision
6 within a few weeks, which will provide you with that
7 additional information.

8 The Board votes to deny service-connected
9 disability to Desiree Bowman.

10 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

11 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
12 being none, all in favor, say aye.

13 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Aye.

14 DR. GERSTENFELD: Aye.

15 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

16 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
17 motion passes.

18 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
19 approve service-connected disability retirement for
20 Misty Burgess.

21 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

22 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
23 being none, all in favor, say aye.

24 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Aye.

25 DR. GERSTENFELD: Aye.

1 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

2 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
3 motion passes.

4 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
5 non-service-connected disability for Laural Chase.

6 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

7 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
8 being none, all in favor, say aye.

9 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Aye.

10 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

11 DR. GERSTENFELD: Aye.

12 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
13 motion passes.

14 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to table
15 the decision for non-service-connected disability for
16 Phylisha Coles.

17 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

18 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
19 being none, all in favor, say aye.

20 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Aye.

21 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

22 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

23 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
24 motion passes.

25 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to

1 approve service-connected disability retirement for
2 Sophia Ferrell.

3 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

4 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
5 being none, all in favor, say aye.

6 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

7 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

8 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

9 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
10 motion passes.

11 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
12 non-service-connected disability to Shanita Gadsden.

13 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

14 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
15 being none, all in favor, say aye.

16 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

17 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

18 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

19 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
20 motion passes.

21 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
22 service-connected disability, however approve non-
23 service-connected disability for Dennis Hart.

24 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

25 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There

1 being none, all in favor, say aye.

2 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

3 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

4 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

5 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
6 motion passes.

7 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
8 non-service-connected disability to Timothy Johnson.

9 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

10 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
11 being none, all in favor, say aye.

12 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

13 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

14 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

15 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
16 motion passes.

17 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
18 approve non-service-connected disability for Timothy
19 Kabel.

20 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

21 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
22 being none, all in favor, say aye.

23 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

24 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

25 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

1 MS. CIESLAK: All opposed, say nay. The
2 motion passes.

3 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
4 approve service-connected disability for Tashishia
5 Lewis.

6 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

7 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
8 being none, all in favor, say aye.

9 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

10 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

11 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

12 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
13 motion passes.

14 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
15 service-connected disability, however approve non-
16 service-connected disability for Kelly McClane.

17 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

18 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
19 being none, all in favor, say aye.

20 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

21 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

22 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

23 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
24 motion passes.

25 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny

1 service-connected disability retirement for Colleen
2 Phillips-White.

3 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

4 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
5 being none, all in favor, say aye.

6 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

7 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

8 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

9 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
10 motion passes.

11 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
12 service-connected disability, however approve non-
13 service-connected disability for Elizabeth Pierscinski.

14 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

15 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
16 being none, all in favor, say aye.

17 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

18 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

19 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

20 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
21 motion passes.

22 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
23 service-connected disability, however approve non-
24 service-connected disability for Evelyn Sanjurjo
25 Melendez.

1 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

2 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
3 being none, all in favor, say aye.

4 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

5 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

6 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

7 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
8 motion passes.

9 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
10 approve service-connected disability for Bernard
11 Sharkey.

12 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

13 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
14 being none, all in favor, say aye.

15 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

16 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

17 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

18 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
19 motion passes.

20 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
21 service-connected disability for Jill Sizensky.

22 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

23 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
24 being none, all in favor, say aye.

25 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

1 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

2 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

3 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
4 motion passes.

5 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
6 approve non-service-connected disability for Angelo
7 Velez.

8 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

9 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
10 being none, all in favor, say aye.

11 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

12 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

13 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

14 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
15 motion passes.

16 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to deny
17 service-connected disability retirement for Michael
18 Viera.

19 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

20 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
21 being none, all in favor, say aye.

22 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

23 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

24 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

25 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The

1 motion passes.

2 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: The Board votes to
3 change the application to non-service-connected
4 disability for Schmid Joseph.

5 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

6 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
7 being none, all in favor, say aye.

8 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

9 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

10 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

11 MS. CIESLAK: Any opposed, say nay. The
12 motion passes.

13 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: I make a motion to
14 adjourn the meeting.

15 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, second.

16 MS. CIESLAK: Any further discussion? There
17 being none, all in favor, say aye.

18 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Parekh, aye.

19 DR. SHORE: Shore, aye.

20 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

21 MS. CIESLAK: Nobody is in opposition, so we
22 are adjourned. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Thank you.

24 DR. SHORE: Thank you.

25 MS. CIESLAK: Doctors, I think we're all set.

1 So have a good weekend.

2 CHAIRPERSON PAREKH: Thank you. Thank you,
3 everybody.

4 DR. GERSTENFELD: Doctors, would you stay on
5 for a moment? I have some information I can provide.

6 MS. CIESLAK: Give me a second.

7 (Adjourned at 11:47 a.m.)

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I, Karin A. Empson, do hereby
certify that the preceding pages are an accurate
transcription of the Connecticut State Employees
Retirement Commission, Medical Examining Board meeting
held electronically via Zoom, conducted at 9:03 a.m. on
February 2, 2024.

Karin A. Empson

Karin A. Empson

02/14/2024

Date