

1 STATE OF CONNECTICUT
2 STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT COMMISSION
3 MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
4

5 DATE: September 3, 2025

6 LOCATION: VIA ZOOM
7

8 **Present:**

9 Dr. Frank Gerratana

10 Dr. Poleak So

11 Dr. Mike Gerstenfeld

12 Robert Helfand, Retirement Services Division

13 Patrick Fairbanks, Retirement Services Division

14 Alex Cipolla, Retirement Services Division

15 Cindy Cieslak, Rose Kallor, LLP
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1 (Proceedings began at 9:10 a.m.)

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3 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Good morning everyone.
4 The September 3rd, 2025 meeting of the Medical
5 Examining Board is now in session.

6 I'm Dr. Frank Gerratana, Chairperson. Present
7 are Dr. Poleak So and Dr. Michael Gerstenfeld.

8 Present from the Office of the State
9 Comptroller, Retirement Services Division, are staff
10 members from the Retirement Services Division:
11 Patrick Fairbanks and Robert Helfand. Is it true
12 Helena Bartolomeo is not with us?

13 DR. GERSTENFELD: That's correct, but
14 Alexandra Cipolla should be here.

15 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Yes, she's here.

16 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: And Alexandra Cipolla.
17 The General Counsel for the Retirement Commission
18 and Medical Examining Board is Cindy Cieslak.

19 The Board will go into executive session, and I
20 move that we do that for the purposes of discussing
21 individual members' disability health issues.

22 I request that members of the Retirement
23 Services Division and Counsel be allowed to remain.
24 Is there a second? Dr. So is muted.

25 DR. SO: Dr. So, second.

1 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor?

2 DR. SO: So, aye.

3 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

4 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
5 motion passes.

6 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: All right. This is Cindy
7 Cieslak. I'm going to put everyone into the waiting
8 room. Before we do that, I want to see, is Mr.
9 Carrillo and Attorney Zimmerman here?

10 ATTORNEY ZIMMERLAND: I'm here and it looks
11 like Robert's in the room as well.

12 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Okay. So my understanding
13 is that you and Mr. Carrillo have asked for his
14 matter to be discussed in public session. Is that
15 accurate?

16 ATTORNEY ZIMMERLAND: That's correct.

17 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Hi, Mr. Carrillo. I'm just
18 confirming a few things on the record here.

19 MR. CARRILLO: Yes.

20 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: So, typically we discuss
21 everyone's applications in Executive Session because
22 we are discussing medical information which is
23 considered confidential information that is
24 ordinarily not disclosed to the public.

25 This meeting is being recorded. As you can see

1 here, there are several applicants and their counsel
2 here. Recognizing that your medical conditions and
3 anything contained in your medical file will be
4 discussed in public, Mr. Carrillo, can you
5 acknowledge that you still want to proceed with your
6 matter in a public session as opposed to a private
7 Executive Session?

8 MR. CARRILLO: Yes, ma'am.

9 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Okay. We will likely --

10 MR. HELFAND: Cindy, let me just add to that
11 to make sure Mr. Carrillo understands that this
12 meeting is being recorded so that, in addition to
13 people who are present at the meeting now or who may
14 be watching it, the recording of the meeting will be
15 preserved as a public record, which means the
16 medical information that's discussed here today will
17 be on permanent record and permanently available,
18 and we want to make sure that you understand that
19 you're agreeing to that as well.

20 MR. CARRILLO: Yes, sir, I do.

21 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Okay.

22 MR. HELFAND: I also have a question because
23 we received two forms acknowledging, you know, your
24 request. I'm sorry to belabor this, but this is
25 kind of a new process for us. They appear to have

1 two different signatures. One, I think, is dated
2 August 28th, the other is dated August 30th. Did
3 you sign either or both of those forms?

4 MR. CARRILLO: I'm not sure about the forms
5 you're talking about.

6 MR. HELFAND: It was in the form of a letter
7 addressed to you, and it recited the facts that I
8 and Ms. Cieslak just went over with you.

9 MR. CARRILLO: Okay, I'm sure I did. Yeah.

10 ATTORNEY ZIMBERLAND: I believe that I signed
11 the first one, and then the second one was sent
12 requesting Robert's actual signature. That's the
13 second one that was signed by Robert, yeah.

14 MR. HELFAND: I see. Okay. Well, in the
15 future, Attorney Zimmerman, I'm going to ask you
16 not to sign those documents on behalf of your
17 client. We need the client's actual signature.

18 ATTORNEY ZIMBERLAND: Okay.

19 MR. HELFAND: Thank you. Sorry, Cindy.

20 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: That's okay. I just have
21 one more question for Mr. Carrillo. So, Mr.
22 Carrillo, you understand that you are giving up your
23 right to have your medical information be maintained
24 in a confidential manner at this meeting and going
25 forward?

1 MR. CARRILLO: Yes. Correct.

2 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Okay. All right, we're
3 going to take your matter up at the end. The
4 doctors have moved into Executive Session, so I'm
5 going to place everyone into the waiting room. The
6 doctors will be going through all of the
7 applications.

8 Those who are on reconsideration will be
9 invited in to make a statement, then we will enter
10 Public Session, at which time Mr. Carrillo's matter
11 will be discussed, and then the doctors will make
12 all of their determinations in Public Session at the
13 end.

14 Okay, so just give me a minute, because it does
15 take me a second to get everyone into the waiting
16 room.

17 (Executive session from 9:11 to 1:41 p.m.)

18 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Good afternoon, everyone.
19 This is Cindy Cieslak. I am going to mute anyone
20 who is not speaking at this time, just because we
21 have quite a few individuals here in our public
22 session. The doctors today are Dr. Frank Gerratana,
23 Dr. Poleak So, and Dr. Mike Gerstenfeld.

24 From the Retirement Services Division, we have
25 Patrick Fairbanks, Alex Cippola, and Robert Helfand.

1 The doctors have discussed all but one of the
2 applications in Executive Session. The Freedom of
3 Information Act provides that when we are discussing
4 confidential medical information, the Board can
5 handle those items in executive session. However,
6 we did have a request from one of the applicants to
7 discuss their matter in public session, so that is
8 what we are proceeding to.

9 At this point in time, Dr. Gerstenfeld, I
10 believe you are presenting Robert Carrillo, so we
11 are ready to proceed.

12 DR. GERSTENFELD: Yes. Thank you. This is a
13 reconsideration of the application for service-
14 connected disability retirement of Mr. Robert
15 Carrillo, a retired DDS DSW2 employee.

16 On April 5th, 2024, the Board denied the
17 claimant's request for service-connected disability
18 for his shoulder and low-back injuries because of
19 insufficient evidence supporting a nexus between his
20 injuries and work dating back to 2005.

21 The issue of a pre-existing lumbar-spine
22 condition was also raised at a 2023 IME. The Board,
23 however, did find that the claimant had sufficient
24 impairment preventing him from performing the
25 physically intensive duties of a DSW.

1 Additional evidence now before the Board
2 includes a June 29th, 2025 medical letter by Dr.
3 John Driscoll, M.D., Middlesex Orthopedics, his
4 long-term treating orthopedic surgeon, who confirms
5 that Mr. Carrillo does meet the criteria of
6 permanent impairment as a result of a work-related
7 shoulder injury sustained on January 3rd, 2025, and
8 that he is, quote, no longer able to perform the
9 full scope of his duties due to an injury received
10 while in the performance of his duty as a
11 Developmental Service Worker 2, DDS.

12 Dr. Driscoll assigned a permanent partial
13 impairment of 25% to the right shoulder and directly
14 attributed his disability to the January 3rd, 2025
15 work-related injury.

16 In addition, the 02/17/2025 C0649, signed by
17 Dr. Bash, also attributed the claimant's
18 vertebrogenic lumbar pain directly to a 2017 work-
19 related injury, which resulted in lumbar-facet
20 arthritis.

21 Dr. Bash concluded that the claimant's
22 vertebrogenic condition was guarded and that, quote,
23 he cannot return to work as a DSW2, unquote.

24 Therefore, given the additional medical
25 evidence of record confirming a nexus between the

1 claimant's work-related injury and subsequent
2 disability, I agree and recommend that the applicant
3 is permanently unable to perform the duties of his
4 job because of his work-related shoulder and lumbar
5 injuries and recommend that we approve his
6 application for entitlement to service-connected
7 disability retirement.

8 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: This is Dr. Gerratana. I
9 agree, doctor.

10 DR. SO: So, I agree.

11 DR. GERSTENFELD: Thank you.

12 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: At this time, I would invite
13 Attorney Zimmerland or Mr. Carrillo to make any
14 statement in support of Mr. Carrillo's application.

15 ATTORNEY ZIMBERLAND: I have nothing more to
16 add.

17 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Thank you. Doctors, do you
18 have any questions for Mr. Carrillo?

19 DR. SO: Dr. So, no.

20 DR. GERSTENFELD: No questions.

21 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Dr. Gerratana, no
22 questions.

23 DR. GERSTENFELD: Dr. Gerstenfeld. No
24 questions, thank you.

25 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Okay. Dr. Gerratana, as

1 Chair of this meeting, we are ready for all of the
2 official determinations when you are ready to
3 proceed.

4 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: You're calling for a vote,
5 is that correct?

6 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: When you make a motion and
7 someone seconds it, if you would like me to assist
8 in calling the motions, I'm happy to do that. It's
9 really up to you, if you would like that assistance.

10 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Okay, I'll go forward.

11 Concerning Catherine Arasimowicz's request for
12 a service-connected disability retirement on
13 reconsideration, I move that it be denied, but we
14 approve her status of non-service-connected
15 disability. All those in favor say aye.

16 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Dr. Gerratana, before you
17 call the motion, we just need a second for the
18 motion.

19 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: I'm sorry.

20 DR. SO: Dr. So, second.

21 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Dr. So made a second, and
22 now all those in favor say aye.

23 DR. SO: So, aye.

24 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

25 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: The motion passes.

1 For Maria Beverly, I move that her request for
2 a service-connected disability retirement be
3 approved. Is there a second?

4 DR. SO: So, second.

5 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
6 aye.

7 DR. SO: So, aye.

8 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

9 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

10 Concerning Assan Boddie, I move that the
11 request for a non-service-connected disability
12 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

13 DR. SO: So, second.

14 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
15 aye.

16 DR. SO: So, aye.

17 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

18 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

19 Concerning Deborah Bradford, I move that her
20 request for a non-service-connected disability
21 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

22 DR. SO: So, second.

23 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
24 aye.

25 DR. SO: So, aye.

1 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

2 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

3 Concerning Monique Burpee, I move that her
4 request for a non-service-connected disability
5 retirement be approved. Is there a second?

6 DR. SO: So, second.

7 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
8 aye.

9 DR. SO: So, aye.

10 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

11 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
12 motion passes.

13 Concerning Rodolfo Carranza, I move that his
14 request for a service-connected disability
15 retirement be denied, but a non-service-connected
16 disability be approved. Is there a second?

17 DR. SO: So, second.

18 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
19 aye.

20 DR. SO: So, aye.

21 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

22 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

23 Concerning Robert Carrillo, I move that his
24 request for a service-connected disability
25 retirement on reconsideration be approved. Is there

1 a second?

2 DR. SO: So, second.

3 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
4 aye.

5 DR. SO: So, aye.

6 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

7 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

8 Concerning Wanda Collins, I move that her
9 request for a non-service-connected disability-
10 retirement continuation be denied. Is there a
11 second?

12 DR. SO: So, second.

13 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
14 aye.

15 DR. SO: So, aye.

16 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

17 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
18 motion passes.

19 Concerning Heather Daley, I move that her
20 request for a non-service-connected disability
21 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

22 DR. SO: So, second.

23 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
24 aye.

25 DR. SO: So, aye.

1 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

2 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
3 motion passes.

4 Concerning Florence Ehibor-Cole, I move that
5 her request for a non-service-connected disability
6 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

7 DR. SO: So, second.

8 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
9 aye.

10 DR. SO: So, aye.

11 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

12 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye.

13 Concerning Scott Elliott, I move that his
14 request for a non-service-connected disability
15 retirement be approved. Is there a second?

16 DR. SO: So, second.

17 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
18 aye.

19 DR. SO: So, aye.

20 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

21 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
22 motion passes.

23 Concerning Wanda Freeman, I move that her
24 request for a service-connected disability
25 retirement be approved. Is there a second?

1 DR. SO: So, second.

2 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
3 aye.

4 DR. SO: So, aye.

5 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

6 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
7 motion passes.

8 Concerning Desmond Gregor, I move that his
9 request for a service-connected disability
10 retirement non-continuation be denied. Is there a
11 second?

12 DR. SO: So, second.

13 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor, say
14 aye.

15 DR. SO: So, aye.

16 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

17 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
18 motion passes.

19 Concerning Robert Hohman, I move that his
20 request for a non-service-connected disability
21 retirement on reconsideration be approved. Is there
22 a second?

23 DR. SO: So, second.

24 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
25 aye.

1 DR. SO: So, aye.

2 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

3 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
4 motion passes.

5 Concerning Jennifer King, I move that her
6 request for a service-connected disability
7 retirement be approved. Is there a second?

8 DR. SO: So, second.

9 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
10 aye.

11 DR. SO: So, aye.

12 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

13 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
14 motion passes.

15 Concerning Michele McGinley, I move that the
16 request for a non-service-connected disability
17 retirement be approved. Is there a second?

18 DR. SO: So, second.

19 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
20 aye.

21 DR. SO: So, aye.

22 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

23 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
24 motion passes.

25 Concerning Deana Nott, I move that her request

1 for a service-connected disability retirement on
2 reconsideration be denied, but the Board agrees that
3 her non-service-connected disability retirement
4 should be continued. Is there a second?

5 DR. SO: So, second.

6 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
7 aye.

8 DR. SO: So, aye.

9 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

10 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The motion
11 passes.

12 Concerning Thomas O'Brien. I move that the
13 request for a service-connected disability
14 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

15 DR. SO: So, second.

16 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
17 aye.

18 DR. SO: So, aye.

19 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

20 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
21 motion passes.

22 Concerning Deborah Robinson. I move that her
23 request for a non-service-connected disability
24 retirement on continuation be approved. Is there a
25 second?

1 DR. SO: So, second.

2 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
3 aye.

4 DR. SO: So, aye.

5 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

6 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
7 motion passes.

8 Concerning Emil Serrano, I move that his
9 request for a service-connected disability
10 retirement on reconsideration be tabled. Is there a
11 second?

12 DR. SO: So, second.

13 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
14 aye.

15 DR. SO: So, aye.

16 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

17 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
18 motion passes.

19 Concerning Kellye Wood, I move that her request
20 for a service-connected disability retirement on
21 reconsideration be denied, but a non-service-
22 connected disability retirement be approved. Is
23 there a second?

24 DR. SO: So, second.

25 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say

1 aye.

2 DR. SO: So, aye.

3 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

4 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
5 motion passes.

6 Concerning Peter Works, I move that the request
7 for a non-service-connected disability retirement be
8 denied. Is there a second?

9 DR. SO: So, second.

10 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor, say
11 aye.

12 DR. SO: So, I.

13 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

14 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
15 motion passes.

16 And lastly, concerning Donald York, I move that
17 the request for a service-connected disability
18 retirement be tabled. Is there a second?

19 DR. SO: So, second.

20 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
21 aye.

22 DR. SO: So, aye.

23 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

24 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana, aye. The
25 motion passes. And that concludes the vote on

1 today's applicants.

2 MR. FAIRBANKS: Doctor, I think you need to
3 make a motion to end the meeting.

4 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Let's see. Would you also
5 like a statement concerning what our determinations
6 mean?

7 ATTORNEY CIESLAK: Dr. Gerratana, if you have
8 that, yes, go ahead and say that before your motion
9 to adjourn, because I'm not sure we said that before
10 we started in terms of if you'll receive a written
11 decision.

12 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Right. The Board will be
13 making determinations and voting on those
14 determinations. It would like to remind members
15 that only the final vote will be given today, and
16 not the reasons for the vote.

17 In some instances, there may not have been
18 enough medical information to make a determination,
19 or perhaps a service-connected disability is more
20 likely a non-service-connected disability.

21 You may seek reconsideration of an initial
22 denial. You will receive the Board's written
23 determination within two to four weeks, which will
24 provide you with that additional information.

25 That being said, I'll make a motion that the

1 meeting be adjourned. Is there a second?

2 DR. SO: So, second.

3 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: All those in favor say
4 aye.

5 DR. SO: So, aye.

6 DR. GERSTENFELD: Gerstenfeld, aye.

7 CHAIRMAN GERRATANA: Gerratana aye. The
8 meeting is adjourned. Thank you, everyone.

9 (Meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m)

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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3 I, Wendy Malitsky, do hereby certify that the

4 foregoing is, to the best of my skill and ability, a true

5 and accurate transcript of the State Employees'

6 Retirement Commission, Medical Examining Board meeting

7 held on September 2, 2025.

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9 

10 Wendy Malitsky, Notary Public

11 My Commission Expires March 2030

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