



GERs BOT's Special Board Meeting Aug 7th 2023

GERs Retirement System (Board of Trustees)

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0:00:00 um yeah i'm here yeah i asked um attorney smith right i'm not talking to it i asked trustee split um to make a motion to get okay um okay um good morning everyone um this special meeting of the board of trustees of the government employees retirement system of the virgin islands for monday august 7th 2023 is here by car to order mr darcy can i have a roll call please yes mr chairman uh trustee nellen l bowrie trustee barry is excused excused trustee andre t dorsey present present trustee vincent g liger uh trustee liger is excused um cindy richardson ex-officio member absent trustee ronald e russell present trustee leona e smith present trustee duane a colwood present mr chairman there are four present one absent two excused and we have a forum okay um

0:01:49 trustee can i have a motion to turn up a motion to get an executive session still move i would like to make a motion to go into executive session to hear matters legal matters and personal matters second move by trustee smith seconded by trustee russell can i have a roll call please yes trustee bowery absent trustee dorsey yes trustee liger absent trustee russell yes trustee smith Yes.

0:02:36 Trustee Colwood? Yes. Mr. Chairman, for EA, two absent, excused. The motion carries. Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

0:04:34 all right um we're back on record back in regular sessions um during the executive session the board um had a few discussions and some presentations with regard to legal matters pertaining to the Havenside Mall area as well as a presentation from ideas company also in reference to the Havenside Mall. So we'll resume the regular session portion of the agenda starting with the medical review policy. Good morning trustees. As you know about a year ago we submitted a revised policy for the medical review committee to function and it was directed that attorney williams and i meet to try to come to some consensus which as far as we're concerned we did so um we have the policy now and i'll just go over what the changes are as you know the current policy requires that um the applicant apply we send them to the doctors to be examined and then it would come before the medical review committee there's a scheduling order that's issued which has a hearing date there is a discovery request that has to be propounded the um applicant has to file a memorandum of law and authority the grs has to file that and then they have to file an exhibit list and a witness list and then if there's

subpoenas they have to have the board issue subpoenas and then there's a hearing in the process we felt that this was too cumbersome and um we needed to change the process so what we did was we drafted a new process and we believe the new process is much better for the applicant it saves time so it gets the applicant before the medical review board quicker it provides due process for the applicant because instead of having a hearing we now have an interview with the medical review committee so if the member so decides or the applicant decides they can have an interview with the medical review committee to explain what their issues are and what their problems are if the medical review committee feels that they need additional information they on their own can go to the doctors or they can ask to speak to the applicant they don't have to have the grs involved in that process so it speeds up the process because once the report is received from the doctors it goes immediately to the medical review committee and we don't have that scheduling audit that we have to file that can take months also um it negates the need for the grs staff to look at and hear the medical condition of the applicants right now the medical reports come to legal and legal has to review it because we have basically a hearing process and if our doctors disagree that the that the applicant is uh does not agree that the applicant is totally and permanently disabled we have to have a hearing and we have to be able to attack what the applicant's doctor has said and so we have to review the person's medical information which our staff would prefer not to do we think it keeps confidentiality with the member or the applicant and their medical information nobody in grs has to see it it's transmitted directly to the doctors the doctors receive it they review it and any questions or or any interviews are done without staff being present.

So the staff doesn't have to hear what the person's medical condition is. And as I said, that provides for privacy. And we think it's just an all out better process. And Ms. Kellan Dunnan, if you wanna add anything to the process, please do. I think the biggest takeaway from the revised policy is that it relieves the disabled person who is not working, the inability or ability, according to if they have it, to pay for legal counsel or somebody to represent them when they have orders, and this is a lay person, they are sick or disabled, then they get an order from GRS, what looks like a legal document, then they are forced to either go get counsel or don't get counsel and feel underrepresented, we truly keep this an administrative process uh with the board who we have successfully recruited and i think attorney williams did orientation new doctors uh to sit on we've changed the process before it was a paper review so this entire process has come a long way we don't do a paper review anymore we physically uh send the applicants to two independent doctors to get to so i think all of this coupled i think the new process would work to their benefit and we wouldn't have persons pending for such a long time which poses an undue hardship to the government or that agency because you can't take them off the payroll so it could be years or months they're sitting there in a position that you can't uh fail or they're still on donated leave and just waiting um i think it speeds up the process to the person's benefit um and if the committee wants to give the person a hearing like they can come in by themselves and ask them any questions they want without that legal burden that's my thoughts and again if the person is not satisfied with the decision of the medical review committee then they can spend their resources to take it to court instead of having to pay for a lawyer to come for the administrative process as well as if they're not satisfied pay for a lawyer to take it to the courts and we think it's just a fair process for the applicants and it as i said it would speed it up because we have some people who've been waiting for years to have a determination and it's not fair to that member um trustees any any questions okay um when when you when you streamline do me a favor do me a favor um turn on the camera as a speaking okay there you go when you okay when you streamline the process uh attorney smith um how does the initial process get started i'm not sure i understand that with this streamline for a disability a person has to file an application the application will be reviewed by the in-house staff to determine whether or not they met the requirements of the virgin islands code because there are certain requirements depending on whether your duty or non-duty that you must meet if they haven't provided all the information member services will write to them and tell them we need additional information we need you to send this information and there's a timeline in there if the person doesn't respond then the the the um application will be denied by the administrator because you know we've given you reasonable time we can't keep your application open forever but if they provide all the documentation then it's um given to the coordinator to determine send it off to a company that determines based on the medicals that they provide to us what type of doctor they need to see so once the doctors are selected they coordinate with the member to determine if it has to be off island their travel arrangements what doctors they're going to see and the dates for the appointments once that's done they travel they have the appointments the doctors the reports come back to the coordinator she would then send those to the board's um assistant who would then send it to the doctors for the medical review committee and disseminate it the doctors would then review the it's my the doctors would review it at their leisure whenever they have time and then they could schedule a meeting via zoom and they could discuss it if they feel they need additional information at that time they could decide well we need to speak with the doctors we need to speak with the applicant and that can be arranged through um either the medical review coordinator that's in-house or through the board's system. Could I answer your question on Chelsea Russell? Yeah. So when do they need to get an

attorney according to this process? With this process, they wouldn't need an attorney unless it goes to an appeal in the court. If they get a decision they do not like, then they could appeal it to the court. Then they would have to get an attorney. But through the current process, because it's structured like a hearing where they have to provide a memorandum of law they have to provide witnesses and stuff grs obviously their attorneys are involved in a process do memos do the witness and it makes the the member feel like they have to hire an attorney

0:14:20 some can't afford it some hire it they paid money for an attorney and then they still don't get the decision they like and then they have to pay for an attorney to take it to the court if they so deem it so we're just trying to streamline it to make it quicker and to make it less expensive on the member and so they don't feel so intimidated if they don't have the wherewithal to hire an attorney they don't have grs's attorneys on the other side filing legal documents that they can't comply with okay okay i like that process okay so it helps the members and it streamlines the process what's that's what you're saying right yes and it helps the members get their decision quicker okay okay and so what we have to do today vote on it yes you'd have to approve the new process and so we can start the new policy so that we can start doing it immediately can i ask a question before um um attorney williams did you get a chance to review this um our new concept yes yes and everything is good it depends on how you define everything being good give me your opinion yeah when this process first started it's not the policy that you have in front of you i think you'll recall that we went through a number of um discussions at the policy committee was then brought to the board the board could not make a decision it was i don't know basically put on hold um i'd always taken the position that what the system was recommending in my opinion did not satisfy what i consider the due process requirement in terms of allowing the member the opportunity to have a discussion with the committee and be represented by council. We've discussed that issue, we've now gone back and in the proposal today there is a provision for a due process interview. I will say that I don't believe that the system that we currently have in effect is broken and need to be fixed, notwithstanding that

0:16:41 the system takes a different position, but to the extent that there is a provision for a due process interview, I could probably live with that, even though I don't believe it's the best way to do it. I don't know that it necessarily saves the member from having to retain counsel, because under the court system, there's no requirement to obtain counsel. I mean, some members do or some applicants do and some do not. My issue with the rate of review before the court is that once it gets to the court, the process is almost cast and concrete. That is, all the court is reviewing is to make sure that things were done properly. There's no opportunity for the applicant to present anything new before the court the opportunity to do that would have been at the time that it's done before the medical review committee so i'm not sure you know arguing that it saves the members time or the need to get an attorney is a valid argument the issue about whether the staff gets to review or see the medical um information for the applicant that's going to happen anyway when the applicants submit his or her application medical reports are attached when the reports come back from the professionals or from the grs selected physicians members of the staff have access to them and i'm assuming that they're reviewing them for whatever purposes so i'm not sure that again that that's an issue um i mean maybe legal staff may not want to review them but members of the grs system are in fact reviewing them um and if you're going to adopt

0:18:32 this new policy i would strongly recommend that it be for cases that are brought um from here on in going forward um they are for cases that are currently pending that they are in the midst of the process um hearing dates have been established so i would strongly recommend against this policy being imposed on those because i think it makes it awkward and makes it retroactive so my recommendation would be that this policy would be going forward for any new cases um i just want to say with the with the current cases we have pending we still have to go through this legal process where we have to do a memorandum of law we have to have witness lists and it's still not fair to the member and while the member can get an attorney or cannot if the member knows that grs has their attorneys on the other side it kind of it compels them to get an attorney because they feel like it's at a disadvantage and to be honest they are at a disadvantage because they have two attorneys on the other side and they don't have the wherewithal to hire an attorney so i think we need to do this immediately and then you can have them have entered the interview with the medical review committee and as far as the review of the medical reports one person gets those medical reports if the person is permanently and totally disabled according to the doctors then the letter would be written and it would be sent to the administrator to go oh no it would be sent to the medical review committee so that's one person that has to look at the medicals to say yes the person is permanently and totally disabled and that's it it doesn't have to go to the administrator anymore doesn't have to go to legal it's only one person within grs who would send it and forward the

0:20:19 documents to either the medical review committee directly or to the board's assistant to send it off to the medical review committee so it does lessen the number of people who have to look at the reports also during the hearings during the hearing we have the grs staff the administrator the member services director and the attorneys have to sit there and listen to these people explain and talk about their medical issues. And it doesn't give them the privacy that I think they deserve, that we have to listen to that and that we may have to cross-examine them on it. So I think we need to put this process in

immediately and it would save the time and we could probably get these people in front of the medical review committee quicker than going through this lengthy process of the scheduling order. That's just my opinion. Some of these people have been waiting for a long time and we need to get them to the medical review committee well the issue of them waiting has not been a medical review um it's not been because of the members of the medical review it's been because the system was not able to obtain doctors to work on the medical review committee having said that i think you're going to invite more litigation by trying to impose a new process midstream for those cases that have already started this process. I can see counsel for at least one of the applicants arguing that GRS has instituted a new process because it wants some sort of advantage, and I think that would be a legitimate argument. Courts and legislatures normally don't make process retroactive, and there are reasons for that. If you're going to change the process midstream, it's going to invite questions. It's going to invite litigation. There's no harm. All of these cases are already scheduled for hearings by the end of this month. There's no need to interfere with that. There's no need to be this retroactive. I think we're asking for problems. And I think if you're going to do this, it should be for any new cases that come in from whatever day the board approves this policy.

0:22:35 that's what you're going to do and i do anticipate problems with the one that's represented by council so maybe we will go forward with that but the other ones are not represented by council so i think that they could be discussed with them and give them the option of going through this lengthy process or going before the medical review committee and doing their interview and if they show opt into it and then let them do that they might prefer instead of having to write a memorandum of law to figure out who their witnesses are ask for subpoenas so i think we should give the members the option of how they want to proceed tell them we have a new process and they can have the option of continuing under the old process or going forward with the new process and we can have them agree in writing i don't see how it's fair to treat one applicant differently from the way you're going to treat the others and we have no control if any of these applicants come at the daily hearing and they have councils present i mean we can't say well because you didn't file a notice of a parent or because we didn't know you had counseling we're not going to allow your counselor to represent you i mean technically maybe you could say that but i can't see the medical review committee taking that position i mean again you're inviting issues and you i mean because how do you explain how do i explain as counsel to the board we're treating one applicant whose application was in either before after somebody else and we we allow them to continue the process that was in place but for you we were telling you at least giving you an option to do something different i mean somebody will certainly have a better argument for some sort of discriminatory argument or treatment um you know without any rational basis well i think we should let me finish and i think that's a problem and i don't i would strongly recommend against the board doing

0:24:24 that i don't think it's a problem if you give everybody the same option i expect the person with the attorney is going to say no but we've given them all the same option they opt in writing they sign for it if they come at the time of the the hearing with the council then you say i'm sorry you said you weren't you you we you gave the option it was not a hearing and so if you're going to have council we'll have to reschedule it so that grs can have their council there and that's all you do to to resolve that issue but i think we need this policy sorry go ahead go ahead i was just going to say i think we need to give them the option a lot of these members don't want to do a memorandum of law they wouldn't know how to begin to write a memorandum of law and it's unfair because lots of times they don't even do it and then grs does theirs and it's unequal so i think we need to try to level a playing board for the of our members but even if they don't do a memorandum that's on them and it doesn't take away from their ability to put forward their case that's a right that they have if they don't want to exercise it that's on them so so to argue that they don't want to do it i mean you may want to take that position but that may not be the applicant's position that's why we should give them a choice but they have a choice now they could either do it or they don't do it but then when they don't do it you put grs in an awkward position because then their attorneys have filed something and the member hasn't filed anything and it's unequal and so we're just trying to level the playing field i mean it's only fair to the member give them the option and let them make the selection as to how they wish to proceed yeah i was gonna say so we're gonna adopt the policy going forward not for all these cases that are pending now this will be for new cases is that correct the new policy that is my recommendation

0:26:20 that's that's that's my position uh okay that's what i see how how you see it um carlwin and we should adopt the policy for going forward and not not you know appear to change the rules mainstream should only be applicable to applications of the fire after i assume today's day all right ... What about giving them the option, those that are, in, in, as Cathy Smith said, giving those that are applicants already an option to opt out of the current procedure and take this easy procedure and just, people pending, have an option, what about that?

0:27:20 i could live with i don't i don't have a problem because i think i i i able to do that these cases are already scheduled for hearing on the 14th and the 21st well then they can just meet with and what we could do is instead of having to file all these documents they could just meet with the medical review committee on that date and they can have their discussion

with the medical review committee to discuss their case without having to go through this legal process on the scheduling I believe with that because really and truly it's tough to tell somebody that if somebody applies for a disability pension then chances are they're born in sick leave or annually or they are donated leave so I think to put them in a position where they feel they need to have counsel to be on a level playing field that's just like an additional burden on top of whatever you know they're already dealing with so i i i you know i i can't see nobody say well you know i i especially if i don't already have counsel like i wouldn't want to exercise the option so i could live with giving the the four cases i could live with giving them an option i don't i don't have a problem me too i don't i don't have a problem with that either with i would adapt the new policy going forward and giving whoever pending an option that i think that's what you're saying to um mr cheer because you know we don't want to create a burden for for the members and and you know attorney costs money so you know i could do it that way but i'd like to hear who else where's their line because i hear from smith and and dorsey so we need consensus moving forward i get said moving forward we'll adopt a new policy but i

0:29:21 agree i did i did say okay okay i must admit it um yeah um trust the um chairman carwin I'm still not clear it sounds like we're in the same place we were at before where we were at before and we had this discussion and the board attorney had a clear position that due process was going to be a problem with the new proposed document and it seemed like the system attorney was like on the opposite side so i heard attorney russell say to trustee smith that is nothing broken so i think i need more clarification on that from uh this the board council because there's nothing broken why are we adopting a new plan again well it's my position that there's nothing broken so i think your question is probably better addressed um to the system representative and i think something um mr dorsey i think something is broken because it's unfair to the member to have a mini trial process when these people have been out on leave on sick leave it forces them because grs has their councils involved it forces a lot of them to either go out and hire counsel that they don't have the money to do or they feel like it's inequitable because GRS has their counsel and they have this trial-like, be it a mini trial-like process where they have to file legal documents that many of them have no clue what they're doing. And it also takes an inordinate amount of time. This way, once we get

0:31:12 the medical reports from the doctors, it can be sent to the medical review committee immediately and within two weeks they can schedule a hearing and have a hearing for before the medical review committee if they so choose and it speeds up the process instead of having another couple of months while we go through this lengthy hearing process so so it may not so it may not say may not be a matter of okay so so it may not be a matter of the car you know not being broken but you have a car with a double four barrel carburetor that gets you a 10 miles per gallon and then you have an option to have a fuel injected car where you get 20 miles per gallon i mean the car with the carburetor ain't broken but you know there's another more efficient effective way to get from home to the post office and back so okay so the the board council indicated that the reason why these cases were taken so long is because there wasn't a full committee is that correct correct correct okay so we're not going to have that problem going forward so what's what's why does it need to change we're not going to have that problem because now the option is on the table is a more efficient process it's less okay so let's have a let's have a boarding less of a morning on the applicants so i'm i'm i'm waiting for board council to tell me that this is more efficient and that is not broken he said his opinion i mean no i'm waiting for board council to respond not the board chair i'm having a conversation um station and i want clarity so i'm asking board council Again, is this how you see this?

0:33:10 Or do you see this as something else? Because it still sounds like something is missing here. I think I've made my position clear. I mean, we just have two different positions, which is not unusual. It's my position that we don't need this new system or this new process. Is the system's position that it's necessary that it make it more efficient? It makes it more efficient, more cost effective for both GRS as well as for the member and it speeds up the process it gets them before the medical review committee much faster so that they can either get their final determination and if they are determined to be permanently and totally disabled they get on the payroll much quicker. We're trying to look out for our members and make the process easier for the member instead of having a mini trial for people who are not lawyers are not savvy and how the process works okay so board council um that's that's your position i'm just trying to figure out what your position is because it's still not clear it's really not clear council are you recommended that the trustees vote for this new system is either yes or no no counsel i said no okay thank you okay kind of a motion to adopt the the um the revised proposed revision to the medical for review policy.

0:35:21 that motion include the option for the pending cases mr chair correct all right okay i i move that we adapt the new medical policy uh as may be discussed here today with the option for pending cases i saw move by trustee russell is there a second second move by trustee russell seconded by trustee smith kind of a roll call we said we said we said the option is going to be in there right correct with the option for the full pending case yes one that is clear yes mr chairman roll call uh trustee barry absent excused trustee dorsey no trustee dorsey no trustee liger absent excused trustee russell yes trustee russell yes trustee smith yes i didn't hear clearly said yes yes okay trustee smith yes trustee callwood yes trustee callwood

yes uh mr chair there are three yay one nay and two absent all right thank you on behalf of the members and the staff we really appreciate this all right next item up on the agenda the approval of the fiscal year 2024 budget so mr. chair I'll just give a high-level overview And we have Ms. Denise Jeremiah, our Chief Financial Officer, here with us, who can answer any questions with regards to details.

0:37:35 For fiscal year 2020. Point information, Chair. Yes, Chosidossi. Did you guys already have a budget meeting? No, sir. No, sir. okay the same thing if the committee met on this no we don't know we did not I decided to bring it straight to the code board so we didn't so we didn't have to have a budget committee meeting and then have some trustees in attendance and some not in attendance and then come to the board meeting and then have to have a repeat of our discussion that we had before the budget so this so this in fact is the would serve as a the committee meeting well being that the proceeds are present um the full board is present we'll be able to vote on the budget one time instead of having to have it and you know a follow-up agenda uh point information chair um i'm not sure i'm not sure about this budget here um i thought we had our i thought when we spoke in our retreat we said we had we know we have not he said we know we have some financial constraints so i figured we would have had a budget committee from the retreat to follow up on those issues before we concluded with voting up or down on a budget today trustee dorsey remember you kept saying that when the budget committee meets you want to be notified of the meeting you want to be in attendance you want to be part of the discussion right that is correct okay so rather than have a

0:39:26 budget committee meeting have a discussion then bring the budget to the full board in a follow-up meeting to vote on it if we have the budget committee discussion right here in the meeting with the full board we're gonna have the same discussion that we would have in the budget committee meeting and when we're finished with the discussion today whatever we agree upon is what we vote on and we move it out it's no different other than instead of having two instead of having the budget committee and budget being considered twice or by a budget committee and then the full board we just bring it to the full board so now is the time to have the discussion that's what it says today we're not saying here is the budget and vote up of order we haven't the discussion the same discussion that we would have if we had a budget committee sorry about that chair i thought we were voting on a budget today i didn't realize we were just discussing it today so see you can vote on a budget today after the discussion after the discussion okay so i really thought this was going to just be a medical committee meeting today that's what we had discussed at the retreat and then i saw these other documents as part of the process today so it's a little taken back but yeah i'm saying to you when we discussed having a meeting in the retreat it was purely about the medical committee issues that was it oh sir and then you have changed you changed the agenda to add on the other items so maybe i i just understood what that

0:41:21 was about that is not correct because in the committee meeting i mean in the in the retreat we indicated that our um our presentation to the legislature was upcoming and we needed to adapt a budget prior to which is why okay which is why the meeting was being held today okay all right so i kind of missed that part so that's cool okay thank you you're cool may i proceed mr chair yes sir yes thank you so the proposal for the fiscal year 2024 budget is broken into three components the board of trustees the administration component and facilities management and operations and i'll go through each of those individually for fiscal year 2024 the board of trustees proposed budget is seven hundred and forty three thousand two hundred fifty three dollars versus a fiscal year 2023 budget seven seven hundred fifty eight thousand two hundred seventy eight dollars a decrease of fifteen thousand twenty five dollars for administration of gers a budget uh proposal of sixteen million eight hundred twenty five thousand one sixty five is presented for consideration uh the fiscal year 2023 administration budget was \$12,172,740, an increase of \$4,652,425. We will get into the details in our discussion with regards to the budget proposal. However, that \$4.65 million increase includes various capital expenses that are non-recurring but necessary based upon input from senior staff facility management and operations the fiscal year 2024 proposed budget is five million sixty eight thousand eight hundred fifty two dollars versus a fiscal year 2023 budget of two million six 68 982 which is an increase of two million three hundred ninety nine thousand eight hundred seventy dollars that budget component similarly includes capital expenditures that are required amongst other things to bring this building into ada compliance so it is not reflective solely of operational expenses but that too can be discussed in the course of this meeting today so those are the major components mr chairman and trustees we prepared myself together with the chief financial officer and the chief operating officer to answer any questions that there may be with regards to the fiscal 2024 budget proposal um mr chair can we have those documents listed on the screen in other words the documents that the executive director was reading um maybe he could put one of them up on the screen which give the summary so that we could look at them as they in real time i think it was i think it was attached to the agenda if i'm not mistaken but um the budget i would like to see the numbers and uh if you could put it up on the screen mr executive director of the code

- 0:45:11 uh your question is understood trustee russell um technically we're trying to get someone who is connected with their computer uh to uh share their screen so that your request can be fulfilled so if we can have a moment um we'll be able to thank you sir sure bear in mind you'll see russell this meeting was supposed to be an important meeting yeah yeah but i had a quote no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no stop stop stop stop stop stop stop i'm not singling you stop i'm not singling you okay Okay. Will you be able to bring it up, Ms. Glendale? My Zoom is updating. Okay. Bear with us, please. Let's take our five-minute recess. Yes. Thank you. While we walk on, okay.
- 0:46:27 Thank you. . all right somebody [3 such phrases repeated 9 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]
- 0:50:33 okay we're back on record um trusty russell you there trusty russell yeah i got it i got it i got it and thank you very much uh executive director yes my pleasure trustee russell so um this is the page of the presentation that you wanted for us to share uh that is what i just presented yes um so uh with that mr chair i turn it over to you yeah yeah there are any questions regarding the budget any um any questions put uh any questions any particular item um yeah i i want to i want to ask But, let me, let me be sure that, um, when, when there are an, a line item for the Board of Trustees, uh, does that include travel to some of these conferences, uh, and travel that we approved when we had a meeting to try to go to washington dc to get the gasoline excise tax i i border trustees that's your line so seven seven hundred and fifty eight thousand two hundred and seventy eight dollars okay and then fiscal year 24 there's a reduction of fifteen
- 0:52:35 2025 so give me the details of that and then uh explain what the breakdown usually is for the voter trustees please okay um okay i see okay so the the reduction in the budget for the board of trustees okay we were able we were able to reduce our uh professional services ah okay expenditures for uh for the last fiscal year okay so that's who you're there okay so that that yeah that brought don't know yeah yeah yeah i i see i see i see the parentheses uh i see that okay okay good okay okay and now let me be sure this is what we're going to the legislature if we approve something today we're going to the legislature to ask for the 15 million dollars in administrative expenses this was a retreat and like i stated then if that's what the board is saying if that's what a majority that's what a majority of the board of trustees vote to include in our presentation it'll be included okay well that's now is the time i think you know i believe um okay so that let me not not to cut you off right okay so hola let's see if any other trustees have any um discussion oh yes
- 0:54:41 yes yes okay and then when we wrap it up okay so so uh trustee um chairman chairman uh i missed the part i missed the part with um the savings you said was on professional services we were able to reduce our professional services expenditures for this past fiscal year so in the budget for the board of trustees that i prepared for the next fiscal year i reduced the budgeted amount okay so what was the amount again i don't remember the exact figure they did change or the variance in our budget for next fiscal year as opposed to this fiscal year was 15 it's 15 15 000 something okay so which part of this which part of those professional services that you actually cut that's what i was moving to i guess what what did you actually save money on what is it you're cutting okay since we don't our meetings tend to be shorter so some of these professionals that we pay by the hour to take part in our meeting we're able to cut those costs significantly because um you can only go into two in the afternoon and 2 30 as they used to so that's where both of our savings came in okay so i'm asking besides council for the board who else are you referring to on an hourly basis that would be the stenographer yes uh-huh those two okay and who else that's it all right wow okay that's interesting okay so a lot of meetings used to go till two and two in afternoon tutorial these are these marathon meetings okay so does this budget include the loan program that we discussed at the retreat are we going to introduce that
- 0:57:06 or we're going to base that on if the senate's going to uh cover the administrative costs or we're going to ask the senate to kick in some money towards helping us start the loan program as we discussed at the retreat so what are the options we we're proposing on this right now we're considering the fiscal year 2024 operating budget so this budget covers the operations of the system the loan program is not part of our operations so that would not be included within this budget yeah but didn't we say when we get in front of the senate chair we're still going to ask for some kind of commitment um from those particular senators that are pushing the loan program trusty dorsi the item that is before us on today's agenda is the approval of the fiscal year 2024 operating budget let's try to focus on that what you're asking is not part of the operating budget so what we force what we're considering right now is the operating budget okay um okay so as far as the salary increases are we going to discuss that today are we going to discuss the salary increases of the administrative staff uh the classified unionized uh members and the non-exempt uh members on the salary increases are we going to discuss that today those numbers are in the budget i i not tell us what i mean are we are we are we going to discuss it are we going to discuss the salary increases that's why i was asking
- 0:58:53 the unionized increase increases are more or less a given the unclassified exempt employee salary increases are not a given so are we just putting all in one vote today are we going to separate it out are we going to discuss it that's all i was asking chair i i i hear you but i still try i try to still try to the end of budget chair this is administrative budget that's what

she just said for 2024 right for the system or operating budget in this budget has salary increases it has it for those who are unionized and those who are not i'm asking you are we going to do it all together are we're going to segregate it we're going to break out the unionized are done by contract the unclassified exempt are not done by contract so i'm asking you are we going to discuss that now are you just going to just go along with the proposed budget and hold that's all i was asking what i'm what i'm saying to you is the numbers the the increases the money for the increases are in a budget so is there a particular item in the budget a particular number you want to discuss i would discuss all the increases for the exempt employees does not have to happen at this time we just did that in the last budget we just came out of the retreat saying that we have um financial um we have financial issues going forward and trying to meet our debt service right that's what we said

1:00:44 in the retreat that's when our advisors advised to us that in 20 20 35 we're gonna be right back to talking about insolvency if we don't do the things we need to do today so outside of those union contracts i don't see why we would be increasing anything on the unclassified side i was just trying to get the justification i guess from the administrator i guess that would come from the administrator i'm not sure if it's right to put it on the new administrator so i was asking you chair okay what's the first operating budget what number in a budget are you questioning what number do you want to read to revisit what number do you want broken down i mean point well i i make it real simple chair all the exempt employees that are requesting another increase those don't need to happen at this time since we have these financial issues and we're trying to save and i guess that would be several more million dollars we'd be able to save on the operating budget all those unionized employees who were contracted with we can fund those positions and we can have that discussion okay that's in the report so fyi fyi no um exempt employees receive pay increases lastly none so i don't know what the basis for your statement that those exempt employees are you said nobody

1:02:38 got an increase last year no one got an increase last year chair oh exempt employees got there were no exempt employee increases across the board so when you make the statement that those employees that got increases last year and requesting it uh that we should not fund increases for them again this year that's not the last time they got an increase when was the last time they got to increase the exempt employee a year before so chair um we just said at the retreat we don't have the money to pay so now we're digging more into the overall system money to pay again like i said we have a union we have union contract employees and by contract we have to pay them but the example employees we don't have to pay them the increase even this year even if they didn't get it last year we don't have to pay them you want to have a discussion i'm trying to have a discussion okay because you said the system is not where it should be and this is outside this is outside of the CEO money because that's a separate situation with the CEO so i'm talking about everybody that sits around the CEO that's unclassified you're saying we need to discuss this among ourselves yes oh i agree we had this that we had a discussion at the retreat unless you guys want to take this

1:04:30 hook line and sinker we could vote this up and down that's why i was saying we needed a meeting among us to talk about this not just bring it here and then this is where we're at i'm being i'm just being real about it right so trust it so trustee don't see what would have been the difference between today and us having a budget committee meeting and inviting all the trustees which is what you requested what's the difference no and i'm not saying that you know what i'm trying to say we could we can have that meeting among us today you know we can go back in the executive session and have that meeting if you want today we can just have it and we can have it openly it's fine with me openly i don't have a problem either way let's go executive session let's go make a motion no i don't need to go in executive session the trustee smith after we should have that among us i said we should but what i'm saying to you i don't have to go on executive session to say what i have to say i can say it openly publicly and i'm saying even though they didn't get a salary increase if you if you go into the budget and look at the salaries there's nothing to complain about at the level that they're at i looked at these salaries so there's nothing to complain about the unionized employees is different we had a contract with them to pay them so that's different and i'm not saying anything i didn't say the last time i'm putting more emphasis on because we have certain realities to make sure these individuals who we represent get their ability every 15 days so you want to cut costs we can cut costs i would like to make a motion to go into executive session to discuss um personal matters and legal matters second

1:06:17 we'll call um yes uh trustee bowery absent excused trustee dorsey yes trustee dorsey yes trustee liger absent excused trustee russell trustee russell trustee russell not voting trustee smith yes yes for russell trustee russell yes trustee call yes yes mr chairman four yay two absent okay um let's give mr roses a minute all right okay we're back in regular session um during executive session the board of trustees made some revisions to the perfect proposed fiscal year 2024 operating budget for the grs um so that that revised budget will be presented to the board for official adoption and our regular board meeting on the 24th of this month that concludes our agenda our agenda items for today can i have a motion to adjourn motion to adjourn second motion to adjourn move by trustee dorsey seconded by chelsea smith uh trustee murray absent excused trustee dorsey yes trustee dorsey yes trustee liger absent excused

1:08:24 trustee russell okay trustee russell trustee russell not voting trustee smith yes trustee smith yes trustee colwood yes trustee call with yes mr chair 3a one not voting to epon all right motion carries this special board meeting for monday august 7th 2023 it's a manual thank you very much ladies and gentlemen we need to get you a gavel mr chairman Thank you very much.

1:09:40 . Thank you. You