



**Missouri Fire Fighters Critical Illness Pool**  
**MINUTES**  
**2:00 p.m. – 3:20 p.m. CT Thursday June 1, 2023**  
**Virtual Zoom Regular Meeting**

**1. Roll Call for a Quorum**

**Present:**

Greg Brown Eureka Fire Protection District, *Chair*

Cory Hogan Local 2665 Professional Firefighters of Eastern Missouri, *Vice Chair*

Mike Snider Lee's Summit Fire District

Kirk Lair Central Jackson County Fire Protection District, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Scott Frandsen Mid County Fire Protection District

Sara Jahnke, Ph. D Dir. & Senior Scientist, Center for Fire Rescue & EMS Health Research at the National Development & Research Institutes

Tom Vineyard (Joined at 2:31 p.m.) O'Fallon Fire Protection District

**Legal Counsel:**

Carl Scarborough – General Counsel

**Others:**

Joseph DePaepe – McGriff Insurance Services, Inc. (*Administrator*)

Jenniffer Alvarado – McGriff Insurance Services, Inc. (*Administrator*)

Paula Lowder - McGriff Insurance Services, Inc. (*Administrator*)

**2. Approval of February 16, 2023 Minutes – Approved**

A motion was made by Scott Frandsen to approve the minutes for the February 16, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Kirk Lair and then unanimously approved by the board.

**3. Grail Presentation**

Allie Erickson presented on behalf of GRAIL, a company that provides blood draw cancer tests. She explained the importance of early cancer detection both for patient outcomes and cost effectiveness. The test works by detecting methylation patterns that are similar to those of people with cancer. The test works best on aggressive types of cancer that leave traces in the blood (would not work well for brain cancer due to the blood-brain barrier). It is recommended that the test be repeated on an annual basis. Jan Leary jumped on stated that GRAIL had worked with they have worked with firefighters in Westminster, CO and San Francisco. In their experience, fire departments typically had a special day or week where their employees could get blood drawn for the test.

Mike Snider asked if they've partnered with organizations like the MFFCIP in the past. Jan Leary answered that they hadn't, but they did work with life insurance providers and health organizations in the past.

Greg Brown proposed getting small group together to talk with GRAIL and determine what a partnership between them and the MFFCIP would look like.

#### **4. Review Old Business and Open Items**

##### **a. Behavioral Health Update**

Cory Hogan stated that the legislative session went well with both SB24 and SB186 passing. SB24 grants funding to the MFFCIP for Peer Support Teams, PTSD treatment, and other services. SB186 puts cancer as a presumptive injury into the workers' compensation system. Neither bill has been signed yet, but Cory Hogan said he had written to the governor encouraging him to sign the bills.

Carl Scarborough added that his current project was build a single structure that would provide oversight for both the Behavioral Health Trust and the Cancer Trust that the Division of Commerce and Insurance will sign off on.

Greg Brown asked Carl Scarborough if he could update the board on what the cost of his work putting everything together would be. Carl Scarborough said that, with the Cancer Trust, there were a significant amount of time that was not billed for at the beginning. He expects to have more than 40 billable hours with all the work on the Behavioral Health Trust and wanted to inform the board in advance so no one was caught off guard by to cost. Carl Scarborough said that he would like official authorization from the board to begin the billing process for the Behavioral Health Trust.

Mike Snider made a motion to approve the billing for the periods which began with the initial phases of creating the new pool for legal counsel. The motion was seconded by Cory Hogan and unanimously approved.

Greg Brown gave a quick summary and update as to what the work groups and subcommittees for the Behavioral Health Trust have been doing. The Best Practices Group has been in charge of establishing procedures, such what to do when certain calls require immediate aftercare for those involved. The Peer Support Group is responsible for figuring out how to get peer support teams with the appropriate amount of training to cover the state. The Clinicians Group is responsible for compiling a list of clinicians with experience working with fire fighters. Valerie Beason mentioned that Jaqueline Brown had provided a proposal together that highlighted some key components of Aspen's service that had been provided to Greg Brown.

##### **b. Dates and Places for Cancer Seminars**

Sara Jahnke, Ph. D provided information about the upcoming Cancer Seminars (listed below). They had been able to shorten the time for some sessions in order to include a few speakers who would provide information about behavioral health.

August 3<sup>rd</sup> in St. Louis – Greg Brown and Dennis Jenkerson working on location

August 4<sup>th</sup> in Columbia – Mike Snider and Jerry Jenkins working on location

August 5<sup>th</sup> in Springfield – Greg Brown and Eric Latimer working on location

#### **5. April Financials – Approved**

Joseph DePaepe reviewed the balance sheet and income statement with the board. Though the net position was negative, they have had a positive net income as of April. The Pool has \$5,111,737.80 in total assets. Joseph DePaepe said that he would send these documents to the board if they wished to review them on their own time along with the budget comparison. Joseph DePaepe also shared the investment report, list of investments,

and investment policy with the board. He outlined for the board what their parameters for investment were and what they were currently investing in.

Tom Vineyard made a motion to acknowledge receiving the April financial documents which was seconded by Kirk Lair. The motion was then unanimously approved.

## **6. Pool Investment Philosophy Review**

Jake Hopkins from Central Bank gave a presentation reviewing the Pool's investment portfolio. The presentation covered what the current state of the economy/market was, a review of the Pool's investment policy and strategy, the portfolio phases that had been implemented so far, the Pool's portfolio compliance, and what investment for the Pool would look like going forward.

For the market status, rising inflation rates and some bank failures hint at a possible recession sometime in the near future. That being said, Federal Open Market Committee predicts lower rates by the end of 2024. Unemployment spiked during the pandemic but has since dropped.

The Pool's investment policy prioritizes safety of principal (not losing anything from the principal amount in an investment), liquidity, and yield. The Pool's investment took the form of a two-phase approach. The first stage lattered securities on the front end monthly, and the Pool is now in the second stage. The Pool's portfolio book yield is 3.67. The total book value is \$4.56 million but the market value is \$4.48 million. Though there is a slight unrealized loss, Jake Hopkins assured the board that their portfolio did very well compared to other portfolios with how interest rates have risen.

44% of the Pool's portfolio is made up of treasuries, 30% is agencies, and 26% are certificates of deposit. Of the agency securities, 22% are callable. Per policy restrictions, the average years to maturity of the Pool's investment should be below 3 and is—at the time of the presentation—1.28 years. All maturities must be within 5 years, which the Pool has complied with as all their maturities stop within 4 years.

Moving forward, Jake Hopkins stated that they would continue to evaluate the Pool's operating cash flows and allow for adjustments to investment portfolio allocations. They would also continue monitoring market data and course correct where necessary.

## **7. New Member Approval as of 5/25/23 – Approved**

Scott Frandsen made a motion to approve the induction of 27 new members into the Missouri Fire Fighters Critical Illness Pool. The motion was seconded by Kirk Lair and then unanimously passed by the board.

Current Membership Count: 2,161 FT, 70 PT, and 156 Volunteer for a total of 2,387 FF from 69 members.

## **8. Update on Prospective Members in Process**

### **9. Claims**

#### **a. Denial Review**

Joseph DePaepe brought to the board's attention a recently denied cancer claim in which a claim was filed during the period of time between the governing body's action to join and the completion of the necessary documentation. This issue has come up in two previous claims. Joseph DePaepe suggested that the board establish a policy in what to do with cases like these and putting a limitation between the events of up to 30 to 90 days.

Cory Hogan made a motion to accept the claims that had come in thus far with this issue and establish a period of 90 days between the governing body's action to join the board and the completion of necessary documentation during which the member would be covered. The motion was seconded by Kirk Lair and the motion was passed with a unanimous vote.

## **10. Approve 2023 McGriff Management Agreement Effective 1/1/23**

Joseph DePaepe explained that the board had not submitted last year's administration agreement for 2023. To avoid this in the future, Joseph DePaepe said that he was trying to make sure that all future contracts came up for renewal at the September meeting so they could all be done at the same time. However, this agreement needs a formal approval and for Chief Greg Brown to sign it. It had already been reviewed by Carl Scarborough.

Cory Hogan made a motion to approve the 2023 McGriff Management Agreement. This motion was seconded by Scott Frandsen and passed with a unanimous vote.

## **11. Board/Trustee Management Liability Proposals**

Ana Holdren said the Trustees Errors & Omissions Liability Proposal had been sent out to market in order to add it for the Trust. There were two carriers that were interested in carrying it: One80 (Lloyds Syndicate) and Hartford. She showed a document comparing the potential policies offered by each of them and the costs.

Scott Frandsen asked Joseph DePaepe if he and his team had a recommendation for which carrier to choose. Joseph DePaepe said that they recommended One80 (Lloyds Syndicate) as it protects the board's personal liability and provides a defense fund. While it does have a higher deductible, the board has the money to handle that without issue.

Scott Frandsen made a motion to approve the contract with One80 (Lloyds Syndicate). The motion was seconded by Cory Hogan and passed with a unanimous vote.

## **12. Financial Audit Firms for RPF in 2023**

Joseph DePaepe explained that his team was working on an RPF and would like to have a few different options for firms that had experience working with Missouri pools. He had received a suggestion from MIRMA, but asked board members to send him any financial audit firms that they would recommend.

## **13. Actuarial Study**

Edward Johnson introduced himself to the board as the actuary for McGriff insurance that works with Joseph DePaepe and his team. He presented updated industry data for the year, a review of the claims that occurred, and how the pricing should be adjusted to reflect that information. Edward Johnson stated that the funding that has been set up for the Pool continues to be adequate, even in light of the handful of claims that have come in already.

## **14. Coverage Review for Ex-Employees and Retirees**

Joseph DePaepe explained that a question had come up about whether the Pool would cover ex-employees the same way they covered retirees (providing coverage for up to 15 years after leaving the fire service) and what the exact definition of a retiree would be for the purposes of providing this coverage. The current language excludes ex-employees but fails to address the Pool's intention to classify retirees as covered individuals. Joseph DePaepe asked for additional guidance from the board to amend the coverage document.

Discussion continued amongst the board and issues were raised such as if/how retirees would be tracked by the Pool and what the exact definition of a retiree would be as definitions are not consistent across departments. Cory Hogan suggested getting a smaller group together to find a definition of "retiree" that would work for the

Pool. Greg Brown suggested that Cory Hogan, Mike Snider, and Carl Scarborough get together to discuss it and bring their findings back to the board.

## **15. Review Proposed Future Contracted Professional Service Agreement Dates and Establish Basis for Soliciting Competitive Bids**

Joseph DePaepe explained that generally public entities are required to review the cost of similar services from multiple providers and use the best cost for the needed services. Pools are not subject to these guidelines. As another reference the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Administrative manual does not give much guidance as to how often professional services must/should be bid out. Joseph DePaepe made a list of professional services that the Pool had contracts with. Since the Pool's fiscal year starts in January, the plan is to get all these contracts come up for renewal by the September meeting so they can all be approved at the same time. It seemed like, typically, contracts only go back out to bid again if the client feels they are being severely overcharged for the services provided.

Carl Scarborough mentioned that there are a few specific statutes related to the public sector as it relates to bidding in the CDBG manual. Carl Scarborough said that he would look through it to see if any of them would apply to the Pool or risk management, but otherwise what Joseph DePaepe had developed was fine.

Scott Frandsen recommended that the Pool Administrator should oversee the vendor contracts and the services delivered and bring to the Board issues that would warrant a competitive bid of the defined professional services.

Mathew Broderson said that MIRMA uses that portion of the statute to tell their members that they do not have to go out and get competitive bids. However, MIRMA does not use it for their pools own bid system.

## **16. Annual Membership Meeting**

After board discussion, Greg Brown said that he would meet with Joseph DePaepe and Tim Bean about having the Annual Membership Meeting be a hybrid meeting with in-person attendees meeting at the Fire Marshall's office and virtual participants joining over Zoom. Though a specific date was not chosen, the board consensus was to hold the meeting in September.

## **17. Conference Pool Marketing Scholarships – Approved**

Joseph DePaepe brought up that a number of organizations that had supported the Pool while the board was building up its program and it would be good to support them in return. He requested that \$500 be allocated in the budget to market at each the four conferences annually (listed below).

- Fire Fighters Association of Missouri (FFAM): Held first week of June
- Missouri Association of Career Fire Protection Districts (MACFPD): Held second week of June
- Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs (MAFC): Held February 29–March 3, 2023
- Missouri Association of Fire Protection Districts (MAFPD): Held June 23–24, 2023

Cory Hogan made a motion to go forward with the Pool's marketing scholarships with \$500 allocated for each of the four conferences listed plus the Missouri State Council of Fire Fighters' (MSCFF) convention from July 31–August 2, 2023. Mike Snider seconded the motion and it was approved with a unanimous vote.

**18. Legal Updates**

None.

**19. Other Business**

Paula Lowder explained that they had a clinician reach out who was with ResponderStrong. They informed Paula Lowder that there would be a “train the trainer” mental health course in O’Fallon, MO and wanted the Pool’s help bringing attention to it. It is a free course that has been funded through a federal grant.

**20. Next Regular Meeting: September 21, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. CT**

**21. Motion to Adjourn – Approved at 3:20 p.m.**

Scott Frandsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Cory Hogan. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kirk Lair  
Recording Secretary

The Missouri Fire Fighters Critical Illness Pool approved the foregoing minutes on \_\_\_\_\_.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Brown  
Board President