

# **City of Cincinnati Retirement System Board of Trustees Meeting**

# Agenda

# October 2, 2025 / 2:00 P.M. City Hall, Council Chambers and via Zoom

**Members CRS Staff** Jon Salstrom

Bill Moller, Chair Tom Gamel, Vice Chair

Kathy Rahtz

Mark Menkhaus, Jr.

Law Kevin Frank Monica Morton

Seth Walsh Aliya Riddle Sonya Morris Tom West

Call to Order

**Public Comment** 

# **Approval of Minutes**

September 11, 2025 (2-5)

# **Report on Governance Committees**

# **Executive Session**

# Informational – Staff Report

- Marquette Investment Report (6-8)
- Investment Manager Contracts Update
- Staff Update
- Eyecare RFP Update
- CEM Benchmarking Update
- Fiduciary Audit Recommendations Update (9-11)

# **Old Business**

Governance Manual (12-14)

#### **New Business**

# Adjournment

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 6, 2025, 2:00 P.M. City Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom



**City of Cincinnati Retirement System Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes** September 11, 2025 / 2:00 P.M. City Hall – Council Chambers and remote

**Board Members** Administration Jon Salstrom

Bill Moller, Chair Tom Gamel, Co-Chair Kathy Rahtz

Mark Menkhaus Jr.

Monica Morton Seth Walsh

Aliya Riddle

Sonya Morris

Tom West

Law

**Kevin Frank** 

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Moller called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and a roll call of attendance was taken. Trustees Moller, Gamel, Menkhaus, Morton, Riddle, and Morris were present. Trustees Rahtz, Walsh and West were absent.

# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

# **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Trustee Morton moved to approve the minutes of the Board meeting of August 7, 2025. The motion was seconded by Trustee Morris. The minutes were approved by unanimous roll call vote.

#### **Report on Benefits & Performance Evaluation Committees**

Trustee Menkhaus: The Performance Evaluation Committee met today and approved a motion to adopt the revised 2025 strategic objectives and goals for the Executive Director's performance evaluation. Because the motion came from a committee, no second was required. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Trustee Gamel: The Benefits Committee met today and reviewed two disability applications. The City's doctor recommended against approval for both applications. The Committee passed a motion supporting the doctor's disapproval of both disability retirement requests. Because the motion came from a committee, no second was required. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **Executive Session**

Chair Moller moved to enter Executive Session pursuant to Revised Code Section 121.22(G) and Municipal Code Section 121-7 to discuss Board Council matters subject to pending and imminent court action. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gamel and approved by unanimous vote.

# <u>Informational – Staff Report</u>

# Marquette Investment Report

Chair Moller: The YTD performance is about on par with the benchmark. The portfolio remains slightly underweight in fixed income and overweight in private equity relative to policy.

Director Salstrom: Marquette performance report covers through July 31. YTD return is +8.4%, driven by strong US and International equity markets (both near double-digit returns). Results are in line with the policy benchmark. Investment documents for Sapphire Ventures completed. WindRose investment documents expected to be finalized soon (this week or next).

#### **Dashboard Reports**

# **Return Dashboard (Through July 31):**

- Outperforming assumed rate of return over 1, 3, and 5 years.
- Compared to a passive 70/30 benchmark: lagging in short-term (1 & 3 years) due to US market strength but outperforming over 5 years.
- In line and outperforming policy benchmark over 1, 3, and 5 years.

# **Demographics Dashboard:**

- Tracks actives, retirees, deceased, terminated, and DROP members (2021-2025).
- Current YTD numbers appear normal and in line with expectations.

#### **Benefits Dashboard**

Dollars paid out YTD vs. prior 4 years are tracking as expected; no anomalies.

#### Risk Dashboard:

- Further review of Cybersecurity planned for next Performance Evaluation Committee meeting.
- Anticipated risk rating changes: Personnel (high to medium) and Counterparty (medium to low).

# **Strategic Asset Allocation & Liability:**

- Portfolio generally aligned with policy benchmark.
- Underweight domestic equity; overweight private equity, infrastructure, and real estate.
- Slight underweight in fixed income.

# **Liquidity Dashboard:**

- Portfolio breakdown: 2/3 liquid, 18% less liquid, 17% illiquid.
- Illiquid holdings consistent with prior reports (17-17.5%).
- Confident in liquidity to meet monthly benefit obligations.

# **Compliance Dashboard:**

• All items in compliance; review dates noted; no issues.

### **Budget Dashboard:**

- Staffing under budget due to vacancies; expected to align once fully staffed.
- Data processing variance due to timing of consulting purchases.
- Professional fees will adjust once Sapphire and WindRose legal bills are finalized.

#### Staff Update

JoAnne Niesen will transition into the Members Counselor role. Her current Administrative Specialist position (supporting pension operations) will need to be filled. Work continues with HR to finalize the Investment Analyst role description. Anticipated posting within the next month. Goal to have interviews by year-end. Both positions are in progress.

# Eyecare RFP Update

Procurement granted final approval to award the contract last week. The Law Department is reviewing contract documents and scope. The Vendor is the same as previously used so no significant issues are expected. The only change is the addition of a buy-up option. It is on track for completion ahead of Open Enrollment.

# Healthcare Survey Update

Horan (healthcare consultant) will present survey results in December. Participation levels have been strong. The goal is to gather insights to guide future benefit options. Last year's survey led to dental and vision buy-up options; similar outcomes are anticipated.

#### Fiduciary Audit Recommendations Update

Two outstanding items remain: 4.2 and 4.3. Both will be addressed through a CEM Benchmarking survey. The survey will provide insight into investment practices (fees, diversification, etc..) and pension operations compared to peer group practices. Expected outcomes include identifying gaps vs. peers (e.g., ability to process documents/changes online) and use findings to resolve outstanding fiduciary audit recommendations.

#### **Old Business**

#### Governance Manual

Work with the graphic designer has resumed. A hard copy example of the handbook created was available for review. Governance Manual is expected to be finalized by the next Board meeting. Trustees' handbook may follow as the next project.

#### Update on CRS Annual Report to Council

This was presented to the Budget & Finance Committee on Monday. The presentation went well; Director Salstrom provided a strong summary of current status. Chair Moller emphasized his encouragement to Council to adopt the incremental annual increase as an official policy, so it can be updated periodically and incorporated into the budget process.

#### **New Business**

No New Business to Discuss.

#### <u>Adjournment</u>

Following a motion to adjourn by Trustee Menkhaus and seconded by Trustee Morris. The Board approved the motion by unanimous roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

Meeting video link: <a href="https://archive.org/details/crs-board-9-11-25">https://archive.org/details/crs-board-9-11-25</a>

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. – City Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom

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Secretary







# Cincinnati Retirement

Monthly Report

Executive Summary August 31, 2025



Monthly Report As of August 31, 2025

	Market Value	% of Portfolio	Policy %	Target Allocation	Difference
Fixed Income Composite	489,662,101	20.0	22.5	551,922,646	-62,260,545
Private Debt Composite	143,526,488	5.9	6.5	159,444,320	-15,917,832
U.S. Equity Composite	654,385,583	26.7	28.5	699,102,018	-44,716,435
Non-U.S. Equity Composite	414,870,344	16.9	16.0	392,478,326	22,392,018
Volatility Risk Premium Composite	58,326,563	2.4	2.5	61,324,738	-2,998,175
Real Estate Composite	151,377,897	6.2	6.0	147,179,372	4,198,525
Infrastructure Composite	252,883,554	10.3	10.0	245,298,954	7,584,601
Private Equity Composite	274,717,185	11.2	8.0	196,239,163	78,478,022
Total Fund Composite	2,452,989,536	100.0	100.0	2,452,989,536	

	Last Month
Total Fund Composite	
Beginning Market Value	2,427,268,218
Net Cash Flow	-14,140,652
Gain/Loss	39,861,970
Ending Market Value	2,452,989,536

	1 Mo	3 Mo	YTD	1 Yr	2 Yrs	3 Yrs	5 Yrs	7 Yrs	10 Yrs	SI	Inception Date
Total Fund Composite	1.7	5.0	8.5	10.0	11.4	10.0	9.8	7.9	8.2	8.8	Jun 85
Target Benchmark	1.8	5.3	9.1	10.0	11.5	9.8	8.9	7.9	8.3	-	
Actuarial Rate 7.5%	0.6	1.8	4.9	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	
Fixed Income Composite	1.2	2.9	5.8	4.3	6.1	4.2	1.2	2.8	3.1	5.0	Dec 95
Blmbg. U.S. Aggregate Index	1.2	2.5	5.0	3.1	5.2	3.0	-0.7	1.8	1.8	4.2	
Private Debt Composite	0.0	1.9	3.2	8.2	9.7	10.9	287.9	-	-	5.3	Oct 20
Blmbg. U.S. Aggregate Index	1.2	2.5	5.0	3.1	5.2	3.0	-0.7	1.8	1.8	-0.7	
MSCI Private Capital Global Private Debt	0.0	3.4	5.5	9.1	9.0	8.8	10.6	8.0	7.8	9.8	
U.S. Equity Composite	2.8	10.1	10.5	14.8	19.8	17.2	15.9	11.6	12.4	9.9	Mar 89
Russell 3000 Index	2.3	9.9	10.6	15.8	20.9	18.8	14.1	13.2	14.0	11.1	
Non-U.S. Equity Composite	3.6	6.8	22.0	15.9	16.9	15.4	10.0	6.6	7.3	6.3	Jun 93
MSCI AC World ex USA (Net)	3.5	6.7	21.6	15.4	16.8	15.1	8.9	7.0	7.3	-	
Volatility Risk Premium Composite	1.8	6.1	5.4	9.5	10.3	11.0	-	-	-	6.9	Feb 22
Cboe S&P 500 PutWrite Index	1.4	5.9	2.2	7.8	11.1	11.5	11.1	6.9	7.8	7.7	
Real Estate Composite	0.4	1.1	2.3	3.8	-2.3	-4.6	3.9	4.0	5.6	4.8	Sep 07
NFI-ODCE	0.0	0.3	1.7	2.6	-3.2	-6.3	2.5	2.6	4.2	3.7	
NCREIF Property Index	0.0	1.2	2.5	4.2	-0.8	-2.8	3.7	4.0	5.2	5.5	
Infrastructure Composite	0.0	2.2	4.8	9.6	8.8	8.9	9.4	8.7	7.2	8.4	Sep 08
3 Month T-Bill +4%	0.7	2.1	5.6	8.7	9.2	8.9	7.0	6.7	6.1	5.3	
Private Equity Composite	0.0	1.3	2.1	6.8	6.9	6.2	14.4	12.7	12.0	8.7	Aug 93
MSCI Private Capital Global All Private Equity	0.0	4.2	6.1	10.1	7.2	5.4	14.9	13.8	13.6	15.0	



#### **DISCLOSURES**

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# **Funston Performance Audit - Summary of Recommendations**

Funston Performance Audit - Summary of Recommendations								Assignment							
			Board	Board, Adm.	Priority	Board	Goverance	<u>IC</u>	Staff	Performance	Audit				
	1. Legal and Regulatory	<u>Status</u>								evaluation					
11	Improve definition and clarity of roles and authorities of:	<u>otatus</u>													
1.1	improve definition and clarity of foles and additionales of.														
	The Board of trustees	Completed	Х		Χ										
	Board chair	Completed	Х		Х										
	Individual trustees	Completed	X		X										
	City Council and Mayor	Completed		Χ											
	City Manager and City Finance Director	Completed		Χ											
	CRS Director	Completed		Χ											
1.2	The City should expand Board of Trustees personnel authorities to align with the Board's responsibilities, for example, naming the CRS Director as a direct report to the Board, with authority to hire/fire, evaluate, and set compensation.	Completed		X											
1.3	The City Solicitor should provide the Board of Trustees with independent external legal counsel or establish a policy and process that allows CRS to retain independent external counsel and/or hire internal CRS counsel to address potential conflicts of interest associated with the City Solicitor's representation of other clients on the same matters.	Reveiwed		х	x										
1.4	Confirm the Board's authority, as the named fiduciary, to contract with actuaries, investment consultants, investment managers, custodial banks, benefit providers, and legal counsel, all of which require unique pension and investment expertise.	Completed		Х	Х										
1.5	The City Manager should allow CRS trustees who are not City employees to vote on CRS procurement decisions; the Board, as fiduciaries, should have final authority on those decisions.	Completed		Х	Х										
1.6	If the CRS Board is not given authority to hire/fire/evaluate/compensate the Director, work with the City Manager to develop a Memorandum of Understanding that addresses the City Manager's role as a potential fiduciary and formalizes procedures where the Board and City Manager, Finance Director or other officers have overlapping responsibilities (e.g., setting goals for and evaluating the Executive Director); CRS may need to consider options for engagement of independent fiduciary legal counsel to assist with this initiative.	Completed		Х	X										
	GREN - SHORTER TERM COMPLETION  RED - LONGER TERM COMPLETION  Board - CRS Board has authority to complete  Board, Adm CRS Board and City Administration have shared authority to complete  Priority - CRS Board priority to complete as soon as possible  Note: Some Recommendations may require CSA update.														
	2. Governance Framework														
2.1	Aggregate and organize the Board policies from all sources into a Board Governance Manual with online access and links to underlying document provisions; include the mission statement, goals, trustee responsibilities, committee charters and the Code of Ethics.	Completed		Х	Х										
2.2	Develop new policies or formalize current policies and practices for:														
	Trustee personal financial disclosures	Completed	Х												
	Board self-evaluation / Board education policy	Completed	Х												
	• Funding	Initiated		Х											
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Completed	v	٨											
	Separate investment policy statement for the 115 trust fund that is tailored to its liabilities		Х												
	Strategic planning, in coordination with the City	Completed		Х											
	Collection of claims in securities class actions	Completed	Х												

			Board	Board, Adm.	Priority	Board	Goverance	<u>IC</u>	Staff	Performance evaluation	Audit
	Succession planning, in cooperation with relevant City appointing authorities	Completed		Χ						evaluation	
	Business continuity and resumption	Completed		Χ							
	Independent governance and benchmarking reviews	Completed		Χ							
	External communications by Board members	Completed	Х								
	<ul> <li>Due diligence and reporting for referral of service provider candidates by trustees, along with limits on candidate contacts with trustees during an RFP process</li> </ul>	Completed	Х								
2.3	Reduce the size of each committee to three or five members to better utilize trustee time.	Completed	Χ								
2.4	Adopt a consent agenda for approval of routine business and reports.	Completed	Х								
2.5	Conduct periodic board retreats for more in-depth discussion on key topics, conducting board self-evaluations and executive director evaluations, and trustee education.	Completed	Х								
2.6	Following implementation of the recommendations in this report, conduct a biennial self-evaluation process, potentially with external assistance; this process should help to inform educational priorities.	Completed	Х								
2.7	Define ongoing training requirements for Board members, including onboarding plan for new trustees and required fiduciary training; link training to board self-assessment findings and the calendar of Board agenda action items.	Completed	Х		Χ						
2.8	Formalize a CRS stakeholder communications plan that identifies key stakeholders, communications responsibilities, and messages and objectives.	Completed		Χ							
2.9	Issue new system email accounts to be used by trustees for all CRS-related business.	Completed	Χ		Χ						
2.10	Discuss with the Director and the investment consultant how reporting could be improved and executive summaries better utilized to enhance trustee understanding and insight.	Completed		Χ	Χ						
2.11	Appoint a Board Audit Committee with oversight of internal and external audits to commission an independent financial audit and obtain internal audit services from the City Internal Audit Department and/or an independent firm; include oversight of enterprise performance and risk in the committee charter responsibilities.	Reviewed		Х	Х						
	3. Investment Program and Operations										
3.1	Develop a separate Statement of Investment Beliefs (SIB) to guide development and implementation of the strategic asset allocation.	Completed	Х								
3.2	Develop a liquidity policy as part of the Investment Policy Statement (IPS) to ensure that the cash needs of the organization are effectively and efficiently met.	Completed	Χ		Χ						
3.3	Develop a separate IPS for the 115 Trust (Health Care Trust) that reflects the unique liability structure of the 115 Trust.	Completed	Х		Χ						
3.4	Extend the time horizon for the strategic asset allocation to 3-5 years and only make changes to the target asset allocation as part of a comprehensive Asset Liability Study.	Completed	Х								
3.5	Include a more comprehensive rebalancing policy in the IPS that describes how rebalancing is linked to the Board's investment philosophy and what the process should be.	Completed	х								
3.6	Discuss with Marquette Associates how reporting might be improved through development of an introductory executive summary, with an exception reporting approach, to the quarterly reporting package focused on actual performance compared to the IPS.	Completed	х		Χ						
	4. Pension Operations										
4.1	Clarify the Board's responsibilities and role (or lack thereof) in pension and benefits administration.	Completed		Χ	Χ						
4.2	Consider if pension staffing resources and capabilities should be improved through Implementation of a member contact center telecommunications system.	Initiated		Χ	Χ						
4.3	Develop a long-term plan with service, performance, and cost objectives, to ensure that member self-service, website redesign, and other improvements, are all developed and implemented in a coordinated manner and achieve desired results.	Initiated	Х								
4.4	Charter a pension administration cost and performance benchmarking report.	Comleted	Х								
4.5	Consult with its actuary and determine if an adjustment to the investment assumed rate of return should be recommended.	Comleted			Χ						
4.6	Develop and adopt a formal actuarial and funding policy describing responsibilities and frequency of actuarial and asset/liability study processes and addressing investment, demographic and benefit risks.	Completed	Х		Х						

	5. Administrative Operations			Board, Adm.	<u>Priority</u>	Board	Goverance	<u>IC</u>	<u>Staff</u>	Performance evaluation	<u>Audit</u>
5.1	Develop succession planning and implement a cross training program for staff to minimize key person risk and enhance staff development.	Ongoing		Χ							
5.2	Work with the City Administration and the Law Department to delegate authority to the CRS Board to engage external counsel to obtain more timely legal support or unique expertise when appropriate. See also Recommendation 1.3.	Completed		Χ	Χ						
5.3	Develop a long-term IT plan that identifies future needs.	Completed		Χ							
5.4	Work with the City Enterprise Technology Solutions (ETS) Department to ensure security is adequate and tested.	Completed		Χ	Χ						
5.5	Update the documented disaster recovery plan.	Completed		Χ	Χ						
	6. Compliance										
6.1	Assign leadership, training, and monitoring responsibilities for compliance to ensure compliance with conflict of interest and ethics policies.	Completed		Χ	Х						
6.2	Develop a repository of risk-ranked compliance requirements.	Completed		Χ							
6.3	6.3 Establish tracking mechanisms to identify and escalate non-compliance.			Χ							

GREEN - SHORTER TERM COMPLETION RED - LONGER TERM COMPLETION

Board - CRS Board has authority to complete

Board, Adm. - CRS Board and City Administration have shared authority to complete

Priority - CRS Board priority to complete as soon as possible

Note: Some Recommendations may require CSA update.



City of Cincinnati Board of Trustees

**GOVERNANCE MANUAL 2025** 



BOARD FUNCTION	GOVERNANCE MANUAL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE TABLE OF CONTENTS
Purpose, Overview, and Fiduciary Duty	2025 CRS Board and Committee Schedule X Introduction, Mission Statement and Core Values X Key Governing Laws, Powers (with links to source documents) X Fiduciary Duty X Overview of Plan X
Board Organization	Definitions; terms used in this manual/retirement keywords X Board Organization X Terms & Vacancies X Board Member Responsibilities X
Conduct Business of the Board	Evaluate Board Direct Reports (Director) X  Stakeholder Relations & Communications X  Board Operations; Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary Charters/Duties X  Board Meetings X  Minutes X  Posting of materials on website X  Board Committees X  Board Elections X  Board Member Attendance X  Code of Ethics X
Appendixes	CRS Retirement Division Operations X  Committee Charters X  Board Rules X  Board policies X  CRS Quarterly Budget Report X  Oath of Office X

Board of Trustees meeting schedule, agendas, minutes, IPS and other financial documents: https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/retirement/crs-board-of-trustees/board-meetings-minutes/

# INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees ("Board") for the Cincinnati Retirement System ("CRS"), is established and governed by the Collaborative Settlement Agreement ("CSA") (Sunyak v. City of Cincinnati, S.D. Ohio, 2016), the Cincinnati Municipal Code ("CMC"), and the Cincinnati Administrative Code ("CAC"). The Board is also governed by applicable Ohio laws and federal statutes, and City regulations such as Administrative Regulations ("AR"). The general administration and responsibility for the proper operation of the retirement system is vested in the Board of Trustees. The Board administers CRS for the benefit of CRS members and has a fiduciary responsibility solely to active and retired members of CRS. The Board has the exclusive authority to govern the CRS Pension Trust Fund and 115 Trust Fund.

The Board is responsible for establishing the investment policy, approving and managing the annual budget and evaluating the Executive Director of the CRS Retirement Division. The CRS Executive Director is responsible for managing employees of the Retirement Division, and administering policy, procedures, and day-to-day operations of the division. The CRS Executive Director is managed by the City Manager.

This Governance Manual incorporates the terms of the CSA, CMC and CAC, and provides guidance for Board matters, procedures, rules and regulations.

This Board Governance Manual is a guide to assist the CRS board in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities and to facilitate the organized, efficient and cohesive functioning of the board. This Board Governance Manual is to be provided to all CRS board members.

# **MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES**

The Board, acting in its fiduciary capacity, is dedicated to seeing that CRS accomplishes its mission.

- 1) Assure Promised Pension and Healthcare Benefits for Current and **Future Retirees**
- 2) Assist and Support CRS Members in Achieving a Successful Retirement
- 3) Assure CRS Transparency and Accessibility for all Stakeholders

As provided by law, the mission of CRS is to provide retirement security for the City of Cincinnati retired public employees. CRS will accomplish its mission by acting in the best interest of all participants, maintaining the financial security of the Trust fund and the 115 Trust, and by providing exceptional service to members, benefit recipients, and employers.