

Public Employee Relations Board
Public Meeting – VIRTUAL – February 19, 2025
11:00

Board Members Present: L. Solomon, H. Cooperman, J. Rivlin, L. Ohman, R. Steyer
Board Staff Present: E. Snipes, C. Franzoni, W. Suggs, N. Coffing

Acting Chair Solomon opened the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Approve minutes from 1.10.25 meeting

Moved: L. Ohman

Seconded: H. Cooperman

Approved without objection.

2. Updates
 - a. New Deputy Director – Nathan Coffing

Acting Chair Solomon introduced N. Coffing, who thanked the Acting Chair and Board members, noting he was glad to be part of the PERB staff.

- b. Legislative Report
 - (1) PERB proposed legislation

E. Snipes noted that the Senate Bill had already been approved with amendments, and crossed over to the House, where it awaited a hearing date.

- (2) Legislation impacting PERB

E. Snipes spoke about multiple bills that would be impactful to PERB if passed. These included bills granting collective bargaining rights to graduate assistants at state universities, a general

ombudsman bill granting collective bargaining rights to those working in the state of Maryland, and an arbitration reform bill requiring the appointment of a mediator/arbitrator at a certain point in the negotiations process should the parties not be able to reach agreement, and a large bill pulling local government (county & municipal) employees/employers under PERB jurisdiction.

c. PERB Regulations

- (1) Changes to regulations about ground rules for negotiations and open versus closed negotiations sessions, COMAR 14.30.13.01A(1) & (7)

L. Solomon noted the language that would be changed in these two regulations; A(1) would be deleted pursuant to a Board vote in April 2024 and in A(7) the phrase “in closed sessions” would be deleted. Mr. Solomon noted that there was no prohibition for negotiations in open sessions if the parties agreed. L. Solomon invited Board member comment/discussion. No Member responded. L. Solomon invited Damon Felton from MSEA to present what he had submitted in writing to the Board regarding these two regulations. Mr. Felton responded that

- Ground rules are permissive subjects of negotiation; an employer may not insist on parties negotiating and agreeing to ground rules.
- PG County and Baltimore County have been impacted by the current regulation requiring closed negotiation sessions as they have had open negotiation sessions in the past.
- Agrees with the changes proposed by L. Solomon

Dr. Christy of PGCEA agreed with D. Felton’s presentation and asked if the parties can continue with open negotiations, and if the current regulations (requiring closed negotiations sessions) will be enforced. L. Solomon indicated that if the Board agreed with the proposed changes, parties will be aware of the Board’s position that open negotiations are permitted, but that the

regulations will not be officially amended until after these changes go through the regulatory publication process.

L. Solomon requested a vote from Board members regarding approval of regulation changes, which would be submitted through the regulatory publication process. All Board members approved without objection.

d. Next public meeting: March

Following Board discussion, L. Solomon indicated that the date and format of the March meeting would be forthcoming.

4. Question & Answer

None presented.

Adjournment

Moved – H. Cooperman

Seconded– L. Ohman

Approved without objection.

The Board adjourned at approximately 11:40 a.m.