

University of Waterloo
PENSION & BENEFITS COMMITTEE
Minutes of the October 17, 2024 Meeting
[in agenda order]

Present: Teresa Fortney (chair), Trevor Askes, Sara Cressman, Elizabeth Demers, Danielle Deveau, Melissa Graham, Sarah Hadley, Michelle Hollis, Lily Hua, Jacinda Reitsma, David Taylor, James Thompson, Sarah Willey-Thomas (secretary)

Guests: Linda Byron, Yessenia Guerrero, Lisa Habel, Lee Hornberger, Sara Perkins, David Porreca, Brad Richards, Kate Rybczynski, Allan Shapira, Tyler Wendland

Regrets: Linda Blair, Ashley-Ann Morgado, James Rush

Organization of Meeting: Teresa Fortney took the chair and Sarah Willey-Thomas acted as secretary. The secretary advised that a quorum was present.

1. Agenda and Minutes

1.1. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.2. Approval of Agenda

The Committee noted a correction to the timing of the adjournment.

Hua and Graham.

That the October 17, 2024 meeting agenda be approved. CARRIED

1.3. Approval of the September 13, 2024 Minutes

Deveau and Hollis.

That the minutes of the September 13, 2024 meeting be approved.
CARRIED

1.4. Business Arising

Committee members requested a further discussion of gender affirmation coverage and eligible prescribers of medical equipment alongside the discussion of the Biosimilar Transition Program.

2. Benefits

2.1. Health Care Spending Account

Michelle Hollis introduced the Health Care Spending Account, noting the arbitrated decision and role of the Pension & Benefits Committee.

The Committee and guests discussed if the HCSA would be offered to other employee groups; decision making role for the Committee as articulated in the settlement and terms of reference, including what the arbitrated decision indicates would happen if the Committee does not approve the HCSA; discussion of benefits in negotiations and role of the Committee relative to negotiations; discussion of options if the HCSA is not approved by the Committee; impact of introduction of an HCSA on retirees; and confidentiality considerations regarding negotiations.

The Committee agreed that further conversations between administration and FAUW would be undertaken with an update to the Committee in November.

2.2. Biosimilar Transition Program

Jacinda Reitsma presented the Biosimilar transition program, noting the three different benefits previously discussed (i.e., Biosimilar Transition Program, gender affirmation, and eligible prescribers of medical equipment); cost savings associated with the change; and the financial situation of the University.

The Committee discussed the impact of recommending all three benefits to the Board of Governors at the same time; feedback from the Board regarding the Family Building Benefit; equity considerations related to the gender affirmation coverage; increase in nurse practitioners in primary care; financial context of the University; eligible prescriber benefit as a correction to the benefits plan; employee inquiries regarding gender affirmation benefits coverage; and messaging to the Board regarding the proposal.

Graham and Taylor.

That the Pension & Benefits Committee accept and recommend that the Board of Governors approve the adoption of the Biosimilar Transition program and the inclusion of coverage for gender affirmation and prescribing of medical equipment by nurse practitioners, with specifics as contained in the Pension and Benefits Committee agenda for September 15, 2024.

CARRIED

3. Pension

3.1. Review of SIPP and FIP

Sarah Hadley presented changes to the SIPP and FIP, noting changes reviewed by the Pension Investment Committee; annual process to review the SIPP and FIP;

engagement of Eckler to review of the documents; and, integration of best practices.

The Committee discussed corrections to the numbering and table of contents to reflect the changes to the document; adding a clarification sentence to asset mix chart in Section 12; challenges associated with valuation of illiquid asset classes, including private debt; clarification of the term investment manager as opposed to fund manager; risk associated illiquid asset classes and related risk mitigation; asset classes of other pension plans, including UPP; and, how PIC monitors returns of asset classes.

James Thompson left the meeting.

The Committee agreed to consider further revisions to the SIPP to clarify ongoing monitoring of SIPP and FIP.

The Committee agreed to amend the SIPP to reflected and updated table of contents; to replace references to investment manager with fund manager; and the additional clarification sentence to the asset mix chart in section 12; and editorial changes as discussed.

Askes and Taylor.

That the Pension & Benefits Committee accept and recommend that the Board of Governors approve changes to the Pension Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures, as amended. CARRIED

Reitsma and Graham.

That the Pension & Benefits Committee approve changes to the Fund Implementation Procedures, as presented. CARRIED

3.2. Plan Text Amendments

Lee Hornberger presented the Plan Text Amendments as per the recommendation from the September 2024 Committee meeting.

The Committee discussed the estimate of increase to the average industrial wage effective January 1, 2025 and heard that language in the plan text allows for adjustments as needed. Aon will bring back any concerns related to the estimate to the Committee as appropriate.

Taylor and Askes.

That the Pension & Benefits Committee recommend that the Board of Governors approve the Amendment Number 10 to the University of Waterloo Pension Plan for Faculty and Staff. CARRIED

4. Other Business

4.1. Pension & Benefits Committee Orientation

The Committee orientation was deferred to the November 2024 meeting.

4.2. Review of Work Plan

Sarah Willey-Thomas shared the Committee's work plan for information.

November 7, 2024

Sarah Willey-Thomas
Associate University Secretary