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1 TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF NEW YORK CITY

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BOARD MEETING

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6

December 19, 2024

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3:34 p.m.

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Teachers' Retirement System of New York City

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55 Water Street, 16th Floor

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New York, New York 10041

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Sophian DeFrance

Digital Reporter

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Notary Commission No. 01DE0006274

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APPEARANCES:

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PATRICIA REILLY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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THAD MCTIGUE, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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THOMAS BROWN, CHAIR, TRUSTEE

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BRYAN BERGE, MAYOR'S OFFICE, TRUSTEE

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ALISON HIRSH, OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER, TRUSTEE

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VICTORIA LEE, TRUSTEE

8

GREGORY FAULKNER, PANEL FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICIES,  
TRUSTEE

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CHRISTINA MCGRATH, TRUSTEE

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Also Present:

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VALERIE BUDZIK, DIRECTOR, TRS

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KAVITA KANWAR, DIRECTOR, TRS

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LIZ SANCHEZ, ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER, TRS

15

ANDREW BRADFORD, CHIEF RISK OFFICER, TRS

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MATT LASKOWSKI, TRS

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DINA SIMON, TRS

18

MAREK TYSZKIEWICZ, CHIEF ACTUARY

19

ISAAC GLOVINSKY, LAW DEPARTMENT

20

GATI DALAL, LAW DEPARTMENT

21

DAN WHITMAN, LAW DEPARTMENT

22

JOE EBISA

23

ANTHONY GIORDANO, PANEL FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

24

JAMES SANCHEZ-MORALES

25 SHARON CAMPBELL, GRANT THORNTON

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1 WILL RICHARDSON, GRANT THORNTON

2 KIRA GREENIE, GRANT THORNTON

3 CECILLE PUBLICO, GRANT THORNTON

4 ANDY ZURICH

5 LOREN PERRY

6 ALEX JUNG

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1 (The proceedings commenced at 3:34 p.m.)

2 MS. REILLY: Well, good afternoon, everyone,

3 and welcome to the Board Meeting of the Teachers'

4 Retirement Board for December 19th, 2024.

5 I'll start by calling the roll.

6 Bryan Berge?

7 MR. BERGE: Bryan Berge represented Mayor Eric

8 Adams. Present.

9 MS. REILLY: Thomas Brown?

10 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Good afternoon, Patricia.

11 Present.

12 MS. REILLY: Thank you.

13 Gregory Faulkner?

14 MR. FAULKNER: Present.

15 MS. REILLY: Alison Hirsh?

16 MS. HIRSH: Present on behalf of Comptroller

17 Brad Lander.

18 MS. REILLY: Victoria Lee?

19 MS. LEE: Present.

20 MS. REILLY: Christina McGrath.

21 MS. MCGRATH: Good afternoon. Present.

22 MS. REILLY: Okay, we have a quorum. And next

23 on the agenda is an update on TRS operations by Kavita

24 Kanwar.

25 MS. KANWAR: Thank you, Patricia.

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1           Good afternoon. On January 1st, a new plan  
2 year goes into effect for TRS members, which means their  
3 contribution rates are subject to change. TRS is  
4 currently reviewing the updated salary and wage  
5 information for these members and will be adjusting the  
6 contribution rates for almost 15,500 members for  
7 January.

8           TRS has also begun work to review the Chapter  
9 551 of the laws of 2025, which allow current BERS  
10 members and UFT titles to transform membership to TRS  
11 during the next year. The law also provides new hires  
12 in those same UFT titles with the opportunity to join  
13 TRS. Thank you.

14           CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you, Kavita. Kavita,  
15 what was the number of people who are affected by the  
16 new rate for Tier --

17           MS. KANWAR: 5,000? Oh sorry, 15,500.

18           CHAIRMAN BROWN: 15,500. Can you get that  
19 electronically to us?

20           MS. KANWAR: Sure.

21           CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thanks, Kavita, much  
22 appreciated. Thank you.

23           MS. REILLY: Okay. Next on the agenda is an  
24 update from the Actuary.

25           MR. TYSZKIEWICZ: Thank you. So I just have

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1 one item to update the Board on.

2           I'm asking the Board to note receipt of the  
3 June 30th, 2022 Actuarial Valuation which determined the  
4 contribution for fiscal year 2024, which just ended.

5           The board already approved the final  
6 contribution amount for the fiscal year. This report  
7 provides all the supporting information the actuarial  
8 standards require.

9           I just want to point out one thing. Last year  
10 we started the process of making the valuation reports a  
11 little easier to read. We tried to continue it with  
12 this one. We actually hired a plain language specialist  
13 to come in. She was a retired English professor, or a  
14 former English professor, and she reviewed our reports  
15 and gave us some advice on how to make them easier.

16           We started doing that in the introductory  
17 section of the report. So in last year's report, if you  
18 analyze the introductory section, the readability score  
19 was a junior in college. With the revisions, the new  
20 intro is a freshman in college, so two years.

21           CHAIRMAN BROWN: I thought I was getting  
22 better at reading everything.

23           (Laughter.)

24           CHAIRMAN BROWN: You shouldn't have me that.

25           MR. BERGE: So I'll be able to read it next

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1 time.

2           (Laughter.)

3 MR. TYSZKIEWICZ: Yeah, we're trying to get to  
4 the high school level, but I don't -- we're not getting  
5 there any time soon.

6 But anyway, happy to answer any questions, but  
7 if there are none, just please note receipt of the value  
8 report.

9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

10 MS. REILLY: Okay. All right, thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

12 MS. REILLY: Next on the agenda is the  
13 Executive Director's report, and the first item on the  
14 report is the matter of the next meeting, which is  
15 scheduled for Thursday, January 16th, 2025.

16 The second item on the agenda is a resolution  
17 for the support for legislation concerning unfunded  
18 accrued liability payment schedule.

19 MR. BERGE: Patricia, if I may be heard from  
20 just a moment on that?

21 I believe the will of the Board this month is  
22 to lay that item over. Hope springs eternal for the new  
23 year, and I hope to keep this item on the agenda, so  
24 that we can see what the new year brings.

25 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you, Bryan.

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1 Consensus in laying it over?

2 (Board consensus.)

3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Let the record show that  
4 consensus was reached in laying that over as well.  
5 Thank you, Bryan.

6 MR. BERGE: Thank you.

7 MS. REILLY: I think it's agreement.

8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I'm sorry?

9 MS. REILLY: No, no.

10 Next is the authorization to the Comptroller  
11 of the City of New York to invest certain QPP funds.

12 MS. MCGRATH: Please waive the reading.

13 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. The reading has been  
14 waived. So do I have a motion to accept the  
15 Comptroller's authorization to invest QPP funds?

16 MS. MCGRATH: So moved.

17 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And is there a second?

18 MS. LEE: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Great. Any discussion? All  
20 those in favor of accepting the Comptroller's  
21 authorization to invest QPP funds, please say aye.

22 (Ayes were heard.)

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Those opposed, say nay? Any  
24 abstentions? Let the record show that the Comptroller's  
25 authorization to invest QPP funds has been approved.

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1 Thank you.

2 MS. REILLY: Next is the authorization to the  
3 Comptroller of the City of New York to invest certain  
4 tax deferred annuity funds.

5 MS. MCGRATH: Please waive the reading.  
6 CHAIRMAN BROWN: The reading has been waived.  
7 Is there motion to accept the Comptroller's  
8 authorization to invest TDA funds?  
9 MR. FAULKNER: So moved.  
10 CHAIRMAN BROWN: It has been moved, thank you.  
11 Second?  
12 MS. LEE: Second.  
13 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And it's been seconded. Any  
14 discussion? So all those in favor of accepting the  
15 Comptroller's authorization to invest TDA funds, please  
16 say aye?  
17 (Ayes were heard.)  
18 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Those opposed, say nay? Any  
19 abstentions?  
20 And let the record show that the Comptroller's  
21 authorization to invest TDA funds has been approved.  
22 Thank you.  
23 MS. REILLY: Next on the agenda is the  
24 calendar and the approval of the following minutes:  
25 November 7th, 2024 Investment Meeting minutes, and the  
0010 November 19th, 2024 Board Meeting minutes.  
1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Great. And is there a motion  
2 to accept both the November 7th, 2024 Investment Meeting  
3 minutes and the November 19th, 2024 Board Meeting  
4 minutes?  
5 MS. MCGRATH: So moved.  
6 CHAIRMAN BROWN: It's been moved. Do I hear a  
7 second?  
8 MS. LEE: Second?  
9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any questions? Any  
10 discussion? So all those in favor of accepting the  
11 November 7th, 2024 Investment Meeting minutes and the  
12 November 19th, 2024 Board Meeting minutes, please say  
13 aye.  
14 (Ayes were heard.)  
15 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Those opposed, say nay? Any  
16 abstentions?  
17 And we'll let the record show that those  
18 meeting minutes have been approved as well. Thank you.  
19 MS. REILLY: Next is the calendar items. You  
20 all received an electronic version to review. So I'll  
21 go over the calendar.  
22 MS. LEE: Please waive the reading.  
23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Great. Reading has been  
24 waived for calendar items. Any discussion?  
0011 And is there a motion to accept the calendar  
1 items?  
2 MS. LEE: So moved.  
3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And is there a second?  
4 MS. MCGRATH: Second.  
5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any discussion again? Okay,  
6

7 ready to vote on this?  
8 All those in favor of accepting the calendar  
9 items, please say aye.  
10 (Ayes were heard.)  
11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Those opposed, say nay? Any  
12 abstentions?  
13 And let the record show that the calendar  
14 items have been approved. Thank you.  
15 MS. REILLY: Next is Other Business. The  
16 first item under Other Business is the updated January  
17 investment meeting date, which will be January 16th,  
18 which is the same day as the board meeting.  
19 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Correct. So please, we'll  
20 note in our calendars that, on January 16th, we have  
21 both the investment meeting and the regular board  
22 meeting on that day.  
23 MS. REILLY: Yes.  
24 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.  
25 MR. BERGE: Just one question. Is the intent  
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1 to have them staggered, or one immediately following the  
2 other?  
3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: One following the other.  
4 MR. MCTIGUE: The investment meeting is  
5 scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m.  
6 MR. BERGE: Oh, okay. It will be in relation  
7 to the board meeting.  
8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Correct. So the investment  
9 meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. on January 16th,  
10 followed by the board meeting --  
11 MS. REILLY: 3:30 board meeting.  
12 CHAIRMAN BROWN: -- right after that.  
13 MR. BERGE: Fabulous.  
14 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you. Thank you for  
15 that.  
16 MS. REILLY: Thank you. Next is a  
17 presentation from Grant Thornton.  
18 MS. CAMPBELL: Hi. Thank you, Patricia.  
19 Good afternoon. Can everyone hear me?  
20 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Yep. Yes.  
21 MS. CAMPBELL: Okay, it looks like my screen  
22 might have frozen.  
23 So for those who are not aware, I'm Sharon  
24 Campbell. I'm a managing director in Grant Thornton's  
25 Employee Benefit Plan Audit Practice, and I will be  
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1 presenting our required communications to the Board  
2 today.  
3 Before I present my screen, I do want to thank  
4 management, as always, they do a great job. They're  
5 responsive to our requests, they're very transparent in  
6 the answers. They have a keen focus on quality  
7 financial reporting. It is really a great pleasure to  
8 work with them, especially when they want to do the

9 right thing. So it is always very helpful for quality  
10 purposes. So with that, I'm going to share my screen.  
11 Okay. Can everyone see my screen?  
12 MS. REILLY: No. Yes.  
13 MS. CAMPBELL: All right. All right. With me  
14 today on the phone, we have Will Richardson. Patrick  
15 couldn't make it. Kira Greenie is with us. I think  
16 Cecille Publico is with us, and Andy Zurich is with us.  
17 This is, by all means, not my entire team, just some of  
18 my managers who work with me.  
19 Okay. So we delivered the audited financial  
20 statements, our opinion on the audited financial  
21 statements on October 29th. We're looking to release  
22 our opinion on the ACFR sometime tomorrow. Again, the  
23 team was very collaborative, so I really appreciate all  
24 their hard work and efforts.  
25 This is our audit timeline. So

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1 responsibilities, I'm required to communicate  
2 responsibilities. Those charged with governance, you  
3 the Board, are responsible for overseeing financial  
4 reporting process, the positive tone at the top, and  
5 challenging the plan's activities in the financial  
6 arena, discussing significant accounting and internal  
7 control matters with management, informing us through  
8 (indiscernible) about fraud or any suspected fraud,  
9 including your views about fraud risks, and then  
10 informing us of any matters that you may deem relevant  
11 to our audit.

12 Management is responsible for fairly  
13 presenting the financial statements and any required  
14 supplementary information, designing, implementing and  
15 maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation  
16 of financial statements, maintaining sufficient records  
17 with respect to participants, and there's a full listing  
18 in our engagement letter.

19 Our responsibilities, as your independent  
20 auditors, are obtaining reasonable assurance about  
21 whether the financial statements as a whole are free  
22 from misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and  
23 then issuing an auditor's report that includes our  
24 opinion.

25 So we approach the audit using a significant

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1 risk-based approach. First, we identify significant  
2 risks. So one significant risk that is pervasive in all  
3 audits is the risk management override over internal  
4 controls, which is based on presumed fraud risk in  
5 professional standards, of manipulating the financial  
6 reporting process by reporting inappropriate or  
7 unauthorized journal entries or making adjustments to  
8 amounts that are reported in the financial statements.

9 To address this risk, we obtain an  
10 understanding of the financial statement process,

11 reporting process, and controls over journal entries and  
12 other adjustments as well as the suitability of the  
13 design and implementation of those controls.

14 We make inquiries of individuals who are  
15 involved in the financial reporting process about any  
16 inappropriate or unusual activity relating to the  
17 processing of journal entries or other adjustments.

18 We consider any fraud risk indicators, the  
19 nature and complexity of any accounts, and entries  
20 processed outside of the normal course, and then, based  
21 on our procedures performed, controls appear to be  
22 designed and implemented appropriately and individuals  
23 appear to have the appropriate authorization rights.

24 There were no significant issues related to this.

25 I do want to point out, which we'll talk about

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1 a little more in a subsequent slide, is that we use  
2 whole ledger analytics to test journal entries. We test  
3 not only manual journal entries but automated journal  
4 entries through the system, and that helps us identify,  
5 pinpoint specifically journal entries that would be  
6 considered higher risk.

7 Another significant risk is related to the  
8 valuation of investments. This is similar to, every  
9 year, we have had similar significant risks as it  
10 relates to those. As you're aware, the alternative  
11 investments oftentimes have non-coterminous year ends,  
12 meaning most of the time they have year ends of 12/31,  
13 and since the system is on a 6/30 year end, there could  
14 be a lag in financial -- in the fair value of the  
15 investments.

16 We did not propose this year end adjustment  
17 related to the alternative investments, like we do  
18 typically, and that's because it was below what we  
19 consider our pagi (phonetic) scope, or a threshold that  
20 we use. But I did want to make you aware that this  
21 adjustment oftentimes is an annual adjustment related to  
22 a lag, a three-month lag, fair value.

23 We did identify one, corrected an adjustment  
24 that management did correct related to a disclosure for  
25 unfunded commitments, and there were no other

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1 significant exceptions noted in this area.

2 Areas of focus, so we spend quite a bit of  
3 time on the investment and investment income testing.  
4 We confirm all investment positions. We evaluate the  
5 reasonableness of the fair value disclosures on a sample  
6 basis. We test the fair value of the investments to  
7 determine the reasonableness of those fair values, also  
8 on a sample basis. We test purchases and sales  
9 throughout the year to determine the reasonableness of  
10 those fair values. We evaluate reasonableness of  
11 investment expenses and the investment related incomes,  
12 such as net appreciation.



13           Again, there was a disclosure adjustment  
14 identified, but the lag for fair value of the  
15 alternative adjustments was not an adjustment this year.

16           We also focus on employer contributions. So  
17 we evaluate the skills of the individuals who oversee  
18 that process, and then we test the completeness of the  
19 employer contributions and trace selected amounts to the  
20 bank statements. We didn't identify any significant  
21 exceptions there.

22           Benefit payments is also an area of focus, so  
23 we test the completeness of the population of benefit  
24 payments, and then, on the sample basis, we'll select  
25 benefit payments, and then we'll review the supporting

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1 calculations as well as the documentation to ensure that  
2 the member was eligible for the type of withdrawal  
3 requested, that it was appropriately authorized, and  
4 that it was calculated based on plan provisions, and  
5 there were no exceptions noted there.

6           Then the total pension and liability, we use  
7 our in-house actuary and examine -- is one of those to  
8 evaluate and assess the reasonableness of the actuarial  
9 assumptions and the inputs used in the calculation of  
10 the pension liability. We test the underlying data,  
11 which census data, we test the completeness and accuracy  
12 of that census data, and then we use an automation tool,  
13 our census automation tool, which basically takes the  
14 prior year census data and the current year census data,  
15 compares the two, and then spits out changes to the  
16 census data that we would consider either expected or  
17 unexpected, such as expected would be adds or drops,  
18 unexpected would be date of birth changes or any kind of  
19 demographic indicative data changes, and then we focus  
20 our testing in those areas. There were no significant  
21 exceptions noted there either.

22           Other areas of focus included member  
23 contributions, member loans, and information technology  
24 general controls.

25           Before I go any further, does anyone have any  
0019 questions?

1           CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any questions, so far?  
2 We're good, thank you.

3           MS. CAMPBELL: All right. So as I mentioned  
4 before, from the significant risk perspective,  
5 management override of internal controls and test  
6 journal entries, we use whole ledger analytics to test  
7 those journal entries.

8           All right. So information technology general  
9 controls or ITGCs for short, the in-scope systems were  
10 UPS, Aspen, PMS, and NYCAPS (phonetic), and the areas of  
11 focus included security administration, program  
12 maintenance, program execution, technology operations,  
13 and cybersecurity.  
14

15 All right. So we issued our -- an unmodified  
16 clean opinion on October 29th. We expect to issue a  
17 similar unmodified clean opinion tomorrow for the ACFR.  
18 There were no scope limitations. We had very open and  
19 effective communication with management, and any  
20 internal control and best practice recommendations were  
21 discussed with management.

22 Again, we expect the effort to be finalized  
23 tomorrow, and it will include the 2023 GFOA certificate  
24 of achievement.

25 Okay. We talked about the audit adjustments.

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1 The only one that we had was a disclosure adjustment  
2 related to unfunded commitments.

3 All right. So these are other required  
4 communications. I'm not going to go through all of  
5 these. We were not made aware of any fraud or any  
6 non-compliance with laws or regulations.

7 There was a significant deficiency [sic], it  
8 was communicated in our internal control letter that was  
9 issued on November 22nd. I'm pleased to say there were  
10 no material weaknesses identified, and that was also  
11 communicated in our letter, in a separate letter on  
12 November 22nd as well.

13 I'm pleased to say the agreements with  
14 management, we're not aware of any consultations that  
15 management had with any other accountants related to the  
16 audit. There were no significant issues or any  
17 significant difficulties encountered, no modifications  
18 to the report, and we have not so far identified any  
19 material inconsistencies between the required  
20 supplementary information and the plan financial  
21 statements that were not revised.

22 Okay. I am also required to communicate the  
23 system's policies which are detailed in the notes to the  
24 basic financial statements. They are considered  
25 appropriate in all material respects and they're

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1 consistent with the prior year.

2 The most significant estimates include the  
3 value of the investments as well as the total pension  
4 liability and the related disclosures. We have assessed  
5 the financial statements and disclosures for clarity and  
6 completeness. The disclosures to the financial  
7 statements do appear to be informative, consistent, and  
8 clear.

9 Also required to communicate our independence.  
10 So our firm maintains robust quality control systems  
11 supported by comprehensive policies and procedures that  
12 meet or exceed regulatory requirements. I'm not going  
13 to go through the entire slide, but overall, we are  
14 independent.

15 Okay. This is just a slide that delineates  
16 the different technologies that we use throughout the

17 audit process. Internal control matters, again, we have  
18 communicated internal control matters with management in  
19 the letters that were provided on November 22nd.

20 This slide just goes through the different  
21 levels of control deficiencies.

22 All right. Again, we used our in-house  
23 actuary, our wealth and human capital services to review  
24 the reasonableness of the actuary consumptions and  
25 methods used in determining the pension liability. We

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1 also used the New York Pricing Group for investment  
2 valuation purposes. Contractors included Galleros  
3 Robinson, similar to the past five years, and other GT  
4 US offices include personnel, technology, and resources  
5 of Pergament Advisors, LLC, as well as technology and  
6 resources of our shared services center in India.

7 And then a copy of management's representation  
8 letter was provided to appropriate members of  
9 management.

10 This slide goes over the New Mountain Capital  
11 investment and our alternative pass structure. So  
12 basically, we work (indiscernible) New Mountain Capital,  
13 so we are part of their private equity group now. It  
14 did not change Grant Thornton, LLP. We continue to  
15 provide audit and attest services. In fact, it didn't  
16 really have much of an impact on our audit at all. What  
17 it did was we now have the advisory and non-attest  
18 entity, which is receiving New Mountain Capital's  
19 investment.

20 And basically, what we need to do from this  
21 perspective, and we worked with the Bureau of Asset  
22 Management, was to determine whether or not the systems  
23 were investing in any of the private -- any of New  
24 Mountain Capital's private equity accounts. And while  
25 there was minimal amounts identified, it was minimal and

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1 it would not be considered to impair our independence.

2 And that concludes my presentation. Does  
3 anyone have any questions?

4 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Does anyone have any  
5 questions for Sharon? Great, thank you.

6 Thank you so much, Sharon, much appreciated.

7 MS. CAMPBELL: Perfect, thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And happy holidays to you.

9 MS. CAMPBELL: Thank you. Happy holidays to  
10 you as well.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you, Sharon.

12 MS. REILLY: Thank you. Okay. Next under  
13 Other Business is the proposed updates to TRS bylaws,  
14 and I wanted to give an overview of the proposed bylaws  
15 changes.

16 You all received an electronic version of  
17 that, plus there's a hard copy at your desk, at your  
18 workstation.

19           Okay. So the bylaws require a review period  
20 for any amendments. Amendments are presented at one  
21 meeting, which is this meeting, and cannot be voted on  
22 until the next regular board meeting. So the Board is  
23 not voting today on the changes. Unless the Board  
24 requests otherwise, TRS will put this item on next  
25 month's EDR for a vote. In the interim, please let TRS

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1 know if you have any questions or comments.

2           Many of the changes are non-substantive  
3 wordsmithing for readability. I won't go over those  
4 changes.

5           So under Article II, Meetings, one, we added  
6 text to reference remote attendance.

7           Number two, we added a requirement for at  
8 least 10 regular and -- regular and finance committee  
9 meetings.

10           Three, we removed sections on the emergency  
11 votes, essentially votes that other than at a regular or  
12 special meeting due to open meeting law concerns and  
13 public testimony, which is not required, or the Board  
14 can certainly opt to hear from the public during public  
15 session.

16           Article III, Officers and Employees, number  
17 one, we update requirements for sending board material  
18 to the executive director for inclusion in board meeting  
19 materials five days versus the current 10 days.

20           Number two, we clarified the actuary's role to  
21 provide actuarial information and services.

22           Number three, we removed the provision from  
23 the Board to appoint employees other than the executive  
24 director. We are not aware of the Board ever appointing  
25 executive staff at TRS or that the Board sees this as

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1 its role.

2           Number four, the medical board, we clarified  
3 provisions to better describe their practices.

4           And Article IV, Rules and Regulations, number  
5 one, the Board is required to adopt by resolution rules  
6 and regulations required by Administrative Code,  
7 including adoption of an annual budget, proposed  
8 changes, remove details on other specific rules and  
9 regulations.

10           And that's basically the changes to the  
11 bylaws.

12           CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you, Patricia.

13           MS. REILLY: So if it's okay, can we present  
14 it for a vote at the next board meeting?

15           CHAIRMAN BROWN: Sure. We are all in  
16 consensus that this will be on next month's meeting for  
17 a vote? And if you have any questions about the  
18 changes, the proposed changes, get them to us.

19           MS. REILLY: Yeah.

20           CHAIRMAN BROWN: We'll answer.

21 MS. REILLY: We're happy to do it.  
22 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Great. Thank you, Patricia,  
23 much appreciated.  
24 MS. REILLY: So next on the agenda is  
25 questions or comments from the public. Okay.

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1 LEAH PLASSE: Hi again. Leah Plasse,  
2 P-L-A-S-S-E, school social worker in South Bronx, a TRS  
3 member.

4 And We're here again to hope for some change  
5 from this board. We'd like to believe that your  
6 decision to divest in genocide is not written in stone.  
7 TRS has taken a stance in the past based on political  
8 reasons when investments are morally reprehensible.

9 There's a precedent for divesting from  
10 countries and companies committing human rights abuses.  
11 As we saw in the 1980s, this body used the Sullivan  
12 principles to divest money from South African companies  
13 which were promoting and benefiting from apartheid. Was  
14 that not political in some way as well?

15 And actually, the TRS was brave enough to be  
16 one of the biggest pensions to first call for divestment  
17 from South Africa using the Sullivan principles.

18 We don't have to go through the Sullivan  
19 principles, I'm sure you know all of them. I don't know  
20 how helpful they are in this sort of area, but the first  
21 one really stands out to me, non-segregation of races in  
22 all eating, comfort, and work facilities.

23 Israel is an apartheid state. There is  
24 different citizenship levels for different people living  
25 within Israel. Palestinians are second class citizens.

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1 By that logic, by the Sullivan principles, by  
2 this board's previous actions in divesting from South  
3 Africa, it's curious to us why this board would say  
4 we're not going to divest in Israel.

5 In your letter response to us, you said that  
6 you must avoid making investment decisions based on  
7 political or divisive issues. I would ask us all to  
8 think if we think Amnesty International is a divisive  
9 organization or if the Human Rights Watch is a divisive  
10 organization. Today, the Human Rights Watch actually  
11 declared that Israel is committing acts of genocide  
12 because they cut all the water off in Gaza. They cut  
13 all the water off in Gaza. That is who we are funding.

14 And you recommended in your letter also to  
15 file a FOIA request. We are going to do so.

16 And just on a personal note, before the  
17 holidays, as a Jew, before Hanukkah begins, I truly  
18 believe in tikkun olam, which is the repairing of the  
19 world. And as a Jew standing here before you today,  
20 pleading that you actually consider divesting from  
21 genocide, that the words of tikkun olam ring in your  
22 ears, to repair this world. We are funding genocide.

23 That is against my faith.

24 NADIA ENNAB: Nadia Ennab, E-N-N-A-B.

25 We read the email, but as New York City

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1 Educators for Palestine and TRS members, we're coming  
2 here to tell you guys that we don't accept the decision  
3 to not divest, and that we're hoping that the channels  
4 still stay open because we are willing to collaborate  
5 and give more information, especially our research that  
6 we have done. I mean, we have given a lot of it to you  
7 guys, so if you need updates on it or if you need us to  
8 re-email this stuff to you guys, we'd be more than happy  
9 to.

10 We don't appreciate the fact that we were  
11 stonewalled many times. We were told that you guys are  
12 not the decision-makers, yet the email was signed by Tom  
13 Brown, who is a decision-maker. We were told that money  
14 managers were in charge of this. We asked who the money  
15 managers were. But we were put in a loop that was a  
16 never-ending loop. We will still continue to come,  
17 making sure that you guys will give us the time where we  
18 sit down and we can actually have talks with each other.

19 The NEA and other educational unions across  
20 the country have called for a ceasefire and arms  
21 embargo. Our question to you is, why do you guys want  
22 to be the last ones? Why can't you guys be pioneers and  
23 be one of the beginning ones to begin divesting from  
24 Israeli securities that have been and are continuing to  
25 commit genocide.

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1 Just now, since the last time we were here,  
2 they have invaded two more countries. Lebanon has been  
3 invaded, Syria has been invaded, and now Yemen two days  
4 ago, just adding to the exponential carnage that's  
5 happening.

6 Now, you guys are going to be home for  
7 Christmas with your loved ones, happy, healthy, warm.  
8 This vacation and this holiday would have never come to  
9 be if a Palestinian Jesus was never born. But yet, our  
10 money is invested in making sure that the people who  
11 live there and the churches that are there and the  
12 mosques that are there are decimated.

13 We're here to tell you guys we still will  
14 come. We still will talk to you guys. We think it's  
15 feasible. We think a collaboration can happen. We  
16 think we can work on it. Our members are not going to  
17 sit idly by waiting for you guys just to make a decision  
18 and say no. We will work and we will still fight to  
19 make sure we are heard and that the genocide ends, but  
20 in your case, divestment first.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you for coming up,  
22 Leah. Thank you, Nadia. Appreciate it.

23 MS. REILLY: Okay. I believe we don't have  
24 any other business.

25 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I guess any other items for  
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1 public agenda?  
2 I have one. Today is the last day that Alison  
3 Hirsh of the Comptroller's Office will be here at  
4 Teachers' Retirement System. She's been here for two  
5 years --  
6 MS. HIRSH: Three.  
7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Three years.  
8 MS. HIRSH: Time flies.  
9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Three years, time has flown  
10 by.  
11 And on behalf of the Board, I just want to  
12 wish you -- I know you're going on to greater, better  
13 things. It's been wonderful for the last three years.  
14 It has been an absolute pleasure working with you.  
15 We really never agreed on everything, haven't  
16 agreed on everything, but we always agreed to disagree  
17 and we always respected you, as you respected us, and I  
18 can say that it was an absolute pleasure, Alison,  
19 working with you, and I'm going to miss you on a  
20 professional level and a personal level.  
21 I just wish you the best of luck with  
22 everything, with your family, I know you're a great mom  
23 and --  
24 MS. HIRSH: That's why I walked out, my  
25 daughter was calling.  
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1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And you so love the public  
2 school and the public school teachers that your children  
3 go to in your neighborhood. So it is absolutely  
4 wonderful to have worked with you, and I just wish you  
5 the best of everything, and Godspeed to you, Alison,  
6 from the heart.  
7 MS. HIRSH: Thank you.  
8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any comments?  
9 MS. HIRSH: Sure. I mean, first of all, thank  
10 you. That's really kind words, and I really feel the  
11 sincerity and appreciate it. And I am sure we'll  
12 continue to run into each other on the bus, Tom.  
13 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Off the record.  
14 (Off the record.)  
15 MS. HIRSH: It has been a real honor to be  
16 part of this board, to get to know everyone in this  
17 room, the Trustees and the team at TRS. And Tom is  
18 right, my kids both go to our neighborhood public  
19 school, and they will be going public school for their  
20 entire lives, and it, like, has meant a lot to me to  
21 know that I have some involvement in like their -- so  
22 the teachers that they love so much, their security in  
23 the future, and I can play a role in that, and it's been  
24 really very meaningful, and thank you, and hopefully, I  
25 will be back. Well, hopefully I'll be back in some way,  
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1 shape, or form, and we will all continue to work  
2 together.

3 For my purpose, if all goes well, I will not  
4 be back at the Board, but I'm looking forward to, you  
5 know, continuing to be in touch.

6 And also, thank you for teaching me so much.  
7 When I came into this role, I knew nothing really about  
8 pensions, except that they are good, and I was proud to  
9 have one, and I really feel like I have learned a lot  
10 throughout my time. So thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you so much. Thank  
12 you, Alison.

13 Any other items for Public Agenda for our  
14 meeting?

15 Do I hear a motion to adjourn?

16 Oh by the way, before we adjourn, I wish  
17 everyone a happy holiday and a good new year, and it's  
18 always great work for all the board members and  
19 especially with Teachers' Retirement System staff.

20 And again, I thank Adrian -- is Adrian there?  
21 Adrian, TRS staff, IT, we couldn't do it without you.

22 And also Sophian.

23 And I know Daniel came in and out, comes in  
24 and out. Thank Daniel as well.

25 Sophian, thank you. We wish you a happy

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1 holiday as well. Thank you, Sophian.

2 And happy holidays to everyone.

3 And with that, do I hear a motion to adjourn?

4 MS. MCGRATH: So moved.

5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And do I hear a second?

6 MS. LEE: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any discussion? All those in  
8 favor of adjourning, please say aye?

9 (Ayes were heard.)

10 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Those opposed, say nay? Any  
11 abstentions? And we are adjourned. Thank you so much.

12 (The proceedings concluded at 4:09 p.m.)  
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1 CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL REPORTER

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3 I, SOPHIAN DEFRANCE, a Digital Reporter and  
4 Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do  
5 hereby certify:

6 That the foregoing proceeding is accurately  
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8 the above-titled matter, all to the best of my skills  
9 and ability.

10 I further certify that I am not related to any  
11 of the parties to this action by blood or marriage and  
12 that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this  
13 matter.

14 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
15 hand this 3rd day of January 2025.  
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3 I, NANCY KRAKOWER, Legal Transcriptionist, do  
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11 verbatim record to the best of my ability.

12 I further certify that I am neither attorney  
13 for nor a relative or employee of any of the parties to  
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15 employee of any attorney employed by the parties hereto,  
16 nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome  
17 of this matter.

18 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
19 hand this 3rd day of January 2025.  
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24  
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