

MINUTES: PUBLIC MEETING ARIZONA STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEM BOARD APPEALS COMMITTEE

HELD Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 9:30 a.m.

The Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) Board Appeals Committee met in public session in the First Floor Board Room of the ASRS Office, 3300 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85012.

Mr. Michael Miller, Chairperson of the Board Appeals Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; Opening Remarks

Present: Mr. Michael Miller
Ms. Diane Landis
Ms. Ashley Retsinas (virtually)

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

Ms. Abigail Cisneros, Committee Administrator, provided all attendees with the meeting guidelines.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the December 11, 2024, Public Meeting of the ASRS Board Appeals Committee

Motion: Ms. Diane Landis moved to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2024, Public Meeting of the ASRS Board. Ms. Ashley Retsinas seconded the motion.

By a roll call vote of 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, the motion was approved.

The Trustee votes were as follows:

Mr. Michael Miller – approved
Ms. Diane Landis - approved
Ms. Ashley Retsinas – approved

3. Approval, Modification, or Rejection of the Administrative Law Judge's Decision Regarding Ms. Celina Freeman's Appeal to the ASRS

Ms. Lynette Evans, Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office, was present to provide independent legal advice to the ASRS Board Appeals Committee if requested.

Mr. Miller introduced the topic of discussion and called on Ms. Cassie Adams, Assistant Attorney General, to proceed.

Ms. Adams provided a brief explanation of the facts of the matter that Ms. Celina Freeman is requesting to opt out of ASRS membership, stating that Ms. Freeman's religious freedoms were being violated and the ASRS is violating the ASRS Constitution by requiring membership in the ASRS.

Ms. Adams stated that the staff encourages the ASRS [the Board Appeals Committee] to accept the ALJ decision.

Hearing no questions for Ms. Cassie Adams, Mr. Miller thanked her.

Mr. Miller called on Ms. Freeman to address the Committee. Mr. Miller requested Ms. Freeman to tell the Board which decision she would like them to take and provide a brief explanation of the facts or law that support the action she would like the Board to take.

Ms. Freeman stated that the action she would like is not to have to pay into a system that does not benefit her. She stated that what she is seeking is to continue her job in peace and not have anything extra taken out of her paycheck because it is creating a hardship on her goals and plans. Ms. Freeman gave her point of view and reiterated the materials presented.

Mr. Miller opened the floor for the Trustees to ask questions. Ms. Miller then clarified a statement that Ms. Freeman said about other retirement systems and that they are not part of ASRS.

Ms. Landis asked questions about Ms. Freeman's statement. A discussion ensued to clarify.

Discussion Participants: Mr. Michael Miller, Ms. Diane Landis, and Ms. Celina Freeman

Motion: Ms. Diane Landis moved to accept the Administrative Law Judge Decision. Ms. Ashley Retsinas seconded the motion.

By a roll call vote of 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, the motion was approved.

The Trustee votes were as follows:

Mr. Michael Miller – approved
Ms. Diane Landis - approved
Ms. Ashley Retsinas – approved

4. Requests for Future Agenda Items

No requests were made.

5. Call to the Public

No one from the public requested to address the Committee.

6. The next regular public ASRS Board Appeals Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Miller announced that the next public ASRS Board meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 11, 2025.

7. Adjournment of the ASRS Board Appeals Committee

Mr. Miller adjourned the April 9, 2025, ASRS Board Appeals Committee meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Abigail Cisneros

Committee Administrator
ARIZONA STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEM