

Richard Meyers

Hello, my name is Richard Meyers and I am asking for your vote in the 2023 Austin Firefighters Retirement Fund Board of Trustee election. I worked for AFD from 1991-2021 and my assignments included stations 25,2,31,30,28,7,44, and 41's. I have always been interested in our pension and how it works. I have been attending monthly meetings for years and I sincerely appreciate the volunteer board members over the years building our pension to what it is today. I would like to ensure it stays on that path. Several years ago, when the board stripped the beneficiary designation away from every firefighter that was not married, I joined the Union Pension Advisory Committee to help correct it. It took over a year, with many people helping, to get the earned benefits back to the members. Most pension stakeholders I speak to don't keep up with the constantly changing pension and how their money and benefits are being handled. I would like to see more updates and transparency on how our money is being spent/invested and why. Some recent examples: in the last couple of years our Pension staff has doubled from 3 to 6 members with pay increases for all and we have spent money on some "major changes" like renaming our pension and getting a new logo. Were these changes needed? With our pension office going to electronic records and becoming more automated did we really need to double the staff? Did we need a new logo and at what cost?

The biggest concern I hear from retirees is about COLA's. I would support research on our current matrix to see if it's the most reliable way to calculate and award COLA's. To be clear, I would vote for **all** COLA's our advisors say we can afford.

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