

**MINUTES**  
**CHAMPAIGN POLICE PENSION FUND**  
**BOARD MEETINGS**  
**May 21, 1980**

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BOARD MEETING  
CITY OF CHAMPAIGN  
POLICE PENSION FUND REGULAR MEETING  
May 21, 1980

Members Present: William Neumann, John Lynch, William Dallenbach, Russell Burke, Sherman Suter, Gene Rose.

Members Absent: None.

The special meeting was called to order by President Neumann at 3:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Mr. Neumann stated that this meeting had been called to discuss and to vote on the request for pension submitted by Margaret E. Watson. Mr. Neumann read the state statute 3.111- -"Pension to Widow or Dependents-death in the line of duty" and 3. 114.3 "Disability Pension-heart attacks suffered in performance of duty". It was pointed out that Mr: Watson did not, at the time of his death, have 10 years service on the Champaign Police force.

Mr. Burke and Mr. Dallenbach did not interpret the above mentioned statutes in the same manner as did Mr. Neumann, Mr. Lynch and Mr. Rose. Mr. Burke stated that the two statutes Mr. Neumann read were difficult to understand and interpret. He then stated that the decision that the Board makes today will set a precedent for future decisions of a similar nature. Mr. Dallenbach agreed. Mr. Neumann presented to the board, the work history, the pertinent medical history and the circumstances of the death of Mr. Watson as is shown below:

- (1) That Curtis Watson was admitted into the Champaign Police Pension Fund on 12/16/71 and was found to be "fit" for that position as a result of an examination by Dr. W. H. Schowengert.
- (2) That Dr. J.A. Raquel examined Curtis Watson on 10/26/79 and reported "no abnormal physical findings".
- (3) That Dr. R. E. Tirona examined Curtis Watson on 12/4/79 and reported that he "did not detect any heart abnormality".
- (4) That Curtis Watson was involved with the arrest of a knife yielding woman on 4/4/80 and in that struggle to subdue the suspect, he was cut on the right little finger. Immediately after that arrest Curtis Watson was treated at the emergency room of Mercy Hospital and was found to have high blood pressure, in addition to a laceration to the finger. Dr. Brooks was the attending physician at Merch E.R.

(5) That while on duty 4/25/80 Curtis Watson collapsed and was taken to Burnham City Hospital emergency room where he was declared dead on 4/26/80 at 0016 a.m.

(6) That the Coroner's Certificate of Death indicates that the immediate cause of death was "Acute Cardiac Failure" due to or as a consequence of "Interstitial Myocarditis." The attending physician, Dr. J. A. Raquel furnished the following explanation of the coroner's findings:

Acute Cardiac Failure-sudden inability of the heart as a pumping device to pump blood to the brain and the rest of the body.

Interstitial Myocarditis-inflammation of the heart muscle. If brought about suddenly, the common cause is infection which infiltrates the heart muscle causing it to swell (inflamed) restricting its strength resulting in failure of its pumping action. I am not familiar with the exact cause of death at this point, but this may explain why he died. He was recently involved in an altercation and sustained a cut, infection could have set in and be the source of inflammation of the heart and may have contributed in the severity of the heart failure.

(7) That Curtis Watson married Margaret E. Watson on 4/18/69 and is survived by her and their two children Marcia Elaine Watson and Melanie Eden Watson.

(8) That Curtis Watson died of a heart attack "as a result of the performance and discharge of his duties as a police officer," within the meaning of Chapter 108½, Section 3-114.3 and in doing so he "shall be considered as being injured in the performance of an act of duty."

(9) That Curtis Watson having been "injured in the performance of an act of duty" and subsequently died, that his widow, Margaret E. Watson shall be granted a yearly pension of 1/2 of the salary attached to the rank held by him for one year immediately prior to his death, in accordance with Chapter 108½, Section 3-118.

Documents attached:

- (1) Approved application to join the police pension fund.
- (2) Marriage Certificate
- (3) Certificates of birth for the two children.
- (4) Death certificate.
- (5) Letter from Lt. O'Neal indicating Watson was working when he died.
- (6) Emergency room examination from Mercy Hospital 4/4/80.
- (7) Emergency room examination from Burnham City Hospital 4/25/80.
- (8) Autopsy report.
- (9) Letter between Pension Board and Dr. Raquel.
- (10) Police report of injury on 4/4/80.
- (11) Police report of death 4/25-4/26/80.
- (12) Application for widow's pension.
- (13) Widow's birth certificate.

Mr. Dallenbach and Mr. Burke thought that the Board may be wise to have an attorney interpret the statutes governing the awarding of a pension to a widow of a police officer with less than 10 years of service under the circumstances which were recently presented to the Board.

Mr. Rose stated that it seemed to him the request should be granted in that the state statutes allowed for disability for policemen injured and/or killed in the line of duty as was Mr. Watson, and that the statute further states and allows the widow of a policeman on disability to receive a pension upon his death.

Mr. Lynch indicated that his interpretation of the statutes reflected the same conclusion of Mr. Rose. Mr. Burke indicated that at this time a vote should be taken by the Board to award or deny the pension request. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Neumann - Yes  
Mr. Lynch - Yes  
Mr. Rose - Yes  
Mr. Dallenbach - Yes  
Mr. Burke - Yes

The calculation for the pension granted to Mrs. Watson is as follows:

April 26 to July 2, 1979 - \$673.34  
July 2, 1979, to April 25, 1980 - \$713.55  
This equals \$18,360.32 annually, divided by 50% equals \$9,180.18. This divided by 12 equals \$765.01 per month.

A request for retirement benefits was submitted by Mr. George Hyde to be effective July 4, 1980. Calculation for his retirement benefit is as follows:  
The last annual salary is \$19,457.36 divided by 50% equals \$9,728.68. This divided by 12 equals \$810.73 per month.  
Mr. Lynch, seconded by Mr. Rose, moved that the request be awarded.  
Voting: Yea All members.

Mr. Neumann suggested that the auditor of the June 30 audit report be requested to elaborate on Note No. 3 of that report and make recommendations for eliminating the actuarial differences reported therein.

There being no further business of this Board, the Board was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. The next regular meeting to be held on July 8, 1980.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sherman D. Suter  
Clerk/Treasurer

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