

**City of Alexandria**  
**Firefighters and Police Officers Pension Board**  
**Election Procedures 2024**  
**Last Amended October 13, 2022**  
**Proposed Amendment: September 12, 2024**

**DEFINITIONS**

Pension Board	“Board” or “Pension Board” means the Retirement Plan Board that is established under Article 10 to manage the assets of the Plan.
Election Administrator	Election Administrator carries out functions of Pension Administrator. Election Administrator is designated by the Pension Board.
Pension Administrator	“Administrator” or “Pension Administrator” means the City Manager, or the person or committee designated by the City Manager to administer the Plan in accordance with Section 10.6.
Voting Participant	“Voting Participant” means a Participant with an Accrued Pension Benefit or Retirement Income Account attributable to such Participant’s employment as a Covered Employee. The term includes a former Covered Employee who continues to have an Accrued Pension Benefit or Retirement Income Account attributable to his or her employment as a Covered Employee or who is currently receiving retirement benefits based upon his or her employment as a Covered Employee. The term does not include a Participant who may be a current or former Covered Employee, but whose rights to benefits under the Plan are not attributable to such Participant’s employment as a Covered Employee (e.g. a Participant whose rights to benefits under the Plan are attributable solely to his or her status as a Beneficiary, contingent annuitant, or an alternate payee under a domestic relations order).

## **PENSION BOARD**

1. Consists of four members nominated by the City Manager and four members nominated by Voting Participants.
2. Two representatives elected by Police Officers and two elected by Firefighters. Representatives are currently or previously employed by the City as Police Officers and Firefighters.
3. Board will include two Alternate Participant Representatives and one Alternate Management Representative. Alternate Participant Representative is nominated in same manner by Voting Participants. Alternate Management Representative will be nominated by the City Manager.
4. In 2022 one (1) Police Officer Participant Representative is elected.
  - a. The election shall be for the Participant Representative. The candidate with the greatest number of votes shall be the Participant representative serving a four-year term January 2023- December 2026.
5. In 2022 (1) Firefighter Participant Representative is elected.
  - a. The election shall be for the Participant Representative. The candidate with the greatest number of votes shall be the Participant representative serving a four-year term January 2023- December 2026.
6. A Board member shall serve a four-year term and can be re-nominated and reappointed for any number of additional four-year terms.
7. The Board has responsibility for the election process, but a Board Member who is seeking re-election cannot participate in any aspect of the election/nomination process for that seat. A Participant Representative or Alternate who is a Police Officer is not precluded from participating in the election process or oversight of the Firefighter elections. A Participant Representative or Alternate who is a Firefighter is not precluded from participating in the election process or oversight of the Police Officer elections
8. In the event there are an insufficient number of candidates for any vacant position who have successfully completed their nominating petitions the Election Administrator may reopen a second nomination period.
  - a. Nominations for this second candidate filing period must be from the second nominating period and signatures from the first period are not valid. All new signatures must be obtained.
  - b. The second nominating period must be the longer of two weeks and one week following when the Election Administrator deems disabled and retired plan participants to have received their announcement.
  - c. The second nominating period is only open for candidates seeking the positions that did not have any candidates.
  - d. Announcements of the reopened nominating period will be sent only to those eligible to run for the position. For example, if the position with no candidates is for Fire (Police) then no announcements of the second nominating period will be sent to the Police (Fire).

- e. Announcements are to be sent to active, disabled, and retired participants of the department for which additional candidates are required.
9. 2023 Mid-term Vacancy
- a. In the event of a vacancy in the Participant Representative or Alternate positions, where the remaining term of the vacated position is greater than 12 months, the Board shall hold a special nomination and election to fill the vacated position. The process for the special election will follow the same process and procedures as the nomination and election procedures. The outcome of the election shall be determined in accordance with sections 9.b. – 9.d. below.
  - b. The newly elected Participant Representative and/or Alternate will serve the remainder of the vacated Board Member’s four-year term.
  - c. The currently seated Alternate may run for the newly vacated Participant Representative position.
    - i. If the current Alternate loses the election for the Board Member position they will continue to serve the remainder of their term as the Alternate. The member winning the election will serve as the Participant Representative.
    - ii. Assuming the current Alternate will seek election as the new Participant Representative the Board will seek nominations for both Participant Representative and Alternate. The Alternate position shall be advertised as a tentative opening contingent on the election of the Participant Representative.
  - d. If there are two or more nominees, an election will be held following the balloting procedures. The Board shall recommend the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes to be appointed as the Participant Representative. If the Alternate position is also vacated The Board shall recommend the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes to be appointed as the Alternate.
  - e. If there are no nominees following the special nomination period, the Board may, at its discretion, choose to nominate a participant to serve the remainder of the vacated member’s term.

## **PROCEDURES PRIOR TO NOMINATION/ELECTION**

- Obtain list of eligible voters.
- Notify participants of the election process and timeline.
- Provide participants with a summary of Board responsibilities.
- Election workers will be designated in advance. All workers will attend a training session for balloting procedures and collection procedures.
- Administrative procedures for securing ballots are determined.
- Publish a calendar of targeted dates. Time allotted for a given step or procedure may be increased but not decreased.

## **NOMINATION PROCEDURES**

1. Announce election procedures. Provide sample nomination petition. Include disqualification rules: copies of ballot not allowed, illegible selections, etc.
2. Candidates for the Firefighter Board member position are nominated by Voting Participants who are currently or previously employed by the City as Firefighters.
3. Candidates for the Police Officer Board member position are nominated by Voting Participants who are currently or previously employed by the City as Police Officers.
4. Candidates will provide contact information to the election administrator.
5. Voting Participants may sign more than one nominating petition.
6. Nominating petition must contain valid signatures of at least twenty-five eligible Voting Participants. Information included: printed names, signatures and addresses.
  - Special Election – Second Nominating Period – Nominating Petition must contain valid signatures of at least two eligible Voting Participants. At least one of the valid signatures must come from a current Board Member or the candidate’s direct supervisor.
7. Nominees whose petitions are received after the deadline may not be included in the ballot.
8. Nominating petition may be mailed, delivered in person or delivered electronically to the Election Administrator’s office. It must be received in the Election Administrator’s office by the published deadline. Mailed nominating petition should be sent by certified mail to assure delivery and allow time for nominee to make any corrections in the verification of the petition.
9. Nominees are expected to provide a personal statement to be included in the ballot packet. A sample personal statement will be provided to all nominees.
10. Nominees will be provided with information regarding fiduciary responsibilities.
11. Election Administrator will confirm Nominated Board Member’s acceptance.
12. Election Administrator will verify the petitions.
13. The Election Administrator may exclude nominating petitions. Reasons for excluding nominee petitions include but are not limited to: the nominee is not an eligible member, petitioners can not be identified due to illegible names, non-matching addresses.
14. Election Administrator will notify excluded nominee of the reason for exclusion.
15. Nominees will be given three days to make the necessary corrections, prior to the petition deadline.

If a candidate submits a nominating petition, and the Election Administrator determines that the nominating petition is valid, and if the candidate is unopposed, then the balloting for that position will be waived. The Board shall recommend that City Council appoint the candidate to the position.

## **BALLOT PROCEDURES**

1. Election Administrator will prepare the voting ballots electronically using a software called Election Runner.
2. List of all eligible Voting Participants will be prepared.
3. Ballots will be prepared separately for Police Officers and Firefighters.
4. Ballot packet must include brief statement (no more than one letter-sized page) prepared by each candidate discussing qualifications and reasons for serving as a Participant Representative.
5. Ballots shall be sent to active participants via City email address and inactive participants at their last post office address or other address available from Empower's database. The Board is not required to take any other action to locate a Voting Participant.
6. Ballot must include instructions for completing the ballot and information concerning the time and manner the ballot is to be returned to the Election Administrator.
7. Notice of deadline to receive election ballot must be posted by Election Administrator in ballot packet, as well as posted at designated locations and on the City intranet.
8. If ballots are not received within two days of distribution mailing date, Voting Participant may request duplicate packet.
9. Voting will be compiled by chosen software vendor.
10. Other information as applicable may be included.

## **VOTING OF BALLOTS**

1. Voting Participants are to vote for one candidate per seat.
2. Election Administrator shall be responsible for accepting, securing, tallying and preparing election results.
3. Election Administrator shall post schedule and location of ballot boxes (if ballot box method is used).
4. Ballot is determined valid if cast by an eligible voter; only official ballots are accepted; must be clearly marked to show voter's intent and cast within period set for the election.
5. Ballots will be marked to identify whether voting participant is a Firefighter or Police Officer.
6. Ballots to be mailed to Voting Participants 15 days before the day the ballots are to be counted.
7. Upon request of Voting Participant, lost ballots will be replaced.
8. Votes delivered must be received by the deadline.

## **TALLYING OF BALLOTS**

- 1) Votes and results will be tabulated by election software.
- 2) A summary tally sheets will be prepared for each category of nominee (Firefighters, Police Officers).
- 3) After votes are counted, the Election Administrator will prepare a written summary of the election results listing the candidates and the number of votes cast.
- 4) The Election Administrator signs and certifies the election results.
- 5) Election Administrator shall notify the Board and all participating candidates of the results of the tally.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

### CANDIDATE APPEAL

- 1) Within 5 working days after the Election Administrator has announced to the candidates the election results, any candidate may file an objection to the way the election was conducted or the manner of conduct affecting the results of the election.
- 2) The Election Administrator shall investigate any objections and based on the findings will certify the results of the election or order a runoff, new election or any other appropriate action.

### ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR APPEAL

Challenge of Election Administrator will be reviewed and determined by the Board. The Board will designate a representative to review Election Administrator's procedures and actions. Representative will present findings to Board within seven days after challenge. Board will make final determination of issue in question.

## **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT and CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

1. The Election Administrator shall publicly announce the election results.
2. Council appoints elected candidates to Board.
3. Ballots and petitions should be destroyed 90 days after City Council's certification of the election.

## **PETITION TO REMOVE BOARD MEMBER OR FILL A VACANCY**

- Petitions to remove a Participant Representative (Board member) must include the signatures of at least 20% of the Participant Representative's entity (Police Officers or Firefighters, Representative, Alternate).
- The petition must include petitioner's printed name, signature, and badge #, phone, and address.
- Upon receipt of a petition the Board shall conduct a proceeding to determine whether to recommend removal.
- The Participant Representative Board Member may submit a document up to three pages discussing the reasons the recommendation to City Council should or should not be heard.

## **ELECTION TIMELINE**

A timeline for the election process is included in the announcement memo dated September 16, 2024.