

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
PUBLIC SAFETY RETIREMENT BOARD  
OF THE TOWN OF CHINO VALLEY  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025  
2:00 PM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS | 202 N. STATE ROUTE 89 | CHINO VALLEY, ARIZONA 86323**

**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL**

Chair Armstrong called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

Present: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

Absent: Board Member Dean Keller

Staff Present: Board Attorney Nicholas Cornelius - remote; Human Resources Director Laura Kyriakakis

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. Consideration and possible action to approve the May 29, 2025, special meeting minutes.

MOVED by Board Member Cheryl Romley, seconded by Board Member Jon Szymanski to approve the May 29, 2025, special meeting minutes.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

**4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously**

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

a. Consideration and possible action to adopt PSPRS Model Rules.

Nicholas Cornelius, Board Attorney, presented the following:

- The PSPRS Model Rules currently in place were a more informal version of Rules of Procedure. The version presented to the Board is the standard form that were promulgated through PSPRS.
- Recommended scheduling an hour-long training session once rules are implemented to go over the rules.

The Board and staff discussed the following:

- Chair Armstrong agreed with the suggestion of a one-hour training session to be scheduled before the next meeting.
  - Mr. Cornelius suggested having the training occur one hour before the next regularly scheduled board meeting and including an executive session to give the

Board an opportunity to ask questions regarding specific issues regarding legal advice.

MOVED by Board Member Cheryl Romley, seconded by Board Member Deana Winn to implement the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Revised Model Uniform Rules.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

**4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously**

- b. Consideration and possible action to terminate Jerrod Salcido from the Public Safety Retirement System, effective May 6, 2025.

Laura Kyriakakis, HR Director, presented the following:

- The Board was given a final notice of decision signed by Terri Denemy, Town Manager, officially making his termination effective May 6, 2025.

MOVED by Board Member Deana Winn, seconded by Board Member Jon Szymanski to terminate Jerrod Salcido from the Public Safety Retirement System.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

**4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously**

- c. Consideration and possible action to accept Randy Chapman into the PSPRS Drop Program, effective June 8, 2025.

Laura Kyriakakis, Human Resources Director, presented the following:

- Mr. Chapman applied for the Drop Program and has been accepted by PSPRS, this is just a formal approval on the part of the Board.

MOVED by Board Member Cheryl Romley, seconded by Board Member Jon Szymanski to accept Randy Chapman into the PSPRS Drop Program.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

**4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously**

- d. Consideration and possible action to accept Evan Moody, Keith Hurtt, and Wade Payne into the PSPRS Defined Benefit Plan, effective September 6, 2025.

Laura Kyriakakis, HR Director, presented the following:

- This item was being continued to the next meeting.

#### 4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOVED by Board Member Cheryl Romley, seconded by Board Member Jon Szymanski to enter into Executive Session at 2:17 p.m.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

#### 4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously

Executive Session concluded at 4:23 p.m.

- a. An executive session for legal advice pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3); and pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(2) for discussion and consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection with regard to:
  - Disability Application and Independent Medical Evaluation for David Herrera originally dated February 20, 2025.
  - Disability Application and Independent Medical Evaluation for Joseph Pelano originally dated December 2, 2024, and corrected to February 24, 2025.

#### 5. OLD BUSINESS

Meeting recessed at 4:23 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 4:28 p.m.

- a. Consideration and possible action to accept or deny the disability application for David Herrera.

The Board directed staff to request additional information and documentation as requested by the doctor who conducted the IME. No action was taken on this item.

- b. Consideration and possible action to accept or deny the disability application for Joseph Pelano.

Laura Kyriakakis, HR Director, presented the following:

- Briefly discussed the timeline of the applications.

The Board, staff, Mr. Pelano and his legal counsel, Steven Serbalik, discussed the following in regard to the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Accidental Disability Questionnaire form:

- Chair Armstrong discussed state statute defining accidental disability and stated that the application was not filed within the timeframe provided.
  - Mr. Cornelius stated that Officer Pelano was still working full-time.
  - Mr. Serbalik stated that as long as the person is still an employee of the Town, and it is not more than a year after they separated from the Town, the application is timely.
    - Mr. Cornelius stated that was correct.
- Chair Armstrong referred to question 2 of whether the employee would terminate by reason of disability.
  - Mr. Serbalik stated that the question states "will he terminate" by reason of disability should the application be accepted by the Board. Mr. Serbalik stated that Officer Pelano would terminate if the application were granted.
  - Mr. Cornelius stated that Officer Pelano may terminate on the basis of disability if the Board accepts the application.
- Chair Armstrong asked for clarification on whether the injury or condition occurred prior to the PSPRS membership date.
  - Mr. Serbalik referenced page 7 of the IME referring to the condition and what causes it (in this specific instance, a heavy duty belt). He stated that the medical board stated that it did not occur prior to PSPRS membership.
  - Mr. Cornelis stated that he disagrees as Officer Pelano wears a duty vest instead of a duty belt and uses a drop holster.
    - Officer Pelano stated that he changed gear as recommended by medical professionals when he returned to patrol in April 2024. Prior to that he used regular gear.
    - Mr. Serbalik added that the IME discusses the matter as an aggravating condition, brought on and made worse by years of wearing the same gear. He pointed to Parkinson v. Guadalupe which states that there does not need to be one reason for a medical retirement, but at least one contributing cause to the medical retirement and all the information in the IME report states the condition is made worse by the equipment and weight-bearing Officer Pelano experienced from the job. Furthermore, there is no medical record showing the condition existed prior to him being a police officer. He also pointed to the IME stating that Officer Pelano is not exaggerating any of his symptoms.
- Discussion ensued regarding the P5 LBA form.
  - Mr. Serbalik stated that the Board could decide if there is a conflicting part of the medical records and referred to page 8 of the narrative IME which provided more information than the checkbox. He argued that the condition is job related because Officer Pelano is finding that he is totally and permanently prevented from performing a reasonable range of duties within the job classification.
  - Chair Armstrong argued that Officer Pelano is still doing the job with the accommodations.
    - Mr. Serbalik stated that he is doing it with an excruciating amount of pain and the Board's doctor is telling them that Officer Pelano cannot continue to perform these duties and compared it to a person being able to climb a flight of stairs despite a broken ankle. He further argued that Officer Pelano has done every form of therapy and treatment that he's been asked to do, but the condition continues to worsen.



MOVED by Board Member Jon Szymanski, seconded by Board Member Deana Winn to accept Officer Pelano's accidental disability application.

AYE: Chair Tom Armstrong, Board Member Cheryl Romley, Board Member Deana Winn, Board Member Jon Szymanski

NAY: None

**4 - 0 Passed - Unanimously**

After the vote, Mr. Cornelius made the clarification that the acceptance of the application was on the basis of the diagnosis of meralgia paresthetica which is exacerbated by the wearing of a heavy duty belt or vest.

Staff stated the disability would be effective October 1, 2025.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Submitted: September 22, 2025

By: Sara Burchill, Deputy Town Clerk

Approved: February 25, 2026