

RESOLUTION NO. 197

A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE VALLEY REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY AMENDING THE RETIREE MEDICAL BENEFIT PLAN

WHEREAS, the Valley Regional Fire Authority (Authority) is a political subdivision of the State of Washington, created and established pursuant to Chapter 52.26 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW); and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of the Authority has determined that it is in the best interest of the Authority and its employees to establish a retiree medical benefit plan (benefit) for its employees; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board adopted Resolution No. 86 on November 10, 2011 establishing the plan, Resolution No. 134 on December 13, 2016 amending the plan, and Resolution No. 170 on February 9, 2021 amending the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has successfully offered the program and adjustments are necessary to ensure the program is contemporary.

NOW THEREFORE, THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE VALLEY REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The retiree medical benefit plan shall be established with the following stipulations:

1. The benefit is available to all employees of the Authority, except those that participate in the LEOFF 1 retirement system. The benefit became effective on January 1, 2012 and is not retroactive.

2. Employees must be at least 53 years old on the date of retirement and they must have at least 25 years of service within a State of Washington Department of Retirement Systems plan, or a combination of age and years of service which equals 78 or greater. The final five (5) years (sixty service months) of service in the State retirement system must have been with the Authority.
3. The benefit rate will be \$550.00 per month, payable into the individual retiree's VEBA plan. Beginning on May 1, 2024, the benefit rate will increase to \$835.00 per month.
4. The benefit will end after twelve (12) years, upon the employee's eligibility for Medicare, or upon the death of the employee, whichever occurs first.
5. The benefit will be limited to five (5) participants per calendar year. An additional three (3) participants, totaling eight (8) participants, will be allowed to utilize the benefit if an employee's notice of intent to retire in the following year is made during the first non-holiday business week (Monday through Friday) after July 4th, for the following calendar year.
6. For retirements in the following calendar year, during the first non-holiday business week after July 4th, seniority will be the tie-breaking factor if the number of requests to participate exceeds eight (8). After the tie-breaker period has concluded, requests for participation will be approved in order of receipt.
7. If the limits in subsections 5 or 6 are exceeded, one (1) additional participant slot will be made available for use by a non-civil service employee.

8. Employees will provide at least ninety (90) calendar days notice of their retirement date. The retirement date must be in either the current or following calendar year.
9. If an employee gives notice of retirement to the Authority and subsequently does not retire on their stated retirement date, the benefit will be permanently forfeited for the employee unless the employee's position has not been backfilled by the stated retirement date, in which case the employee will be allowed to participate in the plan beginning two years after the stated retirement date. Upon mutual agreement between VRFA and the employee, a retirement date may be moved forward or backward by up to 90 days as long as the retirement still occurs in the same year as the original stated retirement date.
10. The Authority and Local agree that this is a permissive subject of bargaining for represented employees that may not drive any future negotiations to impasse. If this subsection is held to be invalid or unconstitutional for any reason, the entire resolution shall be declared invalid.

Section 2. Unless otherwise specified in this resolution, if any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portions of the Resolution.

Section 3. Administrative Authorization. The Fire Chief/Administrator of the Authority is hereby authorized to implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out this directive.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect upon passage and signatures hereon.

DATED and SIGNED the 9th day of April 2024.

VALLEY REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY



NANCY BACKUS
Governing Board Chair

ATTEST:



Stefanie Harper
Clerk of the Board