

Public Safety Memorial Fund Board

Minutes (Draft)

April 23, 2026

The Public Safety Memorial Fund Board (PSMFB) held a regular meeting on April 23, 2026, at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training located at 4190 Aumsville Hwy SE Salem, Oregon. The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:24 a.m.

Committee Members:

Jennifer Cameron, Chair, Law Enforcement Representative
Chris Heppel, Vice-Chair, Fire Service Representative
Mark Daniel, Law Enforcement Representative
Scotty Nowning, Law Enforcement Representative
Michael Reese, Corrections Representative

Committee Members Absent:

Mo Young, Public Member from Board

DPSST Staff:

Kathy McAlpine, Deputy Director
Jennifer Howald, Administrative Rules Coordinator
Juan Lopez, Executive Assistant to Marie Atwood

Guests

1. Introductions

- *Chair Cameron began the meeting by inviting everyone in attendance to state their name and position for the record.*

2. *Approve February 2 and March 4, 2026, Meeting Minutes

- *Member Nowning motioned to approve the February 2 and March 4, 2026, meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Heppel seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*

3. Budget Update

Presented by Kathy McAlpine

Deputy Director McAlpine noted that the 2025-27 revenue is \$380,533, current expenditure limitation is \$310,444. In January 2026, there were no benefits distributed, whereas in February, the PSMFB distributed \$26,108 in benefits. This is approximately 19% of allocated funds, meaning the budget is healthy. The one time Initial Benefit that was reviewed at the last meeting had no future dependents and in turn, expenditures, meaning the same families are receiving benefits as of this moment.

- *Chair Cameron asked whether this funding lasts through this biennium to which Deputy Director McAlpine confirmed that it does. Legislative Rules Coordinator, Jennifer Howald, added that any amount remaining at the end of the biennium carries over into the next.*

**4. *Sergeant Brian Gaunt, DPSST #37820; Beaverton Police Department;
Supplemental Application for Discretionary PSMF Benefits**

Presented by Kathy McAlpine

On October 24, 2021, Sergeant Brian Gaunt with Beaverton Police Department passed away after spending nearly an entire month in the hospital due to COVID-19 complications.

On January 27, 2022, the Public Safety Memorial Fund Board (PSMFB) considered the initial application for PSMFB benefits submitted by Beaverton Police Department and Holly Gaunt. (spouse of Brian Gaunt). Ultimately the PSMFB determined that Sergeant Gaunt's death was a qualifying death as defined by ORS 243.954. As a result, Holly Gaunt was awarded the lump sum benefit of \$25,000.

On February 4, 2022, Holly Gaunt submitted an initial supplemental application for benefits, requesting further reimbursement for mortgage, medical and dental benefits for herself and three children. The PSMFB subsequently awarded Holly Gaunt a total amount of \$31,964.80. Since then, Holly Gaunt has continuously sought medical and dental benefits for herself and her three children.

On March 30, 2026, Holly Gaunt submitted the supplemental application for benefits requesting further reimbursement for medical and dental benefits for herself and one of her children, the only currently enrolled in university, for the months of April 2026 through October 2026 (6 months).

The application submitted by Holly Gaunt requests reimbursement as follows:

Cost of additional medical and dental benefit reimbursement for Holly and one of her children:

\$1,410.22 (medical premium cost per month)

x 3 months

\$148.52 (dental premium cost per month)

x 3 months

\$1,304.24 (medical premium cost per month)

x 3 months

\$84.09 (dental premium cost per month)

x 3 months

Total= \$8,841.21

Requested Reimbursement: \$8,841.21

- *Member Reese motioned to approve the award benefits for Holly Gaunt, as requested. Member Daniel seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*

- *Member Reese motioned to approve the full award amount of \$8,841.21 to Holly Gaunt, as requested. Member Daniel seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote*

5. *Sergeant Andrew Borland, DPSST #33715; Linn County Sheriff's Office;
Initial Application for Discretionary PSMF Benefits

Presented by Kathy McAlpine

On February 14, 2023, Sergeant Andrew Borland was diagnosed with Stage 4 Pancreatic Cancer and began a year-long treatment of radiation and chemotherapy. After a brief remission, Sergeant Borland's cancer returned the following year whereby he underwent another year-long treatment regimen.

On October 3, 2025, Sergeant Andrew Borland passed away after a long battle with pancreatic cancer that had metastasized to the liver. Sergeant Borland was still actively employed at the Linn County Sheriff's Office at the time of death after nearly 20 years of public safety service.

On October 6, 2025, DPSST staff were notified of the death of Andrew Borland and pursued further contact with the employer and surviving family.

On October 22, 2026, DPSST received Borland's Initial Application for Benefits and Notice of Death or Permanent Disability.

Member Daniel asked for clarification on the October 2026 date indicated in the materials. Juan Lopez replied that this is an erroneous date since a six-month time period elapsed between receiving the initial application for benefits and awaiting more information from the agency liaison. Jennifer Howald noted this should read "October 2025."

Member Nowning asked if it is correct to assume that there is no presumptive illness as with fire fighters. Deputy Director McAlpine replied that this assumption is correct. The email correspondence between DPSST and the employer contains the criteria for eligibility, and the Board would still need to make this assessment.

Member Daniel asked whether there has to be a motion for denial. Jennifer Howald replied that this must still go through the official motion and voting process since a 'final order' must be issued stating whether an individual is eligible or not. A 'final order' also allows potential beneficiaries the opportunity to request a reconsideration hearing.

- *Vice-Chair Heppel motioned to approve that Andrew Borland met the definition of a Public Safety Officer, as defined by statute. Member Nowning seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*
- *Vice-Chair Heppel motioned to deny the death of Andrew Borland as qualifying, as defined by statute. Member Reese seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*

- *Vice-Chair Heppel motioned to deny the request for initial PSMFB benefits, as requested. The reasoning for this is that ORS 656.802, defining Occupational Disease, does not coincide with the information presented since it did not demonstrate an occupational or occupational-related death. Member Daniel seconded the motion. A vote was taken by roll call where the motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*

Jennifer Howald shared a follow-up to the last meeting in which members had questions regarding determining eligibility and interpreting the statute. Specifically, under the definition of Qualifying Death or Disability, it states “compensable under ORS 656,” which is essentially the workers’ compensation statute. There were two components to members’ deliberations at the last meeting, firstly, determining whether an individual is a public safety officer. On its face, this statute appears to be an individual who is currently employed, and after conducting statutory research on the changes that occurred when the Legislature was adopting the definitions of occupational disease and death or disability related to presumptive cancers within the fire service. This came about because of a firefighter who had retired and was subsequently diagnosed with cancer before ultimately passing away. Based on the reasoning on why this came forward to begin with, there was the Legislative intent and understanding that as long as one was a public safety officer and one’s occupational death or disability is directly tied to employment, an individual could then retire and still be considered a public safety officer. This process remains intact for the decisions that have been made by this Board in the past as well as the ability to apply such determinations moving forward.

Secondly, regarding compensability under ORS 656, during the last meeting there was an individual who had been employed in two states, and the Board was faced with the variable that there was no documentation stating this individual was approved through the workers’ compensation process. The Board applies its best judgement and interpretation to each situation and this would probably require having to review historical cases as a result. However, in conducting the research, Jennifer Howald stated that the testimony before the Legislature and their approval made it clear that the Board would not have to make these types of decisions. The intent was that there would be an award through workers’ compensation under this statute and there would also be approval of a case for being an occupational-related event.

Chair Cameron commented that the second question was primarily concerned with individuals employed out-of-state, and whether there is a time limit on this circumstance. Jennifer Howald replied that if this had not been an approved claim, then it would not be eligible since the Board would only be looking to determine if there is an approved claim in order to state that such a claim met the definition of a qualifying death or disability under ORS 656. This means that the Board would not have to apply out-of-state or in-state designations, it would be done through the aforementioned process.

Deputy Director McAlpine commented that upon diagnosis of a retired individual, the occupational disease or disability process would be initiated. Depending on how much time

there is in this process, notwithstanding the Board's purpose of getting funds to families as soon as possible, then a significant delay could be experienced if individuals were asked for occupation verification.

Jennifer Howald commented that the Board also does not have a formal document requesting this information upon submission of an application and updating the administrative rule requirement for applications would be a component that members could consider. There is already a rule that requires satisfactory evidence of a permanent or total disability, and nothing was added to administrative rule that would require anything about satisfactory evidence regarding an injury or occupational disease compensable under ORS 656.

Member Nowning stated that this information only really assists the Board when there is a confirmation of an accepted claim, even if it is still ambiguous, since there is still discretion for the Board to make a determination. Jennifer Howald replied that this would depend on the direction chosen by the Board, so if there are no rule changes, then the PSMFB may still operate uninterrupted. If the Board adopts the process in the administrative rule that requires satisfactory evidence, then there could be deferred cases if an applicant does not have the appropriate documentation.

Member Reese asked if this would present a catch-22, i.e. as a result of a health issue and the individual passes away, but before that they had to ensure that the occupational process was completed. Jennifer Howald replied that this is a great question and stated that this will require additional research at this juncture. The Legislature simply did not intend for the Board to have to make the determination as to whether an individual was qualified as compensable or not.

Vice-Chair Heppel sought clarification as to who the authority is tying a determination to an occupational disease since a physician may state this but typically a workers' compensation entity makes the determination amount of an award. If the ORS states this, or if this is what is being interpreted, then an "award of..." statement would be the type of documentation that Vice-Chair Heppel would be looking for from such an entity. Jennifer Howald replied that the statute states, "injury or occupational disease that is compensable under ORS 656," and this contains the OAR program for a specific city. Whoever is not under workers' compensation would go through this process for approval. In essence, it is whatever entity that states that a case is compensable under injury or occupational disease. Member Nowning commented that this is problematic even for self-insured cities since they have fought hard to counter what is written in statute based on historical examples regarding presumptive cases. Member Nowning also stated that he would appreciate if the Board retained discretion in its authority based on the information presented herein.

6. Next Meeting – July 23, 2026, directly following the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training meeting at 9:00 a.m.

With no further items to discuss, Chair Cameron adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:55 a.m.