

PERB Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: June 5, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.

Location: BMS Conference Room at 1021 Bandana Blvd. E, St. Paul, MN

Attendance

Board Members: Laura Cooper, Kathy Megarry, David Aron

Alternate Board Members: Marlin Osthus, Martin Munic, Dick Kaspari

PERB Staff: Jess Anna King, Executive Director/General Counsel; Kyle Reigen, Office Admin.
Support; Ikran Noor, Student Worker

1. CALL TO ORDER at 9:30 AM

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM April 24, 2026 MEETING

Megarry moved, Aron second. Minutes approved.

3. HEARING OFFICERS

Guest: Court of Administrative Hearings (CAH) Chief Judge Jessica Palmer-Denig introduced herself and provided information on the CAH, followed by discussion of having CAH ALJs handle PERB's hearing officer work (billing, training, additional services including transcription and interpretation, and identified statutory requirements). PERB would train CAH ALJs and staff attorneys on PERB's substantive and procedural law prior to handling any PERB cases, consistent with CAH's training process for other agency hearings. PERB and CAH have commenced discussions designed to lead to a draft Interagency Agreement meeting all statutory requirements.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

a. Hearing Officers/CAH Interagency Agreement

PERB is exploring an alternative source of hearing officer work because individual contracting by RFPs is administratively burdensome and has not provided a sufficient number of hearing officers. PERB would train a cadre of ALJs so they would gain necessary substantive legal knowledge to hear PERB cases. In appropriate cases, PERB may request CAH ALJs to provide mediation. The Board approves the ED/GC continuing to work with the CAH to finalize the IA. The process to design ALJ training will include

the perspectives of PERB Members representing the interests of the public, public sector employees, and public sector employers. All PERB members and staff are welcome to attend the training and to contribute to its design. Osthus and King will lead the process of designing the training.

b. Staffing

Abby Frerick starts in July as a new Investigator Senior.

c. Website Refresh Update

King provided a brief showing of the in-process project of redesigning PERB's website.

d. Budget/Finance

The draft PERB budget for FY 2027 was presented and discussed. PERB has a carry forward from not being fully staffed over the past 3 fiscal years. Budget looks similar to FY26 because the appropriation is limited and still at \$772,000 compared to original funding at \$750,000. Absent a comparable carry forward in future years, once PERB is staffed at currently-available levels, and its operations reflect actual position reclassifications, agency functions, and hearing expenses, the current appropriation will be insufficient (assuming the caseload continues at, or exceeds, its current volume).

King described to the PERB her ongoing inquiry into whether PERB should seek independent agency status in the Governor's budget and during the 2027 Legislative Session. It is currently estimated that the cost of PERB attaining independent agency status would be a minimum additional annual appropriation of \$55,000.

5. NEXT MEETINGS

- a. Friday, July 17, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. (Bandana Square BMS/PERB Conf Rm)
- b. Friday, August 28, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. (Bandana Square BMS/PERB Conf Rm)
- c. Friday, October 2, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. (Bandana Square BMS/PERB Conf Rm)

6. ELECTION OF FY27 BOARD CHAIR

Laura Cooper nominated by Aron, Megarry second. Cooper elected.

7. ACTIVE CASES

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §179A.041, subd. 10, the meeting was closed at 11:16 am for deliberations regarding active cases 24-U-036, 26-U-142, 26-U-170, 26-P-175, 26-U-176, and 26-U-180.

8. ADJOURN at 12:25 PM.