MIFFLIN COUNTY RETIREMENT BOARD MEETING
March 6, 2025

The Mifflin County Retirement Board met on Thursday March 6, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., in the Commissioners' Conference Room. In attendance were Commissioners Robert Postal, Kevin Kodish, Noah Wise; Chief Clerk Cathy Romig; Treasurer Diane Griffith; and Fiscal Assistant Holly Yeager.

Guests present was Christian Brokaw from Mariner LLC; Mark Clewett, CFA & Managing Partner of Conestoga, Michael Bee, Relationship Manager, Casey Wendeln, and Aiden Rechin of Boyd Watterson attended via Zoom.

At 2:00 p.m., Commissioner Kodish called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Treasurer Griffith to approve the minutes of the Retirement Board Meeting of December 5, 2024. Commissioner Wise seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Brokaw stated that in the fourth quarter of 2024, the S&P 500 and the smaller caps had marginally positive performances. The international market was down. As the dollar gets stronger, the other currencies are weaker which had a negative impact. In the first quarter of this year, the interest rate trend has reversed, with interest rates falling. This has been a tailwind for international investments. For fixed income, interest rates went up in the last quarter of 2024. Interest rates have come back down year to date. The S&P was up 25% in year 2024. Large cap US stocks have really driven performance in the market. Mifflin County's total fund schedule of investable assets market value on 1/1/2025 was $43,445,684. The total fund market value on 12/31/2024 was $47,131,017.

Mr. Brokaw recommends selling $1,000,000 from the LMCG Large Cap Core portfolio to recognize gains and rebalance the portfolio, investing the proceeds in the Vanguard Core Bond Fund. Another recommendation was selling $1,200,000 of the Vanguard High Yield Corporate Fund (VWEAX) and investing the proceeds in the Vanguard Core Bond Fund. Selling roughly half of the High Yield investment recognizes that the opportunity present in high yield has diminished as credit spreads have shrunk and are near historic lows.

Commissioner Postal made a motion to approve the recommendations. Chief Clerk Romig seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Wendeln shared that the impact of the recent federal government funding cuts had little to no impact on state leased space. States requiring workers to return to working in office will add to the stability of this market. The percentage of leases that were renewed from last year was around 94%.

Mr. Clewett shared that Conestoga Small Cap Fund modestly underperformed the Russell 2000 Growth Index in the fourth quarter of 2024. Conestoga's underweight to Health Care, particularly the biotechnology industry, and overweight to the stronger-performing Technology sector, which is primarily allocated to the software industry, boosted relative returns. Over the full year 2024, the Small Cap Fund trailed the Russell 2000 Growth Index. Stock selection detracted from returns while sector allocation effects were positive.

With no further business, Treasurer Griffith made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Wise seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

____

Chief Clerk