



Weekly Clips, May 19, 2017
Texas Pension Review Board
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PRB PLANS

Dallas Pension Deal is Not Done Yet

May 12, 2017, By Ken Kalthoff

Supporters and critics voiced reservations Friday to the Dallas Public Safety Pension deal announced by the Mayor and State Senators Thursday.

Compared with the deal approved unanimously by the Texas House last week, the new deal limits city contributions and grants the city majority control of the Police and Fire Pension Board.

NBC DFW

Senate compromise could provide a way out of the Dallas Police and Fire Pension quandary

May 13, 2017

With the clock ticking toward the end of the legislative session on Memorial Day, it is time for all sides in the Dallas Police and Firefighters pension to declare victory.

State Sens. Royce West and Don Huffines this week announced a proposal to rescue Dallas' Police and Firefighters pension plan. It isn't perfect, but it has Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings' blessing and the conceptual support of police and fire groups.

Dallas News

Deadline looms for Dallas Police-Fire Pension fix in legislature

May 15, 2017, By Fox4News.com Staff

A Texas Senate committee is expected to vote this week on a new version of a fix to the Dallas Police and Fire Pension Fund bill that passed the Texas House.

Many Dallas police and fire retirees have accused Mayor Mike Rawlings of wanting the pension to fail in order to set up a 401k style plan in its place. Rawlings opposed the house bill, calling it bad deal for taxpayers.

But the mayor is working with State Sen. Royce West on compromises and Monday on FOX4's Good Day he tried to reassure first responders.

FOX 4 News

Dallas Council Vote Supports Pension Fund Bill Before State Hearing

May 17, 2017, By Jack Fink

In a preliminary vote Wednesday, the Dallas City Council fully supported proposed changes to the state bill to rescue the police and fire pension fund.

The final vote will come next week.

The council's move comes a day before the Texas Senate holds a hearing on the legislation.

[DFW CBS](#)

Dallas pension fix saved by last-minute negotiations

May 18, 2017, By Dagney Pruner

An agreement on a fix for the troubled Dallas Police and Fire Pension system was reached Thursday that will keep the pension system solvent for as long as 46 years.

"Today is a good day," said Mike Mata, president of the Dallas Police Association. "Today is the day we solved the future of the Dallas Police and Fire Pension System."

[Dallas News](#)

Senator West On Negotiating Pension Deal: "Have You Ever Had Gumbo?"

May 18, 2017, By Jack Fink

Handshakes and smiles took center stage at a celebratory news conference at the State Capitol after a deal was finally reached Thursday afternoon to save the troubled Dallas Police and Fire Pension Fund.

It came after intense, last-minute negotiations that began 10 days ago and continued through the early afternoon.

[DFW CBS](#)

Downtown Dallas' Museum Tower condos are three-quarters sold

May 18, 2017, By Steve Brown

Downtown's Museum Tower has reached something of a milestone.

The 42-story deluxe condo project in Dallas' Arts District is three quarters sold.

Opened in 2010 during the worst of the Great Recession, Museum Tower was slow to take off. A nasty fight with the neighbors - the Nasher Sculpture Center - also held back sales in the early days.

[Dallas News](#)

Cops and firefighters, not taxpayers, are rescuing the Dallas pension

May 19, 2017, By Mitchell Schnurman

As the Dallas Police and Fire Pension lurches toward a fix in Austin, who's really saving it? Not you and me.

Public safety workers would shoulder most of the burden under the plan working through the Legislature - despite Mayor Mike Rawlings' earlier complaints about "a taxpayer bailout."

With deep cuts in benefits, higher contributions from pay and potential clawbacks, Dallas police and firefighters would cover about 75 percent of the costs of the pension rescue.

[Dallas News](#)

TEXAS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Texas Unemployment Rate for April Holds Steady at 5 Percent

May 19, 2017

The Texas unemployment rate held steady during April at 5 percent.

The Texas Workforce Commission on Friday reported last month's jobless figure mirrored the March unemployment rate. Nationwide unemployment for April was 4.4 percent.

TWC figures show Amarillo had the lowest unemployment across Texas last month at 3 percent. The McAllen-Edinburg-Mission area had the state's highest jobless rate for April at 8 percent.

[US News](#)

After slow-down, Texas job growth picks up

May 19, 2017, By Jill Cowan

Texas added 30,400 jobs in April -- a decent jump following an essentially flat couple of months, the Texas Workforce Commission reported on Friday.

In March, the state created just 9,500 jobs.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, 5 percent, was unchanged over the month, while the nation's number dipped below 4.5 percent.

[Dallas News](#)

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS, LAWS & REGULATIONS

Political Road Map: Here's how (and why) the state is making a \$12-billion pension payment next year

May 14, 2017, By John Myers

If you're a homeowner, you're likely had someone suggest that the easiest way to lower your long-term debt is to make an extra mortgage payment. Thanks to the miracle of compound interest, your total costs in the long run go down.

Last week, Gov. Jerry Brown essentially decided that it was worth applying the same principle to the state government's debt for the pensions of its employees.

[Los Angeles Times](#)

Duke Is Second School to Lose Round in Retirement Plan Lawsuits

May 15, 2017, By Jacklyn Wille

A lawsuit accusing Duke University's retirement plan of high fees and poor investments is moving forward after a federal judge issued a mixed ruling on the school's motion to dismiss (*Clark v. Duke Univ.* , M.D.N.C., No. 1:16-cv-01044-CCE-LPA, 5/11/17).

The judge May 11 refused to dismiss allegations that Duke's retirement plan charged excessive record-keeping and investment fees and favored the investment products offered by the school's record keepers over lower-cost alternatives. Other claims were subject to dismissal for being filed too late or for being insufficiently supported by facts, the judge ruled.

[Bloomberg BNA](#)

NATIONAL ECONOMIC, PENSION, INVESTMENT & BANKING INFORMATION

States Where the Economy Isn't Struggling to Recover

May 12, 2017, By Justin Fox

The U.S. economy isn't growing very fast these days. Some *state* economies are, though! The fourth-quarter state gross domestic product data, out Thursday from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, has Texas, Utah, Florida and Washington leading the way, all with annualized real GDP growth of more than 3 percent in the fourth quarter. Also growing at faster than 2.5 percent: the District of Columbia, California, Idaho and Oregon.

[Bloomberg](#)

R.I. Retirement Board lowers expected investment gains

May 15, 2017, By Patrick Anderson

Rhode Island's \$7.9-billion pension system will expect lower future investment returns and larger taxpayer contributions to pay for public employee retirement benefits under policy changes approved by the state Retirement Board on Monday.

On the recommendation of General Treasurer Seth Magaziner, the Board voted to lower the state's assumed investment rate of return from 7.5 percent to 7 percent.

[Providence Journal](#)

Puerto Rico bankruptcy pits investors against pensioners

May 15, 2017, By Hazel Bradford

Puerto Rico's fiscal tug-of-war with pensioners, bondholders, other creditors and its own finances starts a new, uncharted chapter on May 17.

That's when a specially appointed federal judge opens bankruptcy proceedings in a case that dwarfs previous public bankruptcies, with nearly \$50 billion in unfunded pension liabilities, \$74 billion in bondholder debt and dim financial prospects.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

Kentucky's retirement debt soars after pessimistic outlook

May 18, 2017, By Adam Beam

Kentucky's worst-in-the-nation public pension system is now worse than ever.

The state's pension debt grew by roughly \$2 billion on Thursday after the retirement system's governing body made dramatic changes to long-held investment assumptions. As a result, state taxpayers will have to pay significantly more into the system to keep it solvent. Just how much more will not be known until later this year.

[Star-Telegram](#)

WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC, PENSION, INVESTMENT & BANKING INFORMATION

More info, but no teeth in new foreign exchange code

May 15, 2017, By Rick Baert

Later this month, money managers, pension funds, brokers, banks and other participants in the foreign-exchange market will be asked to sign off on an FX Global Code of Conduct that industry sources said will result in more information to assess execution quality and trading cost.

However, more information won't necessarily translate into better execution or cost savings for pension funds and other asset owners that will continue to have the responsibility for monitoring their FX trades, they said.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

Pensions at centre of Brazil's reality check

May 15, 2017, By Dom Phillips

President Michel Temer's government is battling to introduce an ambitious agenda of reforms. In December, congress approved a 20-year cap on public spending. To implement this it is now it is debating changes to restrictive labour laws and a sweeping reform of the country's generous and expensive pension system.

Coming from a deeply unpopular administration facing a deluge of corruption investigations, the reforms have sparked fierce opposition, street protests, brief invasions of congress by police and prison officers, and even an attempted general strike. But economists see the changes as crucial to resolving Brazil's huge fiscal deficit.

[Financial Times](#)

Clashes in Greece as thousands protest austerity

May 17, 2017, By Elena Becatoros and Derek Gatopoulos, Associated Press

An anti-austerity rally in Greece's capital turned violent Wednesday as a general strike halted flights, ferries and public transportation, and thousands joined protest marches across the country.

A small group of protesters threw gasoline bombs and fired flares at riot police after the marches ended in

Athens. Police responded with tear gas. The clashes broke out after peaceful marches involving around 12,000 people.

[Houston Chronicle](#)

Japan Post Bank ramps up push into alternatives

May 18, 2017, By Douglas Appell

The latest fiscal year results for the ¥207.2 trillion (\$1.9 trillion) Japan Post Bank showed the push into alternatives started last year continuing to focus on hedge funds.

As of March 31, the close of the fiscal year, the bank had ¥468.2 billion, or about \$4.2 billion, invested in hedge fund-of-funds strategies, ¥124.4 billion in private equity and ¥14.6 billion in real estate, a spokesman for the Tokyo-based bank confirmed in an email.

[Pensions & Investments](#)

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