

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REQUIRED  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)  
Year Ended December 31, 2020  
With Report of Independent Auditors

Ernst & Young LLP



Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Financial Statements and Required Supplementary Information

Year Ended December 31, 2020

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## Report of Independent Auditors

Management and The Boston Retirement Board

### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements, which comprise the statements of fiduciary net position and changes in fiduciary net position of the Boston Retirement System (the System), a component unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the System's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### ***Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### ***Opinion***

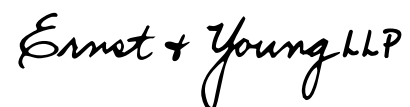
In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the fiduciary net position of the Boston Retirement System as of December 31, 2020, and the changes in fiduciary net position for the year then ended in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

### ***Required Supplementary Information***

U.S. generally accepted accounting principles require that Management's Discussion and Analysis on pages 5 through 9 and the schedules of changes in the net pension liability, contributions, and investment returns on pages 37 through 39 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board which considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

### ***Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we also have issued our report dated July 30, 2021 on our consideration of the System's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the System's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the System's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



July 30, 2021

## Report of Independent Auditors on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*

### Management and The Boston Retirement Board

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the Boston Retirement System (the System), which comprise the statement of fiduciary net position as of December 31, 2020, and the related statement of changes in fiduciary net position for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated July 30, 2021.

### **Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the System's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the System's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the System's internal control.

*A deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. *A material weakness* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

## **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the System’s financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

## **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity’s internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

*Ernst + Young LLP*

July 30, 2021

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Required Supplementary Information –  
Management’s Discussion and Analysis**

December 31, 2020

The following discussion provides an overview and analysis of the fiduciary net position and changes in fiduciary net position of the Boston Retirement System (the System or Plan) by management for the year ended December 31, 2020.

**Overview of the Financial Statements**

The System’s financial statements comprise a statement of fiduciary net position, statement of changes in fiduciary net position, and notes to financial statements.

The Statement of Fiduciary Net Position presents information on the System’s assets and liabilities and the resulting net position restricted for pension benefits. This statement reflects the System’s investments at fair value, as well as cash, receivables, and other assets and liabilities.

The Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position presents information showing how the System’s net position restricted for pension benefits changed during the year ended December 31, 2020. It reflects contributions by members and participating employers, along with deductions for retirement benefits, refunds and withdrawals, and administrative expenses. Investment income from investing and securities lending activities is also presented.

The Notes to Financial Statements provide additional information that is essential for the reader to gain a full understanding of the data provided in the financial statements.

The Required Supplementary Information includes management’s discussion and analysis and the schedules of changes in the net pension liability, contributions, and investment returns.

**Financial Highlights and Analysis**

- Net position is available for payment of monthly retirement benefits and other qualified distributions to the System’s participants. Net position restricted for pension benefits was \$8.30 billion at December 31, 2020, compared to \$7.41 billion at December 31, 2019. The increase in net position of \$.898 billion resulted primarily from an increase in the fair value of portfolio investments and investment income.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Required Supplementary Information –  
Management’s Discussion and Analysis (continued)**

- The System’s equity and fixed income investments comprised 59% of invested assets; the remaining 41% of investments were invested in real estate investments (7%), alternative investments, including private equity and hedge fund of funds investments (10%), PRIT general allocation account (23%) and short-term investments (1%).
- Receivables increased by \$16 million at December 31, 2020. This is primarily due to the increase in investment receivables.
- Liabilities increased by \$66 million at December 31, 2020 predominantly due to the increase in investment payables.

Employers’ contributions are made in accordance with a funding schedule approved by the Massachusetts Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission. The System’s funding objective is to meet long-term benefit obligations through contributions and investment income. As of January 1, 2020, the funding ratio was 74.00%. All employers fully met the required funding amounts in 2020.

	<b>As of December 31</b>		<b>Percentage</b>
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>Change</b>
	<i>(In Thousands)</i>		<b>2020–2019</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 428,489	\$ 370,746	16%
Receivables	66,939	50,523	32%
Investments	7,888,815	7,041,242	12%
Prepaid expenses	2,025	443	357%
Securities lending collateral investment pool	137,037	96,460	42%
Total assets	8,523,305	7,559,414	13%
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Payables	81,460	56,192	45%
Obligation to return securities lending collateral	136,970	96,147	42%
Total liabilities	218,430	152,339	43%
Net position restricted for pensions	\$ 8,304,875	\$ 7,407,075	12%



**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Required Supplementary Information –  
Management’s Discussion and Analysis (continued)

	<b>Year Ended December 31</b>		<b>Percentage</b>
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>Change</b>
	<i>(In Thousands)</i>		<b>2020–2019</b>
<b>Additions</b>			
Total contributions	\$ 699,091	\$ 661,986	6%
Net investment income	867,573	1,008,335	-14%
Intergovernmental reimbursements	10,095	10,352	-2%
Miscellaneous income	5	39	-87%
Total additions	1,576,764	1,680,712	-6%
<b>Deductions</b>			
Benefit payments	653,417	631,485	3%
Other	25,547	45,106	-43%
Total deductions	678,964	676,591	0%
Net increase in net position	897,800	1,004,121	-11%
Net position at beginning of year	7,407,075	6,402,954	16%
Net position at end of year	\$ 8,304,875	\$ 7,407,075	12%

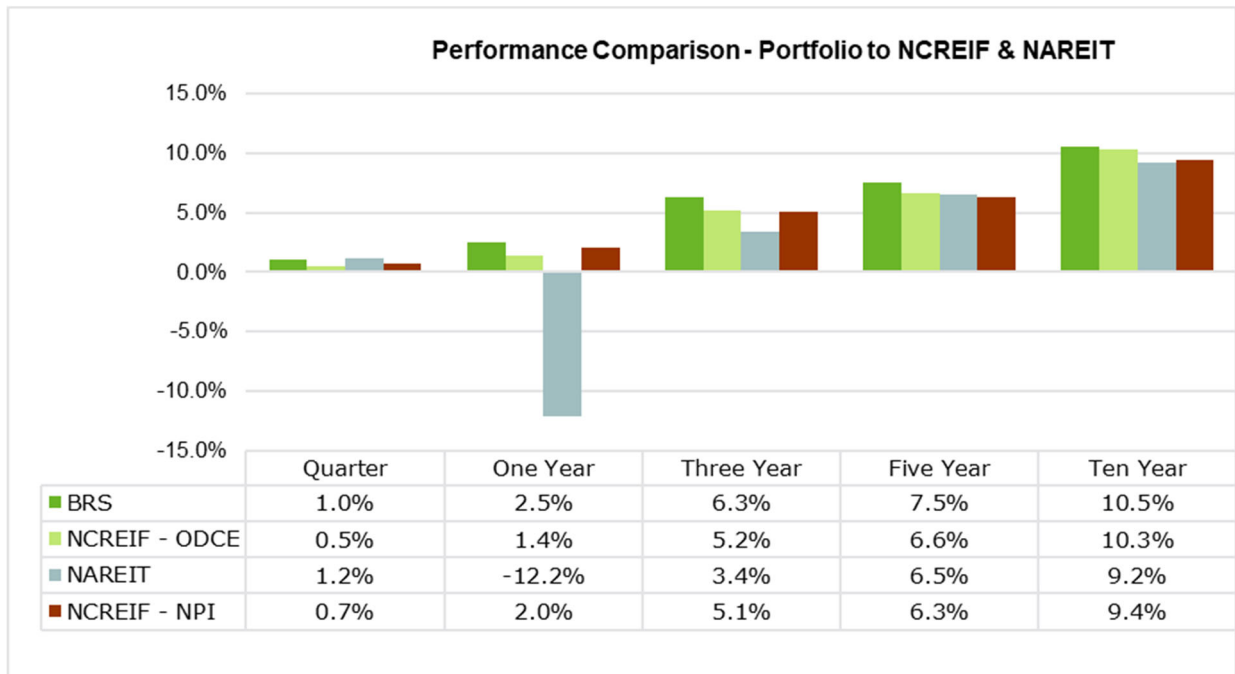
**Plan Investments**

- The total investment return for 2020 was approximately 12.3%. It was a positive year for the portfolio, which ranked in the 52<sup>nd</sup> percentile of its universe. The portfolio outperformed the allocation index by 20 basis points, while trailing the System’s policy index by 40 basis points. The U.S. equity market provided a favorable backdrop for economic performance and a tailwind for most active managers.
- In 2020, the large cap equity composite returned 27.8%, significantly outperforming the S&P 500 Index by 940 basis points. The small cap equity composite returned 20.3%, outperforming the Russell 2000 Index by 30 basis points.
- The international equity portfolio posted a return of 5.0%, underperforming the MSCI EAFE Index which returned 7.8% for the year. The emerging market equity portfolio returned 11.9% and underperformed the MSCI EM, which returned 18.3%.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Required Supplementary Information –  
Management’s Discussion and Analysis (continued)**

- Domestic fixed income had a positive return of 8.6%, outperforming the Barclays Aggregate Bond Index which returned 7.5% for the year.
- Value added fixed income returned 7.3% in 2020. The System’s high yield investments gained 7.5%, outperforming the Barclays High Yield Index by 40 basis points. The System’s emerging market debt portfolio had a return of 5.5%. The emerging market debt portfolio also outperformed its respective benchmark, the JP Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Index, by 20 basis points.



- The real estate portfolio yielded a return of 2.5% in 2020, and the portfolio is a combination of core, value add and opportunistic investment strategies.
- The private equity portfolio earned a return of 3.3% for 2020 and is a combination of a variety of private equity and debt strategies designed to provide a diversified portfolio of assets that can outperform the liquid market counterparts over time.

Boston Retirement System  
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Required Supplementary Information –  
Management’s Discussion and Analysis (continued)

- The System’s hedge fund composite outperformed in 2020, with the portfolio returning 11.7% versus HFRI Fund of Funds Index, which returned 10.9%.
- During calendar year 2020, the PRIT Core Fund (the fund) returned 12.6%. At year end, the estimated fair value of the PRIT investment was \$1.8 billion.
- Over a 3-, 5-, and 10-year horizon, the System’s investments have earned 7.4%, 9.4%, and 7.9%, respectively. These returns are roughly in line with other public funds of a similar size. For perspective, the median public fund earned 8.4% over the 10-year period. Over that same 10-year period, domestic investments such as the S&P 500 and Barclays Aggregate Bond Index, were up 13.9% and 3.8%, respectively, while non-U.S. investments, such as the MSCI EAFE Index and MSCI Emerging Mkt. Index, returned 5.5% and 3.6%, respectively.
- The portfolio remains intentionally invested in a broad array of asset classes and not concentrated from an asset or risk perspective in any one area. This diversification is designed to maximize returns, while minimizing risk to help the System achieve its long-term expected rate of return.
- Since August 1994, the average annual return for the fund has been 8.0%.
- On a forward-looking basis, the portfolio’s target expected return over a long-term cycle (30 years) is 6.5%. The fund undertakes a formal asset allocation review each year to evaluate the current market landscape and, if necessary, to adjust the target allocations to reflect current opportunities.

**Other Information**

This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of the System’s finances. Questions concerning the information provided in this report or requests for additional financial information should be addressed to the Boston Retirement Board, Boston City Hall, Room 816, Boston, Massachusetts 02201.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Statement of Fiduciary Net Position**  
(In Thousands)

December 31, 2020

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 428,489
Investments, at fair value:	
Short-term:	
Domestic	48,405
International	13,347
Equity:	
Domestic	1,657,274
International	1,440,635
Fixed income:	
Domestic	1,203,935
International	353,467
PRIT external investment pooled fund	1,841,024
Real estate	510,191
Alternative	820,537
Total investments, at fair value	<u>7,888,815</u>
Securities lending collateral investment pool	137,037
Receivables:	
Receivable for securities sold	33,382
Accrued interest and dividends	9,057
Other receivables	10,065
Contributions receivable from employers	14,435
Total receivables	<u>66,939</u>
Prepaid expenses	2,025
Total assets	<u>8,523,305</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Payable for securities purchased	62,536
Accounts payable, accrued expenses and other liabilities	18,924
Obligation to return securities lending collateral	136,970
Total liabilities	<u>218,430</u>
Net position restricted for pensions	<u>\$ 8,304,875</u>

*See accompanying notes.*

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Position**  
(In Thousands)

Year Ended December 31, 2020

**Additions**

Contributions:

Employers	\$ 350,532
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	162,976
Employees	185,583
Total contributions	<u>699,091</u>

Investment income:

Interest and dividends	135,770
Net appreciation in fair value of investments	775,797
Less management and related fees	<u>(44,921)</u>
Net income from investing, other than from securities lending	<u>866,646</u>

Securities lending activities:

Securities lending income	1,079
Less borrower rebates and fees	<u>(152)</u>
Net income from securities lending activities	<u>927</u>
Total net investment income	<u>867,573</u>

Intergovernmental reimbursements	10,095
Miscellaneous income	<u>5</u>
Total additions	<u>1,576,764</u>

**Deductions**

Benefit payments to plan members and beneficiaries	653,417
Reimbursements to other systems	4,053
Refunds of contributions and transfers to other systems	11,760
Administrative and other expenses	<u>9,734</u>
Total deductions	<u>678,964</u>

Net increase in net position	897,800
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Net position restricted for pensions:

Beginning of year	<u>7,407,075</u>
End of year	<u>\$ 8,304,875</u>

*See accompanying notes.*

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements**

December 31, 2020

**1. Plan Description**

The following description of the Boston Retirement System (formerly, the State-Boston Retirement System) (the System, BRS, or the Plan) is provided for general information purposes only. Participants should refer to Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) for more detailed information. The Board of Trustees is primarily responsible for the administration of the System and consists of five members as follows: the City Auditor (who serves as an ex officio member), a second member appointed by the Mayor, a third and fourth member elected by active or retired members, and a fifth member chosen by the other four members (or appointed by the Mayor if the other four members do not agree on a selection within 30 days of a vacancy).

**General**

The Plan is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer qualified defined benefit governmental pension plan established under Chapter 32 of the M.G.L. The Plan provides pension benefits for participating employees of the following plan member governmental units:

- City of Boston (the City)\*
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts (other contributing entity – contributing towards City of Boston Teachers pensions)
- Boston Planning and Development Agency\*
- Boston Housing Authority\*
- Boston Water and Sewer Commission\*
- Boston Public Health Commission\*
- Sheriff of Suffolk County (retirees as of December 31, 2009, funded by the City)\*

\* Indicates participating employer of the Plan

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**1. Plan Description (continued)**

At January 1, 2020, System membership consisted of the following:

Active plan members	20,856
Retirees and beneficiaries receiving benefits	14,559
Inactive members entitled to a return of contributions	11,531
Inactive members entitled to, but not yet receiving benefits	1,147
Total membership	48,093
 Number of participating employers	 6

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts (the Commonwealth) is responsible for funding the employer portion of all teacher pensions in the Commonwealth. All teachers in the Commonwealth are members of the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System, with the exception of teachers employed by the City (Boston Teachers), who are members of the System. Although Boston Teachers are members of the System, the Commonwealth is the responsible contributing entity. Additionally, the Commonwealth reimburses the Plan for all cost-of-living increases paid to recipients that were awarded before 1997.

**Benefits Provided**

Participation in the System is mandatory for all permanent, full-time, and certain part-time employees immediately upon the commencement of employment. Participants who resign from employment or are receiving workers' compensation benefits and who are not eligible to receive a retirement allowance are entitled to request a refund of their accumulated total deductions. In addition, those participants who resign voluntarily with less than ten years of service are entitled to receive 3% per year interest; all others receive interest that has accrued on their cumulative deductions at the regular interest rate (0.10% at December 31, 2020).

Employees with ten or more years of service having attained age 55 are entitled to pension benefits; an earlier retirement is allowed upon completion of 20 years of service. The System provides for retirement allowance benefits up to a maximum of 80% of a participant's highest consecutive three-year average annual rate of regular compensation (highest consecutive five-year average for those members who join the System on or after April 2, 2012). Benefit payments are based upon a participant's age, length of creditable service, regular compensation, and group classification.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**1. Plan Description (continued)**

Participants become vested after ten years of creditable service. Effective July 1, 1998, Chapter 32 of the M.G.L. assigned the authority to establish and amend benefit provisions and grant cost-of-living increases for the Plan to the Boston Retirement Board.

If a member in service dies due to causes unrelated to his or her job, the surviving spouse and/or surviving dependent children may receive retirement allowance benefits, either in a lump sum or in the form of an annuity, based on the length of service, contributions, and age. In the event there is no spouse and/or dependent children named, other beneficiaries may be entitled to a lump-sum distribution. Participants who become permanently and totally disabled from further duty may be eligible to receive accidental or ordinary disability retirement benefits.

Accidental disability is provided to members with incapacitation resulting from a work-related injury or hazard. Generally, annual pension benefits are provided based on 72% of the annual rate of regular compensation that a member earned while an active employee on date of injury or average annual rate of regular compensation. Ordinary disability is available to any member whose permanent incapacitation is not work related and has attained ten years of creditable service. Such benefits are provided as if the member had attained the age of 55 (or actual age if over 55), based on the amount of creditable service actually earned. Limits are placed on how much a disability employee can earn from other sources while collecting a disability retirement pension.

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

**Financial Reporting Entity**

Because of the significance of its operational and financial relationship with the City, the System is included as a component unit reported as a pension trust fund in the City's basic financial statements. The System adheres to reporting requirements established by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

**Basis of Accounting**

The accompanying financial statements are presented on the accrual basis of accounting.



Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**Cash Equivalents**

Highly liquid investments with maturities of three months or less at date of purchase are considered to be cash equivalents.

**Short-Term Investment Funds**

Cash balances maintained by investment managers are recorded as short-term investments in the statement of fiduciary net position.

**Revenue Recognition**

Contributions are recognized as additions in the period when they become due, pursuant to formal statutory obligations. Investment income is recognized when earned.

**Benefit Payments and Refunds of Contributions**

Benefits and refunds to plan members and beneficiaries are recognized as expenses when due and payable in accordance with the terms of the Plan.

**Intergovernmental, Reimbursements, and Transfers to Other Systems**

When members transfer to or from other Massachusetts public retirement systems, their cumulative contributions are transferred from the prior employer to the respective Massachusetts public retirement system, and are recognized as receipts or expenses when paid. Additionally, the prior employer reimburses the respective system for a pro rata portion of such member's pension benefits (based on years of service) upon retirement.

**Valuation of Investments and Income Recognition**

The Plan's investments are reported at fair value. Fair value is defined as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date (an exit price). See Note 4 for further discussion and disclosures related to fair value measurements.

Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

Following is a description of the valuation techniques and inputs used for each major class of assets and liabilities measured at fair value.

**Short-Term, Equity, and Fixed Income Investments**

Securities traded on a national or international exchange are valued at the last reported sales price at current exchange rates. Certain fixed income securities not traded on an exchange are valued using a matrix pricing technique. Matrix pricing is used to value securities based on the securities' relationship to benchmark quoted prices.

**Pooled Funds**

The fair value of shares in managed investment pools is based on unit values reported by the funds.

**Alternative Investments**

Alternative investments include hedge funds, holdings through commingled limited partnerships of venture capital funds, including equity interests in early, middle, and later stage companies, as well as debt and equity interests in buyouts, acquisitions, restructurings, mezzanine structures and special situations, such as litigation or spin-off activities. These investments are carried at the limited partnership interest or redemption value, the equivalent of net asset value, which approximates fair value. Values assigned to such investments are based on available information and do not necessarily represent amounts that may ultimately be realized in liquidation. Liquidation values depend largely on future circumstances, including marketability, and frequently cannot reasonably be estimated until at, or near, the liquidation date.

**Real Estate**

Real estate investments consist of interests in commercial properties held by various partnerships and other limited liability entities, some of which utilize debt financing. Fair values of such holdings are reported based on the net asset values of the entities, which are estimated using third-party appraisals and other information provided by property managers.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**Basis of Investment Transactions**

Purchases and sales of investments are recorded on the trade date. Transactions unsettled as of the measurement date are recorded as payables for securities purchased and as receivables for securities sold.

**Foreign Currency Contracts**

The System's investment policy permits it to enter into forward foreign currency contracts for the purpose of hedging foreign currency fluctuations. A forward foreign currency contract is an agreement between two parties to buy or sell a fixed quantity of currency at a set price on a future date. The System may enter into forward foreign currency contracts to hedge its exposure to the effect of changes in foreign currency exchange rates upon its non-U.S. dollar-denominated investments. The contracts are valued daily, and the changes in fair value are recorded by the System as investment income in the statement of changes in fiduciary net position. When the contract is closed, the System records a realized gain or loss equal to the difference between the cost of the contract at the time it was opened and the value at the time it was closed.

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives**

The following disclosures represent essential risk information about the System's deposits and investments.

**Investment Policy**

The provisions of M.G.L. chapter 32 § 23(2); 840 C.M.R. 16-19, 21, 23, 26; and the Plan's own investment regulations (stated at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/boston-retirement-board-investment-regulations>) govern the System's investment practice.

Diversification is attained through varied investment management styles that comply with Massachusetts state law. This is accomplished through the retention of investment managers that adhere to M.G.L. chapter 32, § 3(3), the Prudent Person rule.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

The System has retained an investment consultant to work with The Boston Retirement Board in a fiduciary capacity to assure that strategic investment diversification is attained, to employ investment managers with expertise in their respective asset classes, and to closely monitor the implementation and performance of the respective investment strategies.

The System is currently invested in stocks (domestic and foreign), fixed income securities (domestic and foreign), real estate, private equity, the Commonwealth's Pension Reserve Investment Trust (PRIT) and hedge funds.

The following was the adopted asset allocation policy as of December 31, 2020:

<b>Asset Class</b>	<b>BRS Excluding Boston Teachers – Target Allocation</b>	<b>Boston Teachers – Target Allocation</b>
Domestic equity	23%	22%
International developed markets equity	17	12
International emerging markets equity	8	5
Core fixed income	16	15
High yield fixed income	6	8
Emerging market debt	4	–
Real estate	10	10
Timber	–	4
Hedge fund, GTAA, risk parity	5	10
Private equity	11	14
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

**Rate of Return**

For the year ended December 31, 2020, the annual money-weighted rate of return on pension plan investments, net of pension plan investment expense, was 12.43%. The money-weighted rate of return expresses investment performance, net of investment expense, adjusted for the changing amounts actually invested.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

**Interest Rate Risk**

The following is a listing of the System's fixed income investments (in thousands) and related maturity schedule (in years) as of December 31, 2020:

<b>Investment Type</b>	<b>Fair Value</b>	<b>Less Than 1</b>	<b>1-5</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>More Than 10</b>
U.S. treasury notes and bonds	\$ 306,834	\$ 17,131	\$ 151,035	\$ 104,848	\$ 33,820
U.S. agencies	113,738	-	1,283	616	111,839
Corporate debt securities	993,992	1,742	146,803	128,493	716,954
Municipal	4,445	-	696	205	3,544
International corporate	9,940	-	3,388	5,606	946
International government	35,613	-	13,587	15,476	6,550
Asset-backed:					
CMOs	38,798	-	-	773	38,025
Other	54,042	210	11,764	4,578	37,490
	<u>\$ 1,557,402</u>	<u>\$ 19,083</u>	<u>\$ 328,556</u>	<u>\$ 260,595</u>	<u>\$ 949,168</u>

The System's guidelines do not specifically address limits on maturities as a means of managing its exposure to fair value losses arising from increasing interest rates. The managers of each fixed income portfolio are responsible for determining the maturity and commensurate returns of their portfolio.

The collateralized mortgage obligations (CMOs) held by the System as of December 31, 2020 are highly sensitive to changes in interest rates.

**Credit Risk**

The System allows investment managers to apply discretion under the Prudent Person rule. Investments are made, as a prudent person would be expected to act with discretion and intelligence, to seek reasonable income, preserve capital and, in general, avoid speculative investments.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

The System's fixed income investments as of December 31, 2020 were rated by Standard & Poor's and/or an equivalent national rating organization and the ratings are presented below using the Standard & Poor's rating scale (in thousands):

Investment Type	Fair Value	AAA	AA	A	BBB	BB	B	CCC	Not Rated
U.S. agencies	\$ 113,738	\$ 1,899	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 41	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 111,798
Corporate debt securities	993,992	1,178	3,006	36,970	85,240	39,236	35,174	27,775	765,413
Municipal	4,445	96	3,308	835	-	-	-	-	206
International corporate	9,940	-	-	892	2,508	990	4,452	1,085	13
International government	35,613	1,017	2,108	4,284	18,614	4,239	2,851	137	2,363
Asset-backed:									
CMOs	38,798	8,896	360	-	-	-	-	-	29,542
Other	54,042	25,673	3,348	1,919	1,052	1,149	427	1,086	19,388
	<u>\$ 1,250,568</u>	<u>\$ 38,759</u>	<u>\$ 12,130</u>	<u>\$ 44,900</u>	<u>\$ 107,455</u>	<u>\$ 45,614</u>	<u>\$ 42,904</u>	<u>\$ 30,083</u>	<u>\$ 928,723</u>

In addition to the above schedule, the System has approximately \$306.8 million invested in U.S. government securities, which are explicitly guaranteed by the U.S. government.

**Concentration Risk**

Other than the PRIT fund, the System has no investments at fair value that exceed 5% of the System's total investments as of December 31, 2020.

The System adheres to the provisions of M.G.L. chapter 32 § 23(2); 840 C.M.R. 16-19, 21, 23, 26; and the Plan's own investment regulations when managing concentration risk.

**Foreign Currency Risk**

Foreign currency risk is the risk that changes in exchange rates will adversely affect the fair value of an investment or a deposit. Similar to the investments in domestic equities, the System employs or encourages its investment advisor to employ diversification, asset allocation, and quality strategies.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

Risk of loss arises from changes in currency exchange rates. The System's exposure to foreign currency risk is presented in the following table (in thousands):

<b>Currency</b>	<b>Cash and Short-Term Investments</b>	<b>Fixed Income</b>	<b>Equity</b>	<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Total</b>
Australian dollar	\$ 36	\$ —	\$ 32,526	\$ —	\$ 32,562
Austria	—	—	1,904	—	1,904
Belgium	—	—	4,689	—	4,689
Canadian dollar	—	—	10,282	—	10,282
Danish krone	(81)	—	35,172	—	35,091
Euro currency	190	—	—	244	434
Finland	—	—	8,433	—	8,433
France	—	—	55,634	—	55,634
Germany	—	—	37,893	—	37,893
Hong Kong dollar	2	—	24,215	—	24,217
Ireland	—	—	1,325	—	1,325
Israel	—	—	875	—	875
Italy	—	—	8,530	—	8,530
Japanese yen	7	—	140,948	—	140,955
Korea	54	—	—	—	54
Netherlands	—	—	22,747	—	22,747
New Zealand dollar	21	—	1,377	—	1,398
Norwegian krone	—	—	726	—	726
Pound sterling	103	—	66,891	20,422	87,416
Portugal	—	—	5,222	—	5,222
Singapore dollar	14	—	5,559	—	5,573
Spain	—	—	11,718	—	11,718
Swedish krona	7	—	6,350	—	6,357
Swiss franc	128	—	63,134	—	63,262
Total securities subject to foreign currency risk	481	—	546,150	20,666	567,297
U.S. dollars (securities held by international investment managers)	3,297	46,211	316,041	—	365,549
Total international investment securities	<u>\$ 3,778</u>	<u>\$ 46,211</u>	<u>\$ 862,191</u>	<u>\$ 20,666</u>	<u>\$ 932,846</u>

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

**PRIT External Investment Pooled Fund**

The Massachusetts legislature enacted Section 17 of Chapter 112 of the Acts of 2010 that requires the System to invest all assets, current and future, related to Boston Teachers in the PRIT pooled fund. The PRIT pooled fund is an external investment pool that is not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, but is subject to oversight provided by the Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (the PRIM Board). The PRIM Board was created by legislation to provide general supervision of the investments and management of PRIT. PRIT is not a rated fund.

The fair value of the PRIT pooled fund is based on unit value as reported by management of the PRIT pooled fund. The PRIT fund issues separately available audited financial statements with a year-end of June 30.

On July 1, 2010, the System transferred 27% of its assets, or \$1.1 billion, to the PRIT pooled fund. As of December 31, 2020, the System had the following amounts invested in the PRIT pooled fund (in thousands):

General allocation account	\$ 1,841,024
Cash fund	<u>162,985</u>
Total PRIT pooled funds	<u><u>\$ 2,004,009</u></u>



**Boston Retirement System**  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

As of December 31, 2020, the general allocation account is diversified into the following:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Core fixed income	15.93%
Domestic equity	22.47
Emerging markets	5.63
Equity hedge fund	1.10
Hedge funds	7.52
Other credit opportunities	0.95
International equity	14.64
Liquidating portfolio	0.08
Private equity	12.27
Real assets	0.96
Real estate	7.96
Cash overlay	0.58
Private debt	1.58
Timber natural resources	3.34
Value-added fixed income	4.99
Total	<u>100.00%</u>

**Securities Lending Transactions**

The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC) has issued supplemental regulations that permit the System to engage in securities lending transactions. Securities lending is an investment management enhancement that utilizes certain existing securities of the Plan to earn additional income. These transactions are conducted by the System's custodian, who lends certain securities owned by the System to broker-dealers and banks pursuant to a form of loan agreement. The System and the borrowers maintain the right to terminate all securities lending transactions on demand.

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

Securities lending involves the loaning of securities to approved banks and broker-dealers. In return for the loaned securities, the custodian, prior to or simultaneous with delivery of the loaned securities to the borrower, receives collateral in the form of cash (including both U.S. and foreign currency) or U.S. government securities, sovereign debt of foreign countries, and irrevocable bank letters of credit to serve as a safeguard against possible default of any borrower on the return of the loan. The custodian does not have the ability to pledge or sell collateral unless the borrower defaults. Borrowers are required to deliver collateral in amounts equal to not less than 100% of the market value of the loaned securities. The collateral is marked to market on a daily basis. In the event the counterparty is unable to meet its contractual obligation under the securities lending arrangement, the Plan may incur losses equal to the amount by which the market value of the securities differs from the amount of collateral held. The Plan mitigates credit risk associated with securities lending arrangements by monitoring the fair value of the securities loaned on a daily basis, with additional collateral obtained or refunded as necessary.

The System does not impose any restrictions on the amount of securities lent on its behalf by the custodian. There were no failures by any borrowers to return loaned securities or pay distributions thereon and there were no losses from a default of the borrowers or the custodian for the year ended December 31, 2020. The cash collateral received by the custodian on each loan was invested, together with the cash collateral of other qualified tax-exempt plan lenders, in a collective investment pool. The relationship between the average maturities of the investment pool and loans was affected by the maturities of the loans made by other plans that invested cash collateral in the collective investment pool, which the System could not determine.

The Plan maintains full ownership rights to the securities loaned and, accordingly, recognizes the amount of collateral received as investments, with a corresponding obligation to return such collateral on the statement of fiduciary net position. At December 31, 2020, the fair value of securities loaned by the System amounted to \$305.2 million, against which was held collateral at fair value of \$316.3 million as follows (in thousands):

Short-term collateral investment pool	\$ 136,970
Noncash collateral	<u>179,340</u>
	<u>\$ 316,310</u>

**Boston Retirement System**  
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**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**3. Cash Deposits, Investments, Securities Lending, and Derivatives (continued)**

Securities lending income earned by the Plan is recorded on the accrual basis and was approximately \$1.08 million for the year ended December 31, 2020.

**Commitments**

At December 30, 2020, the System had contractual commitments to provide \$346.0 million of additional funding to private equity and private debt funds, and \$186.0 million to real estate funds.

**Derivatives**

The System trades financial instruments with off-balance sheet risk in the normal course of its investing activities to assist in managing exposure to market risks. The System uses forward and spot foreign currency contracts to hedge against the risk of future foreign currency fluctuations. As of December 31, 2020, there were no pending forward currency contracts. There was one spot contract for income repatriation with a notional amount of \$14,873 and a fair value of \$42.

**Pandemic Risk**

In March 2020, the World Health Organization categorized Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a pandemic, and the President of the United States declared the COVID-19 outbreak a national emergency. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to extreme volatility in financial markets and has affected, and may continue to affect, the market price of Plan assets. The potential economic impact brought by, and the duration of, COVID-19 is difficult to assess or predict and will depend on future developments that are highly uncertain and cannot be predicted.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**4. Fair Value Measurements**

The fair value framework establishes a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The fair value hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described below:

- Level 1 – Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets that are accessible to the reporting entity at the measurement date for identical assets and liabilities.
- Level 2 – Inputs other than quoted prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities that are observable either directly or indirectly for substantially the full term of the asset or liability. Level 2 inputs include the following:
  - Quoted prices for similar assets and liabilities in active markets
  - Quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in markets that are not active
  - Observable inputs other than quoted prices that are used in the valuation of the asset or liabilities (e.g., interest rate and yield curve quotes at commonly quoted intervals)
  - Inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means
- Level 3 – Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability (i.e., supported by little or no market activity). Level 3 inputs include management’s own assumptions about the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability (including assumptions about risk).

The level in the fair value hierarchy within which the fair value measurement is classified is determined based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement in its entirety.

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**4. Fair Value Measurements (continued)**

The following table sets forth, by fair value hierarchy level, the Plan's assets carried at fair value at December 31, 2020 (in thousands):

	<b>Total at December 31, 2020</b>	<b>Fair Value Measurements Using:</b>		
		<b>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)</b>	<b>Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)</b>	<b>Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)</b>
Short-term:				
Domestic	\$ 48,405	\$ 48,405	\$ —	\$ —
International	13,347	13,347	—	—
Total short-term	61,752	61,752	—	—
U.S. equities:				
Large cap core	747,518	747,518	—	—
Large cap growth	172,246	172,246	—	—
Large cap value	298,584	298,584	—	—
Small cap core	167,601	167,601	—	—
Small cap growth	127,954	127,954	—	—
Small cap value	143,371	143,371	—	—
Total U.S. equities	1,657,274	1,657,274	—	—
International equities	1,440,635	1,440,635	—	—
Fixed income securities:				
U.S. treasury securities	306,834	306,834	—	—
Corporate debt securities	993,992	993,992	—	—
Global multi-sector fixed income	45,553	—	45,553	—
Municipal	4,445	—	4,445	—

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**4. Fair Value Measurements (continued)**

	<b>Total at December 31, 2020</b>	<b>Fair Value Measurements Using:</b>		
		<b>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)</b>	<b>Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)</b>	<b>Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)</b>
Fixed income securities (cont'd):				
CMO	\$ 38,798	\$ –	\$ 38,798	\$ –
Other asset backed securities	54,042	–	54,042	–
U.S. agencies	113,738	–	113,738	–
Total fixed income securities	<u>1,557,402</u>	<u>1,300,826</u>	<u>256,576</u>	<u>–</u>
Total investments by fair value level	4,717,063	<u>\$ 4,460,487</u>	<u>\$ 256,576</u>	<u>\$ –</u>
Government external investment pool measured at the net asset value (NAV):				
PRIT fund	1,841,024			
Alternative investments measured at NAV:				
Hedge fund of funds	322,229			
Private equity funds	498,308			
Private real estate funds	<u>510,191</u>			
Total alternative investments measured at NAV	<u>1,330,728</u>			
Total investments at fair value	<u>\$ 7,888,815</u>			

Fixed income and equity securities classified in Level 1 of the fair value hierarchy are valued using prices quoted in active markets for those securities. Fixed income securities classified in Level 2 of the fair value hierarchy are valued using a matrix pricing technique. Matrix pricing is used to value securities based on the securities' relationship to benchmark quoted prices.

The PRIT pooled fund is an external investment pool that is not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, but is subject to oversight provided by the Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (the PRIM Board). The PRIM Board was created by legislation to provide general supervision of the investments and management of PRIT. PRIT is not a rated fund. The

**Boston Retirement System**  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**4. Fair Value Measurements (continued)**

fair value of the PRIT pooled fund is based on unit value as reported by management of the PRIT pooled fund. The PRIT fund issues separately available audited financial statements with a year-end of June 30 (available at <http://www.mapension.com>). The Plan is required to provide a 30-day redemption notice for this investment.

The valuation method for investments measured at the NAV per share (or its equivalent) is presented on the following table (in thousands):

	<b>Investments Measured at the NAV</b>			
	<b>Fair Value</b>	<b>Unfunded Commitments</b>	<b>Redemption Frequency</b>	<b>Redemption Notice Period</b>
Global multi-strategy hedge fund of funds <sup>1</sup>	\$ 322,229	\$ —	Quarterly	60-90 days
Real estate funds <sup>2</sup>	510,191	185,968	<sup>2</sup>	<sup>2</sup>
Private equity fund <sup>3</sup>	498,308	345,773	<sup>3</sup>	<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Global multi-strategy hedge fund of funds*: This type includes investments in 7 hedge funds that invest in other hedge fund managers. Management of each hedge fund is given full discretion to invest with direct hedge fund managers. The fair value of the investments in this type has been determined using the NAV per share of the investments.

<sup>2</sup> *Real estate funds*: This type includes 35 real estate funds that invest primarily in U.S. commercial real estate. The fair values of the investments in this type have been determined using the NAV per share (or its equivalent) of the System's ownership interest in partners' capital. Distributions from each fund will be received as the underlying investments of the funds are liquidated. It is expected that the underlying assets of the funds will be liquidated over the next 7 to 10 years.

<sup>3</sup> *Private equity funds*: This type includes 61 private equity funds that invest primarily in U.S. companies. These investments can never be redeemed with the funds; instead, the nature of the investments in this type is that distributions are received through the liquidation of the underlying assets of the funds. It is expected that the underlying assets of the funds will be liquidated over the next 7 to 10 years.

**Boston Retirement System**  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**5. Contributions and Funding Policy**

Participating employers are required to pay into the System their share of the remaining actuarially determined contribution and plan administration costs, which are apportioned among the participating employers based on an actuarial computation.

The participating employers' actual contributions to the System for the year ended December 31, 2020 were as follows (in thousands):

City of Boston	\$ 294,772
Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Boston Teachers)	162,976
Sheriff of Suffolk County	3,846
Boston Housing Authority	13,946
Boston Public Health Commission	22,343
Boston Planning and Development Agency	3,150
Boston Water and Sewer Commission	12,475
	<u>\$ 513,508</u>

As a condition of participation, employees are required to contribute 5% of their salary if hired prior to January 1, 1975; 7% if hired on or after January 1, 1975 and before January 1, 1984; 8% if hired on or after January 1, 1984 and before July 1, 1996; and 9% if hired on or after July 1, 1996. Employees hired on or after January 1, 1979 contribute an additional 2% of earnings in excess of \$30,000 per year. Additionally, teachers who became members of the System on or after June 30, 2001, or other teachers who elect this option, are required by law to contribute 11% of their salary. Overtime and certain additional earnings are not subject to these assessments and are not considered in the determination of final average salary.



Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**6. Legally Required Reserve Accounts**

The balances in the System's legally required reserves at December 31, 2020 were as follows (in thousands):

		<u>Purpose</u>
Annuity Savings Fund	\$ 1,988,229	Active members' contribution balance
Annuity Reserve Fund	437,917	Retired members' contribution account
Military Service Fund	50	Members' contribution account while on military leave
Pension Reserve Fund	5,456,183	Amounts appropriated to fund future retirement benefits
Pension Fund	422,496	Remaining net position
	<u>\$ 8,304,875</u>	

All reserve accounts are funded at levels required by state statute.

**7. Net Pension Liability of Participating Employers**

The components of the net pension liability of the participating employers are as follows (in thousands):

	<u>December 31, 2020</u>	<u>January 1, 2020</u>
Total pension liability	\$ 12,278,386	\$ 11,964,671
Plan fiduciary net position	<u>8,304,875</u>	<u>7,407,075</u>
Employers' net pension liability	<u>\$ 3,973,511</u>	<u>\$ 4,557,596</u>
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	<b>67.64%</b>	61.91%

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**7. Net Pension Liability of Participating Employers (continued)**

*Actuarial assumptions:* The total pension liability was measured by an actuarial valuation as of January 1, 2020, with update procedures used to roll forward the total pension liability to December 31, 2020, using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

Inflation                                      3.25% for BRS excluding Boston Teachers, 3.25% for Boston Teachers

Salary increases:

Years of Service	Boston Teachers	BRS Excluding Boston Teachers		
		Group 1	Group 2	Group 4
0	7.50%	4.00%	4.25%	4.50%
1	7.10	4.00	4.25	4.50
2	7.00	4.00	4.25	4.50
3	6.90	4.00	4.25	4.50
4	6.80	4.00	4.25	4.50
5	6.70	4.00	4.25	4.50
6	6.60	4.00	4.25	4.50
7	6.50	4.00	4.25	4.50
8	6.30	4.00	4.25	4.50
9	6.10	4.00	4.25	4.50
10	5.90	4.00	4.25	4.50
11	5.70	4.00	4.25	4.50
12	5.20	4.00	4.25	4.50
13	4.70	4.00	4.25	4.50
14	4.35	4.00	4.25	4.50
15–16	4.20	4.00	4.25	4.50
17–19	4.10	4.00	4.25	4.50
20 and later	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.50

Investment rate of return                      7.05% for BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 7.15% for Boston Teachers, net of investment expenses, including inflation

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**7. Net Pension Liability of Participating Employers (continued)**

Cost of living adjustments	3% of first \$14,000
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**Mortality Rates**

*January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 TPL*

Healthy	Pub-2010 General Employee, Healthy Retiree and Contingent Survivor Amount-Weighted Mortality Tables set forward one year projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for Groups 1 and 2 and Pub-2010 Safety Employee, Healthy Retiree and Contingent Survivor Amount-Weighted Mortality Tables projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for Group 4 for BRS excluding Boston Teachers and Pub-2010 Teacher Employee, Healthy Retiree and Contingent Survivor Headcount-Weighted Mortality Tables projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for Boston Teachers.
Disabled	Pub-2010 General Healthy Retiree Amount-Weighted Mortality Table set forward one year projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for Groups 1 and 2 and the Pub-2010 Disabled Retiree Amount-Weighted Mortality Table projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for BRS excluding Boston Teachers and Pub-2010 Teacher Healthy Retiree Headcount-Weighted Mortality Table projected generationally using Scale MP-2019 for Boston Teachers.

The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These returns are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. The target allocation (approved by

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**7. Net Pension Liability of Participating Employers (continued)**

the Boston Retirement Board) and projected arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class, after deducting inflation, but before investment expenses, used in the derivation of the long-term expected investment rate of return assumption, are summarized in the following table:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return</u>
Domestic equity	6.28%
International developed markets equity	7.00
International emerging markets equity	8.82
Core fixed income	0.38
High yield fixed income	2.97
Emerging market debt	3.16
Real estate	3.50
Timber	3.45
Hedge fund, GTAA, risk parity	2.35
Private equity	10.11

*Discount rate:* The discount rates used to measure the TPL as of December 31, 2020 were 7.05% for the BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 7.15% for Boston Teachers. The discount rates used to measure the TPL as of January 1, 2020 were 7.05% for the BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 7.15% for Boston Teachers. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rate and employer contributions will be made at rates equal to the actuarially determined contribution rates. For this purpose, only employer contributions that are intended to fund benefits for the current plan members and their beneficiaries are included. Projected employer contributions that are intended to fund the service costs for future plan members and their beneficiaries, as well as projected contributions from future plan members, are not included. Based on those assumptions, the Plan Fiduciary Net Position (FNP) was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments for current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the TPL as of both December 31, 2020 and January 1, 2020 .

Boston Retirement System  
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Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

**7. Net Pension Liability of Participating Employers (continued)**

*Sensitivity of the net pension liability to changes in the discount rate:* The following presents the net pension liability of the System as of December 31, 2020, calculated using the discount rate of 7.05% for the BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 7.15% for Boston Teachers, as well as what the System’s net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage-point lower (6.05% for the BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 6.15% for the Boston Teachers) or 1-percentage-point higher (8.05% for the BRS excluding Boston Teachers and 8.15% for the Boston Teachers) than the current rate (in thousands):

	1% Decrease	Current Discount	1% Increase
System’s net pension liability as of December 31, 2020	\$ 5,404,784	\$ 3,973,511	\$ 2,775,056

**8. Contingencies**

There are various pending claims arising in the ordinary course of operations; however, management believes that the probable liability resulting from such claims and litigation would not materially affect the System’s financial position.

**9. Commitments**

During 2008, the System signed a memorandum of understanding with the City for the purpose of financing the development, design, purchase, and installation of a pension management system of \$16.0 million. Subsequently, the System obtained an additional \$4.9 million and, therefore, is committed to repaying the City \$20.9 million in principal, along with related interest of \$5.3 million. As of December 31, 2020, approximately \$22.7 million in principal and interest has been repaid. Refer to Note 3 for additional disclosures regarding commitments.

**Boston Retirement System**  
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**Notes to Financial Statements (continued)**

**10. Tax Status**

The Plan has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service dated August 13, 2014, stating that the Plan is qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code) and, therefore, the related trust is exempt from taxation. Once qualified, the Plan is required to operate in conformity with the Code to maintain its qualified status. The plan administrator believes the Plan is being operated in compliance with the applicable requirements of the Code and, therefore, believes the Plan is qualified and the related trust is tax exempt.

The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

**11. Subsequent Events**

Management has evaluated subsequent events through July 30, 2021, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued, and concluded that no material events have occurred that would require recognition or disclosure.

## Required Supplementary Information

**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Schedule of Changes in the Net Pension Liability – Last Ten Years**

Year Ended December 31, 2020

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
<b>Total pension liability</b>							
Service cost	\$ 263,917,290	\$ 231,992,044	\$ 224,582,327	\$ 204,906,499	\$ 200,166,141	\$ 194,996,031	\$ 184,938,621
Interest	843,236,212	810,769,244	795,871,906	758,643,816	755,579,729	739,499,439	705,610,897
Differences between expected and actual experience	(134,303,882)	–	(182,529,598)	–	(318,650,369)	–	–
Changes of assumptions	–	589,891,742	–	377,158,333	–	89,776,142	94,626,461
Changes of benefit terms	–	–	–	45,062,181	–	–	–
Benefit payments, including refunds of employee contributions	(659,134,697)	(657,077,672)	(634,983,862)	(611,304,014)	(594,950,681)	(576,941,443)	(550,984,406)
Net change in total pension liability	313,714,923	975,575,358	202,940,773	774,466,815	42,144,820	447,330,169	434,191,573
Total pension liability – beginning	11,964,670,843	10,989,095,485	10,786,154,712	10,011,687,897	9,969,543,077	9,522,212,908	9,088,021,335
Total pension liability – ending (a)	<u>\$ 12,278,385,766</u>	<u>\$ 11,964,670,843</u>	<u>\$ 10,989,095,485</u>	<u>\$ 10,786,154,712</u>	<u>\$ 10,011,687,897</u>	<u>\$ 9,969,543,077</u>	<u>\$ 9,522,212,908</u>
<b>Plan fiduciary net position</b>							
Contributions – employer	\$ 513,508,120	\$ 486,292,048	\$ 438,334,770	\$ 260,164,547	\$ 247,770,904	\$ 218,812,904	\$ 203,074,621
Contributions – non-employer contributing entity	–	–	–	131,298,000	132,477,000	120,434,000	114,335,385
Contributions – employee	185,582,460	175,694,009	168,425,188	154,937,098	153,879,817	147,090,451	143,397,524
Net investment income	867,577,794	1,008,373,732	(326,077,449)	987,384,683	360,333,280	(15,257,000)	283,342,371
Benefit payments, including refunds of employee contributions	(659,134,697)	(657,077,672)	(634,983,862)	(611,304,014)	(594,950,681)	(576,982,464)	(550,984,406)
Administrative expenses	(9,734,070)	(9,161,172)	(9,235,803)	(7,072,347)	(7,720,520)	(8,951,662)	(10,215,495)
Net change in fiduciary net position	897,799,607	1,004,120,945	(363,537,156)	915,407,967	291,789,800	(114,853,771)	182,950,000
Plan fiduciary net position – beginning	7,407,074,926	6,402,953,981	6,766,491,137	5,851,083,170	5,559,293,370	5,674,147,141	5,491,197,000
Plan fiduciary net position – ending (b)	<u>\$ 8,304,874,533</u>	<u>\$ 7,407,074,926</u>	<u>\$ 6,402,953,981</u>	<u>\$ 6,766,491,137</u>	<u>\$ 5,851,083,170</u>	<u>\$ 5,559,293,370</u>	<u>\$ 5,674,147,000</u>
Net pension liability – ending: (a)-(b)	\$ 3,973,511,233	\$ 4,557,595,917	\$ 4,586,141,504	\$ 4,019,663,575	\$ 4,160,604,727	\$ 4,410,249,707	\$ 3,848,065,908
Plan's fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	67.64 %	61.91 %	58.27 %	62.73 %	58.44 %	55.76 %	59.59 %
Covered-employee payroll	\$ 1,719,830,947	\$ 1,660,821,914	\$ 1,608,544,227	\$ 1,547,478,524	\$ 1,498,768,546	\$ 1,493,958,273	\$ 1,444,652,177
Net pension liability as a percentage of covered payroll	231.04 %	274.42 %	285.11 %	259.76 %	277.60 %	295.21 %	266.37 %

*Note: Schedule is intended to show information for ten years. Historical information prior to implementation of GASB 67 is not required if the information is not available. Additional years will be displayed as they become available.*

*Note: Total pension liability and Plan fiduciary net position calculations were completed separately for the BRS, excluding Boston Teachers and the Boston Teachers.*

*Note: Covered-employee payroll for 2020 and 2019 as estimated from the January 1, 2018 and January 1, 2016 valuation reports, respectively.*



**Boston Retirement System**  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

**Schedule of Contributions – Last Ten Years**  
*(In Thousands)*

Year Ended December 31, 2020

<b>Year Ended December 31</b>	<b>Actuarially Determined Contribution</b>	<b>Contributions in Relation to the Actuarially Determined Contribution</b>	<b>Contribution Deficiency (Excess)</b>	<b>Covered Payroll</b>	<b>Contributions as a Percentage of Covered Payroll</b>
2020	\$ 498,508	\$ 513,508	\$ (15,000)	\$ 1,719,831	29.86%
2019	465,292	486,292	(21,000)	1,660,822	29.28
2018	426,335	438,335	(12,000)	1,608,544	27.25
2017	391,463	391,463	–	1,547,479	25.30
2016	368,248	380,248	(12,000)	1,498,769	25.37
2015	339,247	339,247	–	1,493,958	22.71
2014	312,560	312,560	–	1,444,652	21.64
2013	288,458	288,458	–	N/A	N/A
2012	261,943	361,943	–	N/A	N/A
2011	245,280	245,280	–	N/A	N/A

Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Schedule of Investment Returns – Last Ten Years

Year Ended December 31, 2020

Annual money-weighted rate of return, net of investment expense

2020	12.43%
2019	16.73%
2018	(4.30)%
2017	17.75%
2016	7.15%
2015	0.15%
2014	5.72%

*Note: Schedule is intended to show information for ten years. Historical information prior to implementation of GASB 67 is not required if the information is not available. Additional years will be displayed as they become available.*

Boston Retirement System  
(A Component Unit of the City of Boston, Massachusetts)

Notes to Required Supplementary Information

December 31, 2020

**Changes of Assumptions:**

There were no significant changes in assumptions during the year ended December 31, 2020.

**Methods and Assumptions Used in Calculations of Actuarially Determined Contributions:**

The actuarially determined contribution rates presented in the schedule of contributions are calculated as of December 31, 2019. The funding requirements are established for the employers' fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, and later years and are analyzed based on the preceding two years' experience. The following actuarial methods and assumptions were used to determine contribution rates reported in that schedule:

Valuation date	Actuarially Determined Contribution for 2020 is determined with the January 1, 2018 actuarial valuation.
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal cost method
Amortization method	Prior year's contribution increased by 8.85% for BRS excluding Boston Teachers; contribution as reported by the State Actuary for Teachers
Remaining amortization period	7 years remaining as of January 1, 2018 for BRS excluding Boston Teachers; 18 years remaining as of January 1, 2018 for Boston Teachers
Asset valuation method	Sum of actuarial value at beginning of the year, contributions and investment earnings based on the actuarial interest assumption less benefit payments and operating expenses plus 20% of market value at end of year in excess of that sum, plus additional adjustment toward market value as necessary so that final actuarial value is within 20% of market value
Inflation	3.25% for BRS
Salary increases	4.00% for Group 1, 4.25% for Group 2 and 4.50% for Group 4 for BRS excluding Boston Teachers; based on years of service, ranging from 7.5% at 0 years of service decreasing to 4.00% after 20 years of service for teachers
Investment rate of return	7.05% for BRS excluding Boston Teachers; 7.15% for Boston Teachers

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