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Metro RTA agrees to pay former executive director \$200,000

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The Metro Regional Transit Authority has agreed to pay \$200,000 to its former executive director to settle an ongoing dispute over his firing earlier this year.

The board approved a motion Tuesday authorizing board President Robert DeJournett to enter into a settlement agreement by a 6-2 vote. The amount wasn't disclosed at the meeting, but former Executive Director Richard Enty's attorney Peter Pattakos later released the figure.

Enty had argued that he was let go by Summit County's public bus company in January for political reasons and without cause. At the time, he had two years remaining on his contract, which called for him to receive an annual salary of \$129,243. He had not filed a lawsuit.

"While Mr. Enty would have preferred to stay in his position as Metro's executive director, the legal matter has resolved to his satisfaction," Pattakos said in a prepared statement.

Metro declined to comment on the settlement, but confirmed in an email that the board had voted and an amount wasn't announced at the meeting. The Beacon Journal/Ohio.com filed a public records request with Metro for a copy of the settlement.

Enty, who had been in charge of the agency since 2012, had a rocky last year. He was placed on paid administrative leave in April after he sent an "inappropriate and insulting" email to employees. The board then deadlocked on a vote to fire him in May.

At the time, he was warned to use better judgment and improve his behavior. But several incidents took place after that including making employees watch a Tom Cruise movie while at work, putting a Metro decal on the side of his personal Porsche and vouching for his daughter who applied for a communications position at the agency.

He was placed on leave again in November after he was accused of confronting an employee who had filed a lengthy complaint against him.

Meanwhile, the Ohio Ethics Commission began investigating a questionable financial relationship between Enty and former board member Sandra Foster, and the FBI requested documentation from the transit agency. The outcome of the ethics inquiry is still pending.

Pattakos said Enty is now evaluating his career options.

“He’s glad that this issue with Metro has resolved,” he said.

In a prepared statement, Enty said: “I very much enjoyed my tenure at Metro and was honored to work alongside some of the most caring capable and devoted public servants I’ve encountered in my 41 years in the transit industry.” He also thanked various agencies and entities that he had worked with over the years and wished “the best to new Executive Director Dawn Distler in continuing to improve service for Metro customers.”

Distler took over last month after a national search.

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