



**MINUTES OF THE TWO-HUNDRED-AND-TWENTY-TWO
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY CIVIL SERVICE MERIT BOARD –
AUGUST 24, 2023**

**State Universities Civil Service System (University System)
1717 Philo Road, Suite 24,
Urbana, IL 61802
& WebEx**

Chicago State University
Cook Administration Building
9501 South King Drive
ADM Room 201
Chicago, IL

Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville
East St. Louis Center
601 James R. Thompson Blvd.
Building B, Room 2074
Louis, IL

Illinois State University
718 W. College Avenue
Room NSB 101A
Normal, IL

Southern Illinois University School of
Medicine
801 N Rutledge St.
Lincoln Conference Room
Springfield, IL

Northern Illinois University
116 Altgeld Hall
Altgeld Hall, Room 203
DeKalb, IL

University of Illinois at Chicago
Discovery Partners Institute
200 S Wacker Drive
Conference Room 2006
Chicago, IL

Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville
School of Dental Medicine
2800 College Ave.
Alumni Conference Room, Room B273
Alton, IL

Call to Order and Roll Call – Julie Annette Jones, Chair

Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Chair Jones stated that all votes would be held by roll call and noted that the meeting was being held via WebEx. She also said that the agenda was posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The posted agenda included directions on how to access the meeting electronically.

Members present at the University System Office and via WebEx were: Julie Annette Jones, Chair, from Illinois State University Board of Trustees; Barb Baurer from Eastern Illinois University Board of Trustees; Ramon Cepeda from the University of Illinois Board of Trustees; Tami Craig

Schilling from the University of Illinois Board of Trustees; John Simmons from the Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees; and Derek Wise from Western Illinois University Board of Trustees.

Members absent were: Jason Quiara from the Chicago State University Board of Trustees and John Butler from the Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees.

Also present were: Gail Schiesser, Executive Director, and Teresa Rademacher, Secretary for the Merit Board. Various other university employees and State Universities Civil Service System (University System) staff were also in attendance.

Consideration of participation by other Merit Board Members not physically present at the meeting site

All members were physically present at a designated meeting site.

Welcome new Merit Board Members from the University of Illinois (2) and Western Illinois University

Chair Jones welcomed three new Merit Board members: Ramon Cepeda and Tami Craig Schilling from the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and Derek Wise from the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees. Chair Jones thanked the past board members for their time serving on the University Civil Service Merit Board (Merit Board).

Approval of the Agenda for the 222nd Meeting of the Merit Board – Julie Annette Jones, Chair

Executive Director Schiesser requested Section §250.50 as part of agenda item 11 be removed from consideration. Chair Jones asked for a motion to approve the Agenda for the 222nd Meeting of the Merit Board with the proper modification request by Executive Director Schiesser.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the Agenda for the 222nd Meeting of the Merit Board with the modification. Ms. Baurer seconded Mr. Simmons' motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

Mr. Simmons.....Aye
Mr. Wise.....Aye
Ms. Baurer.....Aye
Dr. Butler.....Absent
Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
Ms. Craig Schilling.....Aye
Chair Jones.....Aye
Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Consideration of the Minutes of the 221st Meeting of the Merit Board, March 16, 2023

The minutes of the 221st Meeting of the Merit Board, March 16, 2023, were transmitted to members of the Merit Board with the agenda materials.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the minutes of the 221st Meeting of the Merit Board. Ms. Baurer seconded Mr. Simmons’ motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

- Mr. Simmons.....Aye
- Mr. Wise.....Aye
- Ms. Baurer.....Aye
- Dr. Butler.....Absent
- Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
- Ms. Craig SchillingAye
- Chair JonesAye
- Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Consideration of the Closed Session Minutes of the 221st Meeting of the Merit Board, March 16, 2023

The Closed Minutes of the 221st Meeting of the Merit Board, March 16, 2023, had been transmitted to members of the Merit Board with the agenda materials.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the Closed Minutes of the 221st University Civil Service Merit Board Meeting. Ms. Baurer seconded Mr. Simmons’ motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

- Mr. Simmons.....Aye
- Mr. Wise.....Abstain
- Ms. Baurer.....Aye
- Dr. Butler.....Absent
- Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
- Ms. Craig SchillingAye
- Chair JonesAye
- Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Public Comments

Chair Jones stated that there were no requests for Public Comment.

Report of the Human Resource Directors Advisory Committee – Linda Holloway, DER for Eastern Illinois University

Linda Holloway, Director of Human Resources, Eastern Illinois University (EIU), presented comments for the Human Resource Directors Advisory Committee (HRDAC). HRDAC has actively fostered collaborative discussions with the University System and Employee Advisory Committee (EAC). On April 19, 2023, the university HR Directors, University System staff, and EAC Executive Committee met to discuss matters of mutual interest to continue to move forward in seeking solutions to modernize outdated processes and language that affect campuses. HRDAC determined that five core items needed to be addressed.

Those five items in order of priority of having the most significant impact are:

1. Residency requirement – Removing the residency requirement is vital in recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified staff. This is important for all universities and critical for universities bordering other states.
2. Credential assessment testing concerns – There is a concern about the lack of consistency during credential assessment reviews, and it is agreed that some modifications of scoring rubrics could help minimize discrepancies.
3. Rule of Three – HRDAC believes that the “Rule of Three” carries limitations to ensure universities can select the most qualified candidates. Broadening the candidate pool could result in greater success in hiring the most qualified candidate for the position.
4. Extra Help Extensions – Though EAC is not supportive of eliminating the 900-hour rule, they are open to increasing the number of hours an extra help employee could be employed.
5. Grant-Funded Positions – This topic was tabled for further discussion and is particularly important to our research institutions.

Ms. Holloway further stated that, in general, this partnership was positive and provided a pathway to address their mutual concerns and needs.

There is also a need to look at the hiring cycle. The time from posting a position to the actual hire is so great that the top talent universities that are able to recruit have often committed to other employers with a shorter hiring cycle. Universities are losing the war in attracting and hiring qualified candidates. We must get aggressive in streamlining the hiring process. We thank the University System for listening and converting testing into a credential review system. This is a welcome improvement and evidence that we can all work together to modernize and improve outdated processes. This has been met with challenges discussed earlier; we have met and addressed ways to meet these concerns. We also appreciate that the proposal to remove the ability to recruit from out-of-state has since been withdrawn; this would have had a devastating effect on all of us and would have further reduced our dwindling candidate pools. We continue to fall behind our private sector employers who can lure candidates with higher salaries, flexible schedules, and sign-on bonuses that we cannot compete with.

Report of the State Universities Civil Service Employees Advisory Committee – Jill Odom, Chair

Jill Odom introduced herself to the new board members and gave an overview of her role as the chair of the committee.

She stated that the Executive Committee of EAC, the University System, and HRDAC met to discuss various items of great importance to each. Each of us has come to these discussions from different points of view; however, everyone has the same goal of achieving what is best for the civil service employees and the universities while following the policies and procedures necessary to ensure compliance with the State Universities Civil Service Act. The meeting was a very productive exchange of ideas and used the time to discuss challenges, concerns, and opportunities for collaboration. Topics discussed were the residency requirement, Rule of Three, Extra-Help Extensions, and Credential Assessment concerns. The entire EAC committee will meet with HRDAC during the October meeting. Following that meeting, EAC expects to present to the Merit Board areas of agreement, requests for improvement, and clarification.

The committee's most recent meeting was held on April 20 and 21, 2023, at Governors State University. Joshua Allen, Vice President of Human Resources for Governors State University, spoke to EAC about civil service employees and processes; this was informational and helpful to the committee. One of the biggest challenges with recruitment and retaining employees seems to be with compensation. While the Civil Service policies and procedures cannot address this issue, it is comforting to know that we are not alone at our individual universities in this regard.

She further stated that at the last meeting, she spoke to concerns that the State Universities Civil Service Act, which created the University System in 1952, was outdated. She stated that for the benefit of the new Merit Board members and to recap EAC's position, she wanted to restate the following: "While we all agree that needs, demand, and processed change over time, the necessity for defined rules, impartial oversight, modern benefits, and employee protections are paramount. The System remains the entity best positioned to develop and maintain a comprehensive and efficient program that ensures equity across the state for all of our employees, universities, and agencies. EAC continues to be committed to assisting the System Office and thus the Merit Board with supporting updates and revisions to the administrative rules and procedures and necessary changes to the act so long as our civil service employees remain the our driving force." She further stated that the Merit Board should consider all sides of the requests and the impact on all universities as we seek the best applicant pool.

Update and action on proposed rulemaking to Sections 5350.20, 5350.30, 5350.100, 5350.210 and 5350.Appendix A of the Code (2 Ill. Adm Code §5350) regarding rulemaking

Executive Director Schiesser stated that Section 5350 relates to administrative rulemaking. The agency is through the first notice period on this set of rules previously authorized by the Merit Board. The First Notice period ended July 24, 2023; we received no comments. There are several

small clarifying pieces and one material item. We removed the Administrative Advisory Committee; the Merit Board dissolved this committee last year, and the change reflects that. The agency cleaned up language for clarification and provided a new organizational chart.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the proposed rulemaking to Sections 5350.20, 5350.30, 5350.100, 5350.210 and 5350.Appendix A of the Code (2 Ill. Adm Code §5350) to the Second Notice Period. Ms. Baurer seconded Mr. Simmon's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion failed with the following vote:

Mr. Simmons.....Aye
Mr. Wise.....Aye
Ms. Baurer.....Aye
Dr. Butler.....Absent
Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
Ms. Craig Schilling.....Aye
Chair Jones.....Aye
Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Consideration and action on proposed rulemaking to Sections 250.5 and 250.30 of the Code (80 Ill. Adm. Code §250.5, and §250.30) regarding definitions and work areas

Executive Director Schiesser stated that in Section 250.5, the agency added a definition for law enforcement personnel that relates to a modification of our enabling ACT that was passed in the Spring of 2023, permitting a waiver of the residency requirement for law enforcement personnel. Section 250.30 deletes work areas from the classification plan because it has not been used for some time. HRDAC was notified of this change, and there were no objections. The agency also modified gender references from “his/her” to “their” and removed references to typing tests that have not been used in some years.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the proposed rule revisions for the First Notice Period and publication in the Illinois Register. Ms. Baurer seconded Mr. Simmons’ motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

Mr. Simmons.....Aye
Mr. Wise.....Aye
Ms. Baurer.....Aye
Dr. Butler.....Absent
Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
Ms. Craig Schilling.....Aye
Chair Jones.....Aye
Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Consideration of the FY 2025 Budget Recommendation for the State Universities Civil Service System

Executive Director Schiesser stated that for FY 2025, the University System is asking for \$1,344,500 as a lump sum appropriation. This is an 8.27% increase or a \$102,700 increase over the FY 2024 appropriation. This increase will allow for an additional position, allowing us to speed up our processes. In addition to the \$1,344,500, the agency is asking for an additional \$100,000 for police testing. In the past, IOC Solutions has prepared police testing for us. We are working with university police and IOC Solutions to create new tests. We had placed this out for bid and did not receive any bids.

Mr. Simmons moved to approve the FY 2025 appropriation of \$1,444,500. Mr. Wise seconded Mr. Simmons’ motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

- Mr. Simmons.....Aye
- Mr. Wise.....Aye
- Ms. Baurer.....Aye
- Dr. Butler.....Absent
- Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
- Ms. Craig Schilling.....Aye
- Chair Jones.....Aye
- Mr. Quiara.....Absent

Consideration of a Separate Place of Employment for the University of Illinois System Office

Executive Director Schiesser stated that the University System had received a request to allow for the University of Illinois System Office to designate itself as a separate place of employment. Section 250.5 of the Administrative Rules defines a separate place of employment as a unit of the institution or agency as determined by the Merit Board. Designation of which for the purpose of the maintenance of registers, computation of seniority, employment of pay rates or ranges, and effecting transfers by employer. A separate place of employment is treated in our system as an employment bubble, separate from the campus or any other place of employment. A separate place of employment will be required to maintain its own HR records, including but not limited to examination records, registers, referral lists, seniority lists, pay ranges, and disciplinary records. As a separate place of employment that maintains its own HR records, it will be subject to its own audit. The University of Illinois System Office will need to calculate the seniority of all of its approximately 1,500 employees and inform those employees of the seniority, and the seniority will only apply to that place of employment and not any other place of employment. If the University of Illinois System Office found itself needing to pursue a layoff, those employees would only be able to bump within the place of employment rather than in the larger University of Illinois place of employment. Reemployment registers reflecting that event would only affect that specific place of employment. The University of Illinois System Office believes this change

will improve its business functions and minimize its personnel activities. The University System believes this conforms with the rules.

Ms. Craig Schilling moved to approve the University of Illinois System Office as a separate place of employment. Mr. Simmons seconded Ms. Craig Schillings' motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved with the following vote:

Ms. Craig SchillingAye
Chair JonesAye
Mr. QuiaraAbsent
Mr. SimmonsAye
Mr. WiseAye
Ms. BaurerAye
Dr. ButlerAbsent
Mr. CepedaAye

Governance, Risk, and Compliance Audit Program review of recent activities

Ms. Neitzel commented that the University System remains regularly engaged with Chicago State University (CSU) due to the audit conducted in 2020.

She stated that the SIU School of Medicine report was finalized, and several other drafts are in process. The University System is in the middle of determining findings for Illinois State University and Governors State University and engaging with other agencies and universities regarding follow-up activities. For FY 2024, the University System will conduct audits at Western Illinois University and the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Ms. Neitzel informed the Merit Board that she would retire from the University System effective August 31, 2023.

Report of the Executive Director – Gail Schiesser

Executive Director Schiesser stated that the Governor signed HB1767 (Public Act 103-0287) regarding Section 70/36f of the Act (110 ILCS) on July 28, 2023. This new legislation will be effective January 1, 2024. This legislation allows residence requirements to be waived for law enforcement personnel examinations. The modification was proposed on behalf of Western Illinois University and modifies our enabling Act.

Expenditures to date for FY 2024 are approximately \$180,000. For FY 2023, the appropriation was \$1,170,500; there was an unexpended amount of \$107,173, primarily from the unhired legal counsel position.

The agency continues to review and revise our classification plan. Recently, the agency revised 39 classifications and 12 promotional lines in the IT sections. Those were revised and collapsed

into a smaller and more manageable classification plan. The agency is also currently working on a nursing series, driving series, and operating room technician.

In addition to Ms. Neitzel's retirement, Don Harsh, Legal Counsel, and Danielle Routh, HR Manager for Classification, Examination, and Compensation, resigned effective August 15, 2023. Ms. Routh was with the University System for 10 ½ years and provided excellent and creative services to the university system.

Report of the Legal Counsel – Gail Schiesser

Executive Director Schiesser stated that there are currently several matters in various courts around the state:

In Madison County, the State of Illinois vs. Chad Bateman

In June 2019, the Executive Director signed a criminal complaint alleging that an applicant at SIUE attempted to cheat on an Electrician exam. The University System asked the Madison County State's Attorney to prosecute that matter. The matter was settled, and Mr. Bateman paid \$1,000 as part of the settlement. The University System has received and passed the payment to the state.

Vincent Bradford

On December 10, 2020, the Merit Board discharged Mr. Bradford from the University of Illinois at Chicago. The Attorney General represents the University System in this matter. The court gave Mr. Bradford leave to prepare and serve a second amended complaint. Mr. Bradford filed that after the deadline set by the court. The Attorney General's office filed a motion to dismiss. The motion to dismiss was granted. Mr. Bradford made a timely filing for appeal.

James Kehoe

James Kehoe, a former employee at the University of Illinois Chicago, filed a Complaint for Administrative Review in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, Case No. 2022 CH 04502, requesting an Administrative review of the Merit Board's April 7, 2022, decision to discharge him. The Illinois Attorney General's Office is representing the agency in this matter. The matter has been fully briefed before the Circuit Court, and the judge has taken it under advisement. The University System has been notified that it could take several months for a decision to come down from the Circuit Court.

Christopher Bean

In February 2021, Christopher Bean, a former University of Illinois at Chicago employee, filed a "Charge Against a Labor Organization" with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board (IELRB). Mr. Bean alleged a violation of the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act (IELRA), 115 ILCS 5, and identified the agency as a "Labor Organization." The Illinois Attorney General's office is representing the agency in that matter. Following a recommendation by the Executive Director of the IELRB, the IELRB dismissed the charge on

February 4, 2022. On May 27, 2022, Mr. Bean appealed to the Appellate Court to overturn the IELRB dismissal. The Assistant Attorney General has filed a motion to dismiss. This motion was denied, and the case is proceeding against our agency. The Court is waiting for Mr. Bean to file his brief based on the merits. The case is still pending.

Other Items as presented

The next board meeting is scheduled for November 30, 2023.

Mr. Cepeda moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Simmons seconded Mr. Cepeda's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Mr. Cepeda.....Aye
Ms. Craig SchillingAye
Chair JonesAye
Mr. QuiaraAbsent
Mr. Simmons.....Aye
Mr. Wise.....Aye
Ms. Baurer.....Aye
Dr. ButlerAbsent

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Teresa Rademacher

Teresa Rademacher
Secretary for the Merit Board

APPROVED:

/s/ Julie Jones

Julie Jones, Chair
University Civil Service Merit Board

November 30, 2023

Date