



**MINUTES OF THE TWO-HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH  
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY CIVIL SERVICE MERIT BOARD –  
January 17, 2020**

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**State Universities Civil Service System (University System) Office  
1717 Philo Road, Suite 24  
Urbana, Illinois 61802  
&  
(Video Conference)  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Human Resources Building  
Room 201D  
715 South Wood Street  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice Chair Eagle called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

Members present at the primary meeting location were: Naomi Jakobsson, representing the University of Illinois; and Joseph Dively, representing Eastern Illinois University.

Members present at the Chicago video conference location were: John R. Butler, representing Northern Illinois University; Pedro Cevallos-Candau, representing Governors State University; Sherry Eagle, representing Northeastern Illinois University; and Julie Jones, representing Illinois State University.

Member present by audio conference was: John Simmons, representing Southern Illinois University.

Members absent were: Jill Smart, representing the University of Illinois; Stuart King, representing the University of Illinois; Kisha Lang, representing Western Illinois University; and Miriam Mobley Smith, representing Chicago State University.

Also present were: Jeff Brownfield, Executive Director; Gail Schiesser, Legal Counsel; Teresa Rademacher, Secretary for the Merit Board; representatives of the Human Resource Directors Advisory Committee (HRDAC); and representatives of the State Universities Civil Service Advisory

Committee (EAC). 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 meeting site***

Vice Chair Eagle asked for approval for Merit Board members not physically present to actively participate by other means in accordance with the Open Meetings Act requirements.

Mr. Butler made a motion to allow Mr. Simmons to participate by audio conference. Ms. Jones seconded Mr. Butler's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

### ***Merit Board Reorganization***

The Merit Board conducted reorganization activities, electing its officers for calendar year 2020. Vice Chair Eagle called for nominations for Chair. Dr. Eagle made a motion to elect Ms. Jones as Chair. Ms. Jakobsson seconded Vice Chair Eagle's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Chair Jones called for nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Butler made a motion to re-elect Dr. Eagle as Vice Chair. Mr. Cevallos-Candau seconded Mr. Butler's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Chair Jones called for nominations for the Executive Committee of the Merit Board. Dr. Eagle made a motion to elect Ms. Smart and Dr. Mobley Smith to the Executive Committee. Ms. Jakobsson seconded Dr. Eagle's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

The following officers for calendar year 2020 were elected:

- *Chair: Julie Jones*
- *Vice Chair: Sherry Eagle*
- *Executive Committee: Jill Smart and Miriam Mobley Smith*

Chair Jones stated that the Merit Board was also required to appoint a Secretary for the Merit Board. Dr. Eagle made a motion to re-appoint Teresa Rademacher as Secretary for the Merit Board. Ms. Jakobsson seconded Dr. Eagle's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

The board welcomed Mr. Dively to the Merit Board, representing Eastern Illinois University. Mr. Dively presented a a brief bio of himself saying that he was born and raised in Charleston and that he currently works for First Mid Bank and Trust. He is also active on the Eastern Illinois University campus and has served as a Trustee for eight years.

### ***Consideration of the Minutes of the 210<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Merit Board, December 17, 2019***

The minutes of the 210<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Merit Board, December 17, 2019, had been transmitted to members of the Merit Board with the agenda materials.

Ms. Jakobsson moved to approve the minutes of the 210<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the University Civil Service Merit Board (Merit Board). Dr. Eagle seconded Ms. Jakobsson's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

### ***Public Comments***

The University System Office received no requests to present public comments for this meeting.

### ***Consideration of Discharge Proceedings Number UIC-19-17 filed against Chumita Underwood by the University of Illinois at Chicago***

Ms. Schiesser, Legal Counsel, was asked to provide a brief summary of the Underwood discharge case. Ms. Schiesser stated that the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) filed Written Charges for Discharge against Chumita Underwood on June 11, 2019. Ms. Underwood, a Building Service Worker since September 13, 2013, made a timely request for a discharge hearing. UIC charged Ms. Underwood with job abandonment, failure to adhere to the department's order to report to work, failure to adhere to the department's call-in procedures, and unexcused and unauthorized absences. The Hearing Officer, Kim Kirn, found that the employer, UIC, had met its burden of proof on the charges against Ms. Underwood.

Ms. Schiesser stated that the Merit Board went into Closed Session during the December 17, 2019 meeting and upon returning to open session, the board postponed the decision to resume the decision until the next meeting of the board, which is this meeting.

Mr. Butler asked for an explanation of the differences in the Orders provided in the agenda materials. Ms. Schiesser explained that the board had three options, the board could reinstate an employee without any loss of compensation; reinstate the employee with a suspension of 3 to 120 days; or discharge the employee.

Mr. Cevallos-Candau made a motion that Ms. Underwood be reinstated with a 30-day suspension.

Dr. Eagle made a motion that the board go into Closed Session to discuss the above discharge case. Mr. Butler seconded Dr. Eagle’s motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried. The Merit Board went into Closed Session at 1:29 pm.

The Merit Board returned from Closed Session at 1:50 pm.

Chair Jones, asked for a second to Mr. Cevallos-Candau’s motion prior to going into Closed Session which was that the employee would be reinstated with a 30-day suspension. The motion failed for a lack of a second.

Mr. Dively made a motion to discharge Ms. Underwood. Ms. Jakobsson seconded Mr. Dively’s motion.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion was approved with the following vote:

Mr. Dively .....	Aye
Dr. Eagle .....	Aye
Ms. Jakobsson .....	Aye
Chair Jones .....	Aye
Dr. King .....	Absent
Ms. Lang .....	Absent
Dr. Mobley Smith .....	Absent
Mr. Simmons .....	Aye
Ms. Smart .....	Absent
Mr. Butler .....	Aye
Mr. Cevallos-Candau .....	No

### ***Executive Session***

Mr. Butler made a motion that the board go into Closed Session to discuss security issues. Dr. Cevallos-Candau seconded Mr. Butler’s motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

The Merit Board went into Closed Session at 1:52 pm.

The Merit Board returned from Closed Session at 2:17 pm.

### **Consideration of the 2020 Schedule of Meetings of the Merit Board**

Mr. Brownfield stated that the following dates were being proposed for calendar year 2020:

- Thursday, April 2, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.
- Thursday, August 13, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 19, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Jakobsson made a motion to accept the proposed dates. Dr. Cevallos-Candau seconded Ms. Jakobsson's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

### **Other Items as Presented**

Mr. Brownfield stated that the University System had met with Vicki Thomas from the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) regarding the current discharge rule with the proposed changes that the University System had been working on.

Dr. Eagle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Jakobsson seconded Dr. Eagle's motion. In accordance with the Merit Board Bylaws, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 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

May 14, 2020

Date