

**Eastern Illinois University Annuitant Association
Chapter Meeting Minutes
Neal Welcome Center
July 13, 2017**

Attendees Present 53 members, 5 guests

Jeffrey Lynch, Sam Taber, Charles Titus, Marilyn Coles, Suellen Garner, Larry Cannon, Alan and Carlene Baharlou, Al Joyner, Cal and Betty Campbell, Tom and Audrey Edwards, Mary Anne Hanner, John Flynn, Bob Whittenbarger, Vicki Hampton, John Kilgore, Gail Mason, John Best, Don McKee, Margaret Messer, Norma Taylor, Lydia Ann Roley, Dale Downs, Dan Carpenter, Richard and Barbara Funk, Dale Wolf, Carol Helwig, Nancy Dole, Vicki Woodard, Blair Lord, Rosalee Noble, Pam Atteberry, Ewen Bryden, Glenn Miller, Jayne Ozier, Frank McCormick, Marita Metzke, Ernie Secrest, Roy Meyerholtz, Cheryl Hawker, David Maurer, Cynthia Nichols, Marsha Figgins, Brenda Wilson, Scott and Jan Stevens, Helen Gregg, Jill Nilsen, John Ryan, Kathryn Bulver, Kathleen O'Rourke, Jone Zieren

Welcome and President's Remarks

After welcoming the larger than typical group of annuitants, The president opened the meeting with a trivia question.

Trivia: Even during difficult times, we have a rich heritage in the history of Eastern Illinois University. EIU celebrated its centennial birthday a few years ago. Who was the mayor who signed a document showing the impact of EIU on the Charleston community and what month and year did this take place?

President Messer thanked the association for the opportunity to represent them at the annual SUAA meeting in Springfield, then shared a few of the things she learned there. SUAA has become a force to be recognized. SUAA has a strong voice, and legislators seem to be listening. The EIUA board of directors chose to contribute \$1000 to SAAAction and \$1000 to the SUAA Legal Fund to maintain this strong voice to protect our pensions and benefits. There is concern for the dwindling number of current SURS employees. Fewer employees mean less money going into the system and the Tier options could actually reduce their pension benefits.

At the SUAA meeting, several methods for supporting the pension fund were discussed. One option being considered is a potential income tax to be levied against all state pensions. SUAA has set specific guidelines that must be met prior to their endorsement of such a proposal.

A phone app is now available on SUAA's website that will communicate the most recent legislative actions. EIUA will continue to post legislative updates on the list serve.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the February 23, 2017 meeting were approved as amended (V. Hampton/C.Baharlou).

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Bob Whittenbarger presented the treasurer's report. The current balance in the checkbook is slightly more than \$4500. The report was approved (M. Hanner/D. Carpenter).

Committee Reports

Communications and Newsletter: Vicki Hampton reported that the committee is working on the Fall newsletter. Structural changes are being made to the newsletter so that it will be more easily read electronically. Only about 150 newsletters are actually printed and mailed.

Events: Margaret thanked Marsha Figgins for all of her hard work on the Spring luncheon. The new VPAA, Jay Gatrell, will be invited to be the speaker for the October meeting. Members were encouraged to share ideas for speakers or topics for programs.

Legislative: The General Assembly overrode the Governor's veto of three bills that created a budget for FY18. The bills identified a spending plan, a revenue plan and a budget implementation plan (BIMP). The spending plan included increased MAP grant dollars by 10% and funding of college, universities, and community colleges at 90% of FY15 levels. The revenue plan raised the individual income tax rate from 3.75% to 4.95% and the corporate tax rate from 5.25% to 7%. The BIMP implements a Tier 3 defined benefit plan for Tier 2 members (if they elect) and future non-covered hires in SERS, SURS, and TRS. The new budget provides almost \$5 million dollars in capital improvement projects. Senator Righter and Representative Phillips voted for the bills and for the override of the Governor's veto. The Legislative Committee will continue to closely monitor potential legislative actions that could negatively impact pensions and benefits.

Membership: Mary Anne reported that, as of April 1, SUAA listed our official membership count as 726. Since that time, 2 new members joined following a coffee the committee hosted for current EIU employees and 10 new members joined following Margaret and Marsha's presentation at the retirement dinner. Two former members rejoined. It is expected that, with these additions, SUAA's records will indicate our membership to be 740! Future efforts to recruit members will continue. Thanks to the great efforts of the Membership Committee!

Scholarship: Nancy Dole reported that Allison Endsley was the recipient of the Annuitants Scholarship in April. Members were encouraged to donate to the scholarship's corpus. The balance in the fund is currently \$23,000 and it needs \$25,000 to be fully funded.

Other Business and Suggestions

Members were encouraged to consider service on the board or on committees.

Program: Kaye Dent, guest speaker from Frisse and Brewster law firm, spoke on the topic of elder law, estate planning, long-term care insurance, and disability law. Additional information is available on her website kaye@frisselaw.com.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Upcoming Chapter Meeting Dates

October 5, 2017 NWC February 22, 2018 NWC

April 27, 2018 Lifespan Center

July 12, 2018 NWC October 4, 2018 NWC