

STATE UNIVERSITIES ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION
UIUC Chapter Executive Committee
Minutes for December 10, 2025
Web site: www.suaa-ui.org
Facebook Site: <https://www.facebook.com/SUAA.UIUC/>

Executive Committee Attendees: Robert Flider, Michael Hirschi, Melanie Loots, Vera Mainz, Debora McCall, Katie Ross, Donald Uchtmann, Matthew Wilson

Other Attendees: Melinda Carr, Rose Paul.

I. Call to Order and Introductions.

Wilson called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes for November 12, 2025.

A motion to approve the minutes for November 12, 2025, was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

III. President's Update.

Wilson had some off-line discussion via email from Katie Ross (attached). There was some discussion about NIU being able to provide an niu.edu email address to retirees who signed up for NIU SUAA chapter membership. Ross also provided some information from the latest U of I System-wide Virtual Retirement Planning Conference on December 3, 2025.

Wilson noted that the Fall General meeting went well and was well-received by those attending. Ross asked if we would have a higher attendance at a different day of the week or time and asked if there was anything we could do to increase attendance. The general consensus was that we have larger meetings when the membership is concerned about something specific, as it was in the Fall 2022, when the change in the administrator for TRAIL (the Medicare Advantage plan provided by CMS for retirees who are eligible for Medicare) from United Healthcare to Aetna, and the apparent lack of an agreement between Carle Clinic and Aetna, caused many members to be worried. The Fall 2022 meeting concerned this topic and we had over 300 attend in person and as many attend via Zoom, as SUAA members state-wide were concerned with this problem.

IV. Treasurer's Report.

Loots presented the report for the activity in November 2025 and the year to date. Loots was thanked for the report. She is still working with UIUC HR regarding payment to the graphics designer's various projects. An UIUC HR CFOP account number is used to pay these invoices, but there isn't a process to get the relevant data to Loots so she can reimburse HR. Loots wrote to the State SUAA office about the dues the other chapters require.

NOTE: When purchasing anything where an invoice is sent to the UIUC-SUAA Chapter, please send to Melanie Loots: 813 W. University Avenue, Champaign, IL 61820-3921.

V. Action/Discussion Items.

- A. Spring Chapter Meeting planning. One suggestion was to ask DIA Director Josh Whitman to speak, and align it with his schedule. McCall was asked to contact his office and ask about a date in late April. It was also suggested that it might be time to invite the local legislators to the Fall general meeting or invite a US Senator or our local US Representative to speak about the changes in Medicare and how it may impact out members. It was also suggested to ask the State SUAA office give a legislative update via zoom for all chapters. Carr suggested that the Chapter sponsor a zoom meeting or general meeting to provide some resources on fraud and identity theft for members.
- B. Appoint Nominating Committee (for 2026-2029 candidates for the Executive Committee). Wilson appointed Gallagher, Loots, Ross, and Williamson to serve this year. Wilson said the committee should definitely reach out to everyone on the Executive Committee for their suggestions for candidates. Ross mentioned she has a staff member retiring in spring who might be interested.
- C. Planning for January Executive Committee Meeting. The consensus was that there would be no Executive Committee meeting in January due to the inability of many members to attend.

- D. Report on Annuitant. The Fall 2025 Annuitant was distributed only via email due to production problems. Carr had intended to send a postcard to the approximate 200 out of 1400 total chapter members who did not have an email in our records, to advise them of this problem. The postcard would include a link to the Fall 2025 Annuitant on the chapter website, and note that if they have an email, they should send it to the State SUAA office. Carr reported that she was unable to send these postcards but still wanted to make that connection. Last week she called Kathy Walbert at the State SUAA office to find out how the State SUAA office is communicating with members who don't have emails. Carr is concerned about these members not getting the information digitally. She is also concerned about these folks if we transition to a non-print Annuitant. Suggestions included sending a postcard about the changing to a digital only publication of the Annuitant or perhaps have one more print issue or hybrid in the spring. Mainz suggested that Wilson ask the Communications Committee look into this and report to the Executive Committee and this suggestion was accepted. See **attached** email summary of the charge to Communications Committee, as well as a more detailed summary of actions taken to date.
- E. Review Records Retention Guidelines. Loots, Mainz, and Williamson need to meet and evaluate the old records.
- F. SUAA-UIUC Pop-up Banner, Mainz. See **attached**. The attached banner was approved, pending Mainz making sure that the QR code is a link to the correct page. Mainz asked Wilson to ask the State SUAA office to set up redirect link from their previous JOIN page (<https://www.suaa.org/join-suaa-now>) to their current JOIN page (<https://www.suaa.org/how-you-can-help/join-today>) to bridge any of the State chapter who had links to a now non-existent page.

VI. Standing Committee Reports.

- A. Legislative Committee: Adams, Flider (Chair), Marlin, Rugg, Winkel. There was no report.
- B. Membership Committee: Carr, Loots, Pearson, Ross, Williamson (Chair). Williamson's report was accepted with thanks.
- C. Communications Committee/Newsletter/Website: Carr, Francis, Gallagher. See section V.D, above.
- D. Benefits Committee: Hirschi, Ross, Stone (Chair), Williamson. Ross described a situation that developed over the last month. Williamson had forwarded an email to Ross from a member who said they weren't going to pay SUAA dues as SUAA wasn't doing enough to fix the Medicare Advantage issues. Ross responded with a UIUC approved email that did not satisfy the member. Ross noted that SURS and CMS never mention IRMA (in place for many years) costs to retirees.
- E. Program Committee: McCall, Wilson. See section V.A, above.

VII. Ad Hoc Committee Reports.

- A. Big 10 Retirement Association Committee: Gallagher, Williamson. There was no report.
- B. Long Range Planning Committee: Gallagher, Marlin, Williamson, Wilson (Chair), Uchtmann. There was no report.

VIII. New Business.

Wilson received an email from Soady noting that the June 25-26, 2026, annual meeting State SUAA will hold on the UIUC campus at the I-Hotel. Soady asked whether we (the local SUAA chapter) would be interested in having a host committee. Wilson was unsure of what they want us to do. Uchtmann thought it would be a good idea as we could showcase the UIUC as the premier research university in the state of Illinois. The consensus was to have Wilson ask Soady for a better idea of what would be involved.

IX. Adjournment and Next Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20pm. The next scheduled meeting will be at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026.

IMPORTANT DATES

- A. Executive Committee Meetings, 2026: Feb 11, Mar 11, Apr 8, May 13, Jun 10, Jul 8 (tentative)
- B. State Conference and Business Meeting: June 25-26, 2026, Champaign, Illinois
- C. Big Ten Retiree Association Meeting: July 21-24, 2026.

Mainz, Vera V

From: Ross, Katie <katross@uillinois.edu>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 6:01 PM
To: Saaa Leadership
Subject: Update on some SUAA items of interest

Good evening,

I wanted to share a few bits of info from this week, and for possible discussion at our upcoming meeting.

We held our U of I System-wide Virtual Retirement Planning Conference on Wednesday this week. Over 650 employees registered, but actual attendance was a bit lower. We had around 250 employees attend the SURS Tier 1 and SURS Healthcare Transition sessions. The SUAA session presented by Bryan Soady was well attended with 113 employees present.

By rather inconvenient coincidence, SUAA was doing an upgrade of their website on the same day as our Virtual Retirement Planning Conference. So, even though Bryan had a good audience, he had to tell people they couldn't join SUAA that same day, since the website was down. We did gain 2 new Facebook followers on the SUAA-UIUC page.

The updated [SUAA.org](https://www.suaa.org) website came back online today, and it does look very nice. I noticed that the links to join SUAA, donate to the Legal Fund, etc, are different. The old links do not seem to be redirected. I wonder if the State SUAA would be willing to put up redirects if that causes chapters like ours any problems? For example, it worries me that the links may now be broken from our chapter website, our business cards may have the wrong link, our QR code needs to be updated, and so forth.

On a separate note, I was talking with my counterpart at Northern Illinois University, and learned some helpful info about the NIU SUAA chapter. Apologies if you are already aware of this info, but it was new to me. She told me that NIU makes membership in their SUAA chapter a requirement in order to obtain/maintain an email address as a retiree from NIU. This would explain why NIU's chapter membership is higher than ours considering the size difference of our institutions. NIU also employs an administrative staff person who assists with the SUAA chapter, and that individual works on the chapter website that is hosted on NIU's website.

I also asked my colleague what NIU does to recruit active employees as members, and she said, "*Years ago, our local chapter did a big push to recruit active employees. It was successful at the time, but no large scale activities have taken place for years. I am sure our active number have decreased. I would say now we push for those retiring or considering retiring, but haven't done anything with active employees in awhile.*" She also put me in touch with Chris Doe, who is the aforementioned staffer for their SUAA chapter, if we have any other questions we want to ask.

Looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday, I should be in-person at the library this month.

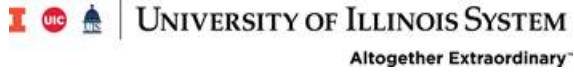
Best, Katie

Katie Ross, Ed.M., CEBS, PHR, SHRM-CP
Senior Assistant Vice President

System Human Resource Services | University of Illinois System

katross@uillinois.edu | 217.244.7979

<http://hr.uillinois.edu/>



Under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), any written communication to or from University employees regarding University business is a public record and may be subject to public disclosure.

Mainz, Vera V

From: Melinda Carr <carrmr2007@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, February 6, 2026 10:33 AM
To: Williamson, H F Jr; Gallagher, Tanya Montaleone
Cc: Matt Wilson; Mainz, Vera V
Subject: Follow up from December 10, 2025, EC Request to Review Print or Hybrid Communications Plan

Good morning,

I am following up from the December Executive Committee meeting as directed by the President and Executive Committee. Tanya and Bettina have been listed as part of the Communications Committee/Newsletter/Website (except for Bill Williamson, who I contacted because he said he would be willing to help with postcards). I have since contacted him in his role as chair of the Membership Committee. I understand from talking to Bill that Bettina is not available currently due to illness. It's just us 3, but other members are doing great work to keep the Website and Facebook page updated!

A Zoom meeting has been set for this afternoon, February 6@2:00 p.m. to discuss a tentative plan for the Executive Committee to review/approve on February 11. FYI: I am copying Matt and Vera to update them in preparation for the February 11 Executive Committee agenda. You will receive a tentative draft by Monday, February 9 or Tuesday noon at the latest. (If either of you would like to attend the meeting today, please let me know and I'll send you the Zoom link).

One important task before us is a plan for the 2026 Spring Annuitant Newsletter and closure for the Fall 2025 Annuitant. The last issue (Fall 2025) was distributed through email due to critical delays in the production and publishing process.

According to the list I received from Kathy Walbert, 262 members do not have email addresses. Therefore, they did not receive a copy of the newsletter. The SUAA UIUC Executive Committee voted to send a postcard to those members who did not receive an email. I proposed a different plan with email and follow-up with the printed newsletter, but that was not approved. *In the November 12, 2025, minutes: "Gallagher proposed that the communications committee send a postcard to those 200 members without an email, include a link to the chapter website, and note that if they have an email, they should send it to the State SUAA office. This motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed. Williamson is one of four executive committee members who has access to the membership list and volunteered to help with this mailing." The December 10, 2025, minutes read: "Report on Annuitant. Carr had intended to send a postcard to the approximate 200 out of 1400 total chapter members who did not have an email in our records. The postcard would include a link to the chapter website, and note that if they have an email, they should send it to the State SUAA office. Carr reported that she did not get to do the postcards. She also suggested that the Chapter needs to have a zoom meeting or general meeting to provide some resources on fraud and identity theft for members. Last week she called Kathy Walbert at the State SUAA office and Carr wants to find out what the State SUAA office is communicating with members who don't have emails. Carr is concerned about these members not getting the information digitally. She is also concerned about these folks if we transition to a non-print Annuitant. Suggestions included sending a postcard about the changing to a digital only publication of the Annuitant or perhaps have one more print issue or hybrid in the spring. Mainz suggested that Wilson ask the Communications Committee look into this and report to the Executive Committee and this suggestion was accepted. It was also noted that at the Spring meeting we need to change the bylaws."*

NOTE: Here is what the current bylaws state pertinent to the annual meeting (my understanding is this applies to the Spring chapter meeting and Annuitant mailings). This information was not presented before the Executive Committee voted in November, so this will help to revisit their decision and update bylaws as appropriate: **ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** 4.2. Each year prior to the Annual Meeting the President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a Nominating Committee, which then shall select candidates for the Executive Committee positions being vacated. The slate of candidates shall be drawn with full consideration of the need for

active participation on the Executive Committee and for comprehensive consideration of members' interests. After approval of the Executive Committee, the names of these nominees shall be published no later than 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations shall be requested from the floor. Such nominations require the consent of the nominees. All nominees must be Chapter Members. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting. Newly elected Executive Committee members shall assume their duties on July 1 following their election. [NOTE: I don't see a deadline associated with the Fall Annuitant. In past practice, notice has been given before chapter meetings.] Other bylaws related to electronic meetings and communications: **ARTICLE IX. ELECTRONIC MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS.** 9.1. Meetings of the Chapter, the Executive Committee and all other Committees shall be authorized to be held by telephone conference or through other electronic communications media so long as all the members can simultaneously hear each other and participate during the meeting. All such meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules adopted by the Executive Committee. 9.2. All communication required in these bylaws, including meeting notices, may be sent electronically.

Of course, my mind did not process all the work required when I agreed to take care of sending postcards! I just wanted to make sure the members received the information.

After the meeting, I had planned to proceed with that recommendation in consultation with the state office and Kathy Walbert, Membership Director. My goal was to confirm how they were corresponding with members with no emails. I called Kathy in November and left a message and since then I have been busy with other tasks. I called again in December and spoke to Morgan Puckett who sent an email to Kathy Walbert (Kathy was about to leave for vacation). Finally connected with Kathy on Jan. 22 and she confirmed some members are receiving printed renewals. I am committed to doing what I can to resolve this issue including communicating with those who didn't receive the Fall 2025 newsletter and proposing a plan for the Spring Newsletter and beyond in accordance with the bylaws. Thank you.

Melinda Carr
217-714-2435

State Universities Annuitant Association



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