

**STATE UNIVERSITIES ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION**  
**UIUC Chapter Executive Committee**  
**Minutes for March 11, 2026**  
**Web site: [www.suaa-ui.org](http://www.suaa-ui.org)**  
**Facebook Site: <https://www.facebook.com/SUAA.UIUC/>**

**Executive Committee Attendees:** Melinda Carr, Tanya Gallagher, Michael Hirschi, Melanie Loots, Vera Mainz, Debora McCall, Rose Paul, Megan Pearson, Katie Ross, Donald Uchtmann, H. F. Williamson, Matthew Wilson

**Visitor:** Chris Harris

**I. Call to Order and Introductions.**

Wilson called the meeting to order at 1:37 pm. Wilson introduced visitor Chris Harris.

**II. Approval of Minutes for February 11, 2026.**

A motion to approve the minutes for February 11, 2026, was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

**III. President's Update.**

Wilson reported that he had a short conversation with Bryan Soady, the State SUAA office, and Betty Zeedyk from the Parkland SUAA chapter, to discuss venues for receptions during the upcoming State Conference and Business Meeting, June 25-26, 2026. They discussed using the Alice Campbell Alumni Center for a Thursday reception or hosting the reception at Riggs on High Cross. There might be an event (possibly a meeting and reception) on Wednesday night prior to the start of the conference for Foundation Board members and SUAA Board members. Gallagher noted that the reception site and the conference might be a way to showcase the campus and bring chapter members back to the campus.

**IV. Treasurer's Report.**

Loots presented the report for the activity in February 2026 and the year to date. She continues to receive dues payments promptly. She has made payments to Illinois Human Resources (IHR) for everything we owe them for previous graphics work and other expenses associated with previous general meetings. These payments total \$1300 and the checks have not yet been cashed. Loots will wait another month to see what she can do to get IHR to cash these checks. The reports to State Office are completed. She has also sent the Treasurer's Report to Carr for the Spring 2026 Annuitant. Loots was thanked for the report.

*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. Planning for Annual Meeting**

1. Sunday, April 19th at the I-Hotel, Quad Room, 2:30 pm Reception / 3:00 pm Program
2. Program: Kam Cox, UIUC Associate Athletic Director for Business Operations
3. Election of the 2026-2029 Candidates for the Executive Committee
4. Mainz brought the new banner and gave it to McCall for use at the Annual meeting.

**B. Publicity for Annual Meeting**

1. Spring *Annuitant* – Carr is looking for a legislative summary from Flider. Mainz gave an update on postcards sent to chapter members with no known email address. The message on the postcard notes that the Annuitant will now be published only digitally, and asked the members to send Mainz their email address. The postcards were sent out March 9, 2026.
2. State SUAA Website – McCall will ask that they post on the State website calendar.
3. EWeek – deadlines are Friday at noon and it comes out on Sundays. Williamson will prepare an entry to appear in the April 12<sup>th</sup> EWeek.

- C. Status of Spring *Annuitant*** – Carr asked Mainz if the “Important Sources of Information about your Pension and Benefits” page could be posted on the website since the content rarely changes. Mainz thought it possible and will report back. Carr noted that there was a problem with the fall general meeting

summary on website; Mainz will take care of the problem. Carr will ask Thomas Martin at State SUAA to get the email addresses to send out the *Annuitant*. There was a discussion as to whether Carr would pursue setting up the new template for the *Annuitant* or work with the graphic designer to do this. The consensus was that if Carr was willing to do the set up, she has our trust.

- D. Planning for Annual State Conference and Business Meeting: June 25-26, 2026, Champaign, Illinois. This was covered in section III. This was covered in the President's Report.
- E. Mainz moved to strike from the minutes for the December 2025 meeting of the Executive Committee the sentence "It was noted that at the Spring meeting we need to change the Bylaws." since no amendments to the Bylaws have been suggested. Her motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## VI. Standing Committee Reports.

- A. Legislative Committee: Adams, Flider (Chair), Marlin, Rugg, Schoell, Winkel. See **attached** summary from the State SUAA office. Gallagher noted that there is an on-going concern about Aetna, so the State SUAA office needs to be informed of issues such as a provided service for getting members to medical appointments not working.
- B. Membership Committee: Carr, Loots, Pearson, Ross, Williamson (Chair). Williamson provided the Chapter membership report for February during which we lost slightly more members (nine) than usual. He also looked at the monthly reports for the last 20 years to determine when we had significant monthly membership gains. Not surprisingly, they were associated with events which concerned annuitants such as the threats to medical choices in the fall of 2022 or efforts such as the formerly live Retirement Expos or mailings from the staff at the State Office.
- C. Communications Committee/Newsletter/Website: Carr, Francis, Gallagher. See section V(C), above.
- D. Benefits Committee: Hirschi, Ross, Stone (Chair), Williamson. Williamson noted in his report that about half of Big Ten Universities have access to licensed software, see **attached** handout. UIUC doesn't have this benefit unless a department or unit pays for it. Emeritus faculty can request this coverage but it isn't a given. College of Medicine gives faculty a 0% appointment to get access. Harris noted that a document stating clearly what benefits an employee (faculty, AP, or civil service staff) would retain or and what one loses when going emeritus or retiring would be very helpful. The Faculty Benefits (FB) Committee were talking about some of these items and some gets taken care of by the *ex officio* members. Ross has been speaking to Tech Services about this issue. She noted that retirees change from A5 to A1 status, and that while you can keep some software it isn't resident on your computer anymore but via a web based client. These explanations need to be expanded. Loots noted that the cloud version of MS software is not equivalent to that resident on a PC or Mac.
- E. Program Committee: McCall, Wilson. See Sections V(A) and V(B), above.

## VII. Ad Hoc Committee Reports.

- A. Big 10 Retirement Association Committee: Gallagher, Williamson. Williamson shared a survey from the Big 10 Retirement Association, see section VI (D), above. He hopes that either he or Gallagher will mention a long-term goal or priority to pursue for SUAA-UIUC. Gallagher noted that the Parkland Chapter has social functions that are monthly; it might be useful to discuss providing similar opportunities for our members. Parkland has many opportunities for social interaction for their members. Mainz asked Gallagher to ask her Parkland contact for a webpage for their group. Mainz noted that they do have a facebook page but don't refer to SUAA on that facebook page. Williamson noted that we could revisit what campus might want from SUAA, such as tutoring and letting members know about opportunities for research.
- B. Long Range Planning Committee: Gallagher, Marlin, Williamson, Wilson (Chair), Uchtmann. No report.

## VIII. New Business.

No new business.

## IX. Adjournment and Next Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:34 pm. The next scheduled meeting will be at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, April 8, 2026.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

- A. Executive Committee Meetings, 2026: Apr 8, May 13, Jun 10, Jul 8 (tentative), Aug 12, Sept 9, Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 9
- B. Annual Chapter Meeting: April 19, 2026, I-Hotel, Champaign Illinois
- C. State Conference and Business Meeting: June 25-26, 2026, Champaign, Illinois
- D. Big Ten Retiree Association Meeting: July 21-24, 2026, Minneapolis, Minnesota

## UIUC Legislative Summary 3/11/2026

As of the date of this report, significant events continue to occur at the Federal level that may have long-term implications for our National and State economies. In February, Governor Pritzker published the FY27 State Budget proposal. The 639-page document highlights and emphasizes the status of the State Pension System funding ratios and the continuation of responsible funding plans to fulfill both current and long-term actuarial financial obligations. Governor Pritzker also has adopted a 100% long-term actuarial Funding Ratio by 2048, versus the 90% target outlined for 2045 in existing statutes.

During the past year, Bryan Soady has continued to enhance and emphasize our State Governmental Relations team in Springfield and I want to acknowledge the extent of coverage and engagement that our Springfield Office is now capable of undertaking in the State Governmental Relations context. The 2026 Illinois Legislative Calander has scheduled only 50 Session Days, consistent with Election Year schedule trends. Accordingly, we do not anticipate significant Legislative initiatives in relation to State Pension benefits. Nor do we anticipate potential action to establish a SURS DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Plan). A DROP program provides options for participants to implement their retirement options and elect to continue working for a specified time period (typically 5-years or less) while the retirement benefits are deposited into a holding account distributed as of the future retirement date. Rep. Katie Stuart, working with SUAA, introduced a DROP plan bill, HB 2920 in 2025.

Likewise, Rep. Stephanie Kifowit, working with SUAA, introduced a bill this year, HB 5134, to expand SURS mailings to include email mailings for associations like SUAA. Sen. Robert Martwick, working with SUAA, introduced SB 3413 this year, which would create the Healthcare Ombudsperson(s) role at the IL Department of Central Management Services.

Tier II reform continues to be emphasized in SUAA's Legislative Platform and proprieties. However, we do not anticipate significant Legislative Tier II initiatives during the 2026 Session, just as we do not expect significant movement on HB 2920, HB 5134, nor SB 3413 during the election year. A Third-District Appellate Court decision was published on March 9, that declined to require Tier II amendments for the Judges Retirement System (JRS) and, by extension, to the General Assembly Retirement System (GARS).

Finally, with the Illinois Primary Election Day scheduled for March 17, SUAA will continue to monitor the Primary results, and we encourage our members to support candidates committed to State Pension benefit integrity and funding.

**INFORMATION FROM BIG 10 RETIREES ASSOCIATION SPREADSHEET**  
**Retiree access to University Licensed Software**

<b>Membership Questions</b>	<b>California (UCLA)</b>	<b>ILLINOIS</b>	<b>INDIANA</b>	<b>IOWA</b>	<b>MARYLAND</b>	<b>MICH</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>MINN</b>
<b>Access to Univ. licensed software (Yes/No) Is it free (F) or Purchased (P)</b>	Free - everything students have. Emeriti also have software access, not retirees	No	No	Yes, Free	Yes, mostly free	Yes	No	Yes, and free

<b>Membership Questions</b>	<b>NEB</b>	<b>NU</b>	<b>OSU</b>	<b>PSU</b>	<b>PURDUE</b>	<b>RUTGERS</b>	<b>Southern Cal (USC)</b>	<b>WASH</b>	<b>WISC</b>
<b>Access to Univ. licensed software (Yes/No) Is it free (F) or Purchased (P)</b>	Yes and free	Yes	Only emeriti faculty	No	No	---	Yes	Yes, Free	No (Institution license no longer allows)