



## **MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Governmental Affairs Committee  
of the Board of Trustees of the  
State Universities Retirement System  
1:30 p.m., Friday, January 15, 2010  
The Northern Trust  
50 South LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60603**

The following Trustees were present: Dr. Marva Williams, Chair; Dr. John Engstrom, Dr. J. Fred Giertz (via teleconference), Ms. Carrie Hightman, Mr. Antonio Vasquez, and Mr. Mitchell Vogel.

Others present were: Ms. Judith A. Parker, Interim Executive Director; Mr. Kelly A. Jenkins, General Counsel; Ms. Angela Lieb, Director of Member Services; Ms. Stacy Smith, Executive Assistant; Mr. Jake Baggott, SURSMAC; Ms. Linda Baker, GII of Illinois; Mr. Steve Zahn, Governmental Consulting Solutions; Mr. Steve Morrill, Morrill & Associates; and Dr. Alice Palmer

Trustee Marva Williams called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Roll call attendance was taken. Trustee Beaulieu, absent; Trustee Berns, absent; Trustee Cassidy, absent; Trustee Engstrom, present; Trustee Giertz, present (via teleconference); Trustee Hightman, present; Trustee Miller, absent; Trustee Rogers, absent; Trustee Vasquez, present; Trustee Vogel, present; Trustee Williams, present.

Trustee Giertz was unable to physically attend the meeting due to employment reasons, and his request to participate by teleconference was granted by the Committee members physically present.

Trustee Williams indicated that she would like to move agenda item four to the beginning of the meeting.

### **PLANS FOR 2010 LEGISLATIVE OUTREACH**

Ms. Judith Parker noted that the legislative outreach event is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10, 2010. Ms. Parker summarized the Board's past activities. The Committee discussed possible activities for the annual event which will be co-hosted by the State

Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA). The Committee also discussed the value partnering with other stakeholder groups, such as the Higher Education Legislative Coalition (HELIC).

Ms. Parker mentioned that the evening event would be geared towards a targeted audience to include the legislative leaders and certain members of the pension committees. Dr. Alice Palmer suggested including key staffers. Mr. Steve Zahn recommended focusing on a larger group from the downstate area. Trustee Williams discussed how to target the legislature and how to choose particular agenda items. The Board discussed possible themes, which included a “toast” date (the date that SURS’ last dollar would be spent), funding, second tier proposals, investing in Illinois people, and the connections between students and those that serve the students. Mr. Jenkins suggested focusing on investing in Illinois and on the amount of dollars that are paid back to citizens of Illinois.

Trustee Williams summarized the Committee’s intent to participate in HELC’s event and also a separate event hosted by SURS/SUAA. The Committee discussed distributing informational materials and decided to update the legislative district maps and possibly play a DVD that was created after the 2008 event. Dr. Palmer indicated that the DVD played at the 2007 event was very well received. Mr. Morrill suggested providing research and charts to show the legislature the costs of borrowing money with an 8% interest rate.

Ms. Parker and Staff will continue working on the details of the event, and an invitation will be drafted. Mr. Morrill, Mr. Zahn, and Ms. Baker agreed to help distribute the invitation and promote attendance.

### **REVIEW 2010 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM/ISSUE POSITIONS**

Trustee Williams presented the Legislative Platform. Ms. Parker reminded the Committee that the legislative principles and legislative proposals were approved at the December meeting. At that meeting, the Committee elected not to approve the issue positions until more information was provided.

Ms. Parker noted that staff conducted research regarding the current issue positions and drafted a document for the Board’s review, which is incorporated as a part of these Minutes as [Exhibit 1](#). The issue positions originated from a number of sources which include SUAA, SURSMAC, AAC, past proposed legislation and past members of the Board. Many issue positions have been on the platform since 1998 and none have been added since 2004. Staff provided the history as to each issue position.

Trustee Hightman and Trustee Vogel voiced a preference of a more succinct platform. After discussion, Trustee Williams summarized noting that the Legislative Platform would include a preamble summarizing Board’s mission followed by the legislative principles ending with specific proposals for 2010. Should questions arise regarding

SURS position on a matter (for example, former issue positions); staff will contact the Board for guidance.

Mr. Zahn noted that second-tier benefit proposals will be introduced this session. The discussion followed regarding whether the Board should take a position on second-tier legislation. Mr. Zahn is to prepare a summary for the next Board meeting for further discussion.

**LONG TERM STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FOR**  
**INCREASED PENSION PAYMENTS**

Dr. Palmer suggested the SUAA meet with the editorial boards of various newspapers to narrate the “three legs of the stool” that maintain working peoples’ stability. She further suggested conducting a study applying this principle to SURS’ participants and showing the detrimental effect of taking away one leg of the stool. Dr. Palmer also proposed writing a piece of legislation that requires an annual legislative report to reflect where the state borrows the money and the consequences of the same to the annuitants and to the state. Thirdly, Dr. Palmer suggested finding a champion representative for SURS system and its participants. Lastly, she suggested a public education session for the annuitants. This is an election year which could make these steps more impressive.

Trustee Williams paralleled Dr. Palmer’s suggestion in developing a campaign to increase state funding, to identify other partners SURS can team with, and to identify strategies, goals and communications of the Board. The Committee discussed these possibilities and the lack of resources. Mr. Zahn suggested including other retirement systems such as the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) for more effectiveness. Trustee Williams agreed with identifying strategic partners and discussing similar strategic interests with them.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Trustee Giertz moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded and it carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Judith A. Parker  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

JAP:ssr