

Brief minutes of the June 22, 2015 meeting of the SIUE Chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA)

The meeting began at 11:30 a.m. with a light lunch and informal conversation.

John Jennetten, SIUE SUAA president, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and introduced Chancellor Julie Furst-Bowe, who welcomed the group to the campus. Her remarks included recognizing the two speakers for the day, State Representative Dwight Kay and SUAA Executive Director, Linda Brookhart. She referred to a list of several recent SIUE accomplishments. For example, reaccreditation of the university, receipt of the Excellence in Diversity Award, and increased enrollment in Spring 2015 over the enrollment in 2014.

John Jennetten recognized the new retirees who were present and the chapter board members. He reminded those in attendance that SUAA is their advocacy organization. He introduced the speakers, State Representative Dwight Kay and SUAA Executive Director, Linda Brookhart.

Dwight Kay congratulated Chancellor Furst-Bowe on her excellent leadership and saluted Linda Brookhart who represents us in Springfield. He announced he would speak on three topics: pensions, retiree health benefits, and financing for higher education. With regard to pensions, he believes the state has a contract with employees and retirees. He inquired if those present had received a refund from the state for overpaid health benefits. Those present nodded affirmatively. He said the financing for higher education will see a five percent cut across the board. He responded to question and comments from the floor.

Linda Brookhart mentioned that SURS has a new director, Bryan Lewis, and she asked if anyone has met him. She said the Illinois budget recommendations can be seen on the Illinois Channel. She said Illinois is losing students to surrounding states because of high costs for higher education. She recommended the legislators should address why higher education is so expensive in Illinois. She appealed for contribution to the legal fund. She stated 49% of the membership has contributed. Of the 488 members of the SIUE group, 188 have made a contribution.

David Ault, SIUE SUAA treasurer, reported that as of May 21, 2015 the organization had a balance of \$8,057.76.

John Jennetten adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.