President Jim Lockard called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Jim Lockard, Joe Grush, Nancy Kasinski, Pat Vary, Sara Clayton, Dan Wunsch, Dave Mason, Margaret Phillips, Lee Ann Henry, Alan Voelker, Steven Johnson, Elaine Spencer, Deborah Haliczer, John Engstrom

Approval of the Agenda: Jim Lockard passed out an agenda which was approved.

Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the January 14, 2015, Board meeting were approved unanimously.

President’s Remarks: A couple of things are significant. At the April 14, SPS awards meeting NIUAA was recognized for Partnership and Collaboration with the University. Confirmation was received that President Baker will be speaking at the Annual Meeting and will provide for dinner. Also, it was announced that we will get most of our money back from insurance payments. The judge said that the lawyers submitted unreasonable rates and hours, but they did do work that was essential for the case, so were awarded what he felt was a reasonable amount, a little under 2%.

Treasurer’s Report: Pam Rosenberg was not present at the meeting. Jim reviewed the report that was received, but there were questions about the report. Jim will clarify and review the financial situation with Pam. There is a need to explore the money from the CDs.

SURS Board and SUAA Foundation Reports: John Engstrom passed out summary reports to the attendees. He noted that Brian Lewis became the new Executive Director of SURS on April 6. There is currently an election occurring for a trustee position. The two candidates, Fred Giertz and Mitch Vogel are well qualified, although they have different views on things so everyone should review. (See report) There is one active annuitant position available due to a recent resignation. The position will be filled through an election by the remaining Trustees. John was recently elected as Treasurer for SURS and will be a member of the three person Executive Committee. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the year ended June 30, 2014 has been issued and is posted to the SURS website.

The SUAA Foundation has been taking time to get organized and readying for their first audit. They are now in a position to start actively doing things through the Survivor Assistance Program and the Emergency Assistance Fund We will later discuss what NIUAA wants to do regarding the Survivor Assistance Programs.

Benefits: Sherie Spear was not present. Jim reported she has been involved with the committee to deal with email migration for retirees as well as library access. The computer transition has been “bumpy,” and priority is on those on campus. Retirees will come later when there is time. Groupwise has to disappear on July 1, so it is hoped that retirees will be moved before that time. At that time, there will be support for us in the transition. Sherie and Jim met with the Dean of the libraries, Patrick Dawson, and TJ Lusher, Associate Dean for Technology Initiatives and Support Services. They made it clear that the library serves all of NIU, including retirees and they will support full access. There is a glitch at the library when a person moves from “retiree” and then comes back to work. A person cannot move back to “retiree” status. There are some library benefits that are affected by this. This can be solved by contacting TJ Lusher at the library and she will manually fix it.

Legislative: Jim Lockard stated that not a lot has happened recently. It is difficult to predict what will happen with a new governor. Joe Sosnowski has again brought up changing the constitution.
SUAAction: Alan Voelker reported that they have started to send out the solicitation letters. They are emphasizing attendance at Fund Raisers. The D2 report will be out soon (report of how they have raised and spent money). It includes the names of all who contributed $200 or more.

Membership: Pat Vary (Cathy Cradduck was not present) reported that there is some discrepancy on numbers from February report (1895 members). Twelve members had died and there were eight new members. There was increased interest from people at the Wellness Fair. Twelve signed up at the fair and they also handed out many applications. Pat’s goal is to get above 1900 this year. Margaret said that she had a difficult time convincing people from Building Services and Physical Plant about the need to join. Lee Ann Henry reported some difficulties reaching people regarding the dues increase.

Public Relations/Events: Steven Johnson announced that the next coffee hour will be at Oak Crest on May 15th. He handed out a list of upcoming trips.

Communications: Jerry Meyer was not present. May Annuitant Newsletter articles due now!

SUAA Executive Committee: Joe Grush reported that there are 99 shell bills dealing with pensions in the Legislature. There has been a large push from legislators about removing the benefit of tuition waivers for current employees. It has been argued that it is a prime recruitment and retention item for the university. A SUAA attorney has suggested that they provide a cohesive platform about what SUAA would support regarding pension changes. There is a significant movement to support the taxing of all pensions. Significant issues include where to draw the line for protection of taxes, should it be graduated tax (would need a constitutional amendment), should exemptions only occur when you reach 65, etc.? Joe gave some of his opinions regarding some of the stated conditions he felt should occur. He also shared two different models that have been presented from citizen tax payer groups.

Old Business

Report of the Nominating Committee: Joe Grush stated there is a change as of yesterday. Pam Rosenberg is resigning, so Joe has approached Betsy Hull to be recommended for Treasurer. There was a motion to endorse the slate of candidates. It was seconded and there was unanimous acceptance. There was a motion and acceptance to see if Pam would like to resign now and have Betsy replace her.

Report of the Audit Committee: An audit of the financial records will be done in the future.

Awards Committee: We have not set up an awards committee this year and it is not required that we have an award every year.

Holiday Party: There was a motion and vote that Faranda’s will be approached again, as the location for the 2015 Holiday Party.

Annual ($500) memorial contribution to SUAA Foundation: Motions were made and a vote was taken with unanimous acceptance to send the contribution to SUAA Foundation.

SUAA legal fund solicitation: There is very little money remaining in the fund and there will probably need to be another solicitation for funds. The fight is not over. At this time, there is a major need to fight for the benefits of those that are still working.
New Business

NIUAA Annual Meeting:  Wednesday, June 3, Sandburg Auditorium, Holmes Student Center, 3PM
   Agenda will be sent out, and will include time allocation for President Baker (30 minutes)

SUAA Annual Meeting:  Will be held June 16 & 17 in Springfield.  Six delegates from NIU are needed.  All Board
   Members should consider their involvement in this meeting.  If you are interested in going and know you are
   free, send Joe Grush an email.  Your expenses are reimbursed.  They are proposing to formalize items regarding
   the qualifications of delegates.  A person should probably consider doing it for a few years at a time.

NIU spring honor reception for all retirees:  This is a new reception being proposed by Mollie Montgomery.
   This will not happen this year, so we will delay this to a future meeting.

Debbie Halczer:  There is no longer anyone on campus that advises about retirement.  Debbie will be having
   four Brown Bag discussions regarding retirement.  NIUAA is collaborating with Debbie.  Debbie was looking for a
   female volunteer to help with “Career Planning for Retirement” and Pat Vary volunteered.  If anyone is
   interested in assisting, contact Debbie.  The program was approved by the Board.

SUAA Bylaws revision:  This situation has evolved since last year where the revision was not approved.  A new
   committee was appointed, but opponents of the new version have been appointed to the committee.  Some
   objections were listened to and were contained in the new revision proposal.  First they sent out some Guiding
   Principles used for developing the new Bylaws.  This is a major rewrite.  Jim shared his opinions and others
   added to the discussion.  Jim feels the bottom line in the revisions is differing perceptions of how SUAA
   operates.  A group from the northern part of the state sees it as a member driven group.  Another group feels it
   should be turned over to the Executive Director.  It is difficult to separate that from the feelings about the
   current Director. There has been a lot of energy directed to this and people are tired of it.

   Other issues with the proposal were discussed briefly.  It was felt that it does not make sense to combine the
   offices of secretary and treasurer into one position.  There was some discussion that the secretary could be a
   paid member of the office.  The treasurer’s part is not well defined.  Overseeing the monies has been lacking,
   possibly contributing to the financial problems of SUAA.  Joe added that they are different jobs and need
   different skill sets.  Second, the SUAA Directors accepted John Engstrom’s amendment regarding audit standards
   last fall, but the new committee failed to include them in the re-write.

   Joe had to leave and wanted to comment that the amount that the Executive Director can spend on his/her own
   is currently $50,000 dollars.  That is 10% of the budget.  Joe will propose that it should be changed to 3% and
   anything over that should be sent to the Executive Committee for Approval.  Second, a large note of contention
   is the way to recall an officer.  If a person is elected by a majority, the percentage needed to recall
   in this proposal is too small.  As it is written, officers can be recalled without cause.  Jim also commented that nothing
   is written as to how the Executive Director could be terminated.

   Other issues include:  It has been rewritten to stifle any comments or nominations to be made from the floor;
   The requirements to serve as an officer are very complex: The revision puts schools into regions that are
   requiring two directors for each region, one from CC and one from University. (This is a problem because many
   community colleges aren’t very active.)

   Pat Vary has asked how to address this.  Jim says there are several meetings scheduled.  Jim will be attending on
   the Monday, April 27 at UIC.  Allen will also be attending and others are encouraged to attend if interested.  Let
   Jim know if you would like to attend.
The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Kasinski, Secretary

[Tentative dates for 2015-2016 Board Meetings: TBA, traditionally July; Oct; Jan; April; all @ 10 a.m., Human Resources Building, room 178] *(need to schedule with HR)*