

2025-2026 CIVIL SERVICE COUNCIL
Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Student Services Building Room 307
1:00 PM

I. Call to Order

The February meeting was called to order by President Elizabeth Cheek.

II. Roll Call of Membership

Present: Thomas Becker, Elizabeth Cheek, Odessa Colombo, Mickel Cordes, Ann Coward, Liz Franklin, Cyndy Green, Amelia Ketzle, Kristen Matthews, Diane McIntyre, Jason Phillips, Rick Pierson, Terry Richardson, Marianne Schoonover, Jamie Schrader, Anthony Travelstead, and Christopher Vick.

Absent: Dina Timmons

Guests: Rebecca Dycus, Andy Hawkins, Melissa Laake, Mark Owens, Tiffany Vicente, and Nick Wortman.

III. Guest Speaker: Mark Owens, Director of Facilities and Energy Management

Several major Capital Development Board (CDB) projects are progressing, supported by new quarterly coordination meetings that have helped secure additional funding and advance long-delayed efforts. The Gower Translational Research Center is receiving significant electrical and infrastructure upgrades, with an added \$4 million to complete unfinished areas, and bidding is expected this summer. The Communications Building renovation—one of the largest current projects—is nearing bid, with construction anticipated to begin late summer or fall. The project features extensive renovations, a major addition, and a multi-year construction zone on its west side. A new chiller plant will be built west of Communications, funded in part by \$14 million restored to deferred maintenance, while a related \$7 million electrical feeder project will extend newly expanded Ameren power capacity across campus. Additional CDB initiatives include steam tunnel and sewer line repairs, as well as planning for a new central chiller plant near Neckers. C. Vick asked about the greenhouse. Although the greenhouse remains unfunded, it continues to be the institution's top RAMP priority and is raised at every meeting. Other campus updates include steady progress on the Tedrick Welcome Center, expected to open in May or June; construction of the Touch of Nature wildlife habitat building; new EV charging stations installed through an EPA grant; and multiple roof replacements following last year's storm damage. Recent severe weather also caused roof issues at the library and a few cold-weather-related pipe breaks in buildings like Altgeld and Neckers, which are being addressed. Additionally, the university is preparing to bring a major solar energy project to the Board for approval, which could enhance campus energy resilience and reduce utility costs. The proposal also includes accelerating LED lighting retrofits across campus by contracting the work externally, helping phase out outdated, energy-intensive fixtures. J. Schrader asked if any student housing projects are on the agenda. M. Owens stated there's always a housing project coming up. I know they have been doing a lot of roofs and Evergreen Terrace got siding. Projects are prioritized by housing. There are no new housing projects for this summer.

IV. Human Resources – *Nicholas Wortman, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources*

(A PowerPoint presentation was shared.) The university has implemented a new electronic system for desk audit/temporary upgrades, which is functioning well overall despite normal early-stage bugs. The system now provides better tracking, date stamping, and more efficient request routing, though users still need to manually enter the correct supervisors and approvers due to limited automation. Approvals run through Microsoft Teams, which has caused some minor hiccups but continues to improve. The onboarding module in NeoEd is now live, providing the university with a fully electronic portal and checklist for new hires; however, staff still must manually enter some data into AIS until further automation is completed. The HR team is also finalizing reviews for about 150 Compensation 2030 reconsideration requests, addressing both individual concerns and broader classification issues. Employees affected by pay grade or classification adjustments will receive communication by the end

of next week, and any resulting pay increases will be retroactive to the original effective date (Oct. 1, 2025). HR emphasized that all changes will be handled carefully and thoroughly, and that no employee's pay will be reduced. L. Franklin asked for clarification about the reconsideration – it would go across the board for everyone, not just to those who had a rebuttal, correct? N. Wortman stated yes. If someone submitted a reconsideration form and a change was made, then the change will be communicated to everyone in that title. D. McIntyre wanted to verify that once an employee made comments in the JAQ, a supervisor could not edit those but could add comments. N. Wortman confirmed. Could a director or administrator within the department edit that above a supervisor? N. Wortman stated, "No." Then there should be no altered communication in the request. N. Wortman stated, "Nope." W-2 forms have been released, with paper copies mailed last Friday for those who prefer physical documents, though delivery may take a bit due to postal processing. A. Coward stated there was an error message when she tried to get her W2 online, but was told to use a different browser and that worked. D. McIntyre shared that her federal taxes have decreased. She was encouraged to reach out to a tax advisor. A W4 was recommended. In labor relations updates, the ACSE's contract has been ratified and is now circulating for signatures, and the FOP Sergeants' agreement has also been finalized and will be signed soon. LiUNA/AP completed signatures last week, while negotiations for the library remain ongoing. Kelly Bird, Director of Labor and Employee Relations, will be meeting with supervisors and departments to explain contract changes and their impacts as updated agreements are published. A. Hawkins shared that when filling out a form for their employee discount for their kids to attend school, why can't the form be tied to the active directory so they don't have to keep filling it out? N. Wortman stated there's limitation with technology. Your point isn't missed. E. Cheek asked if there was an increase in desk audits. N. Wortman stated I don't think we've seen much of an increase right now.

V. Public Comments – (none)

VI. Approval of the Minutes for January 7, 2026

Motion: T. Richardson

Second: A. Travelstead

A vote commenced: 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions; The minutes from January 7, 2026, were approved as presented.

VII. Announcements – M. Schoonover stated the Unleashed (social) event was rescheduled for tomorrow due to winter weather. It's a piano bar theme.

VIII. Reports

A. Council President

- 1. Chancellor's Meeting –** Committee met January 9, 2026. The next meeting is on February 13, 2026. HR reported continued progress on Compensation 2030 reconsideration responses, noting that communication will be sent to employees by the second week of February. An email update acknowledged delays beyond the original 60-day estimate, explaining that the review required multiple stages, including consultant analysis and internal evaluation, and confirmed that any resulting adjustments will be retroactive to October 1, 2025. The team also discussed standardizing remote work agreements, aiming to reduce paperwork by allowing "ongoing" agreements rather than requiring end dates, while still ensuring employees understand these arrangements are not permanent; HR is updating the form accordingly. Additional topics included adding ESL balances to fringe benefit reports—something feasible in the short term—while FMLA balances will require more time due to current manual processes. The Chancellor provided updates from a recent retreat, stressing the need to boost enrollment and retention and noting that the university will learn more about state appropriations after the Governor's February address; tuition increases, unchanged since 2017, are also being considered with plans for

student government communication if pursued. Finally, an article shared at the Cabinet level highlighted challenges facing higher education nationwide, including examples from Eastern Illinois University, intended to provide context.

2. **Board of Trustees' Meeting** – Next meeting is February 6, 2025, at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.
 3. **Chancellor's Leadership Council** – No meeting in December. No report.
- B. School of Medicine Civil Service Council – *Kristie Parkins*** – Committee has not met. The new representative for the School of Medicine is Tiffany Vicente. Welcome!
- C. Annuitants Association** – M. Schoonover stated they are the sponsor for the Unleashed event, and they will have a table set up to recruit people.
- D. SURS Member Advisory – *Elizabeth Cheek*** – The committee has not met.
- E. Council Committees**
1. **Executive/Budget – *Tony Travelstead*** – They met and set the agenda.
 2. **Bylaws – *Marianne Schoonover*** – The committee has not met. M. Schoonover asked whether they should still hold on to bylaws or if they can proceed. E. Cheek stated I think we are good to proceed now.
 3. **Civil Service Benefits – *Odessa Colombo/Amelia Ketzle*** - Committee has not met.
 4. **Education Assistance – *Tony Travelstead*** – The next Quatro's Pizza days will be February 10, 2026. The last MOD's Pizza Day was not productive; it was a snow day. There will be a MOD's Day in March. Volunteers are needed to work at the concession on February 12, 2026, at the men's basketball game. The tentative date for the Flea Market is April 18, 2026. The parking lot was not available on April 25, 2026. Scholarship vouchers are completed and being processed. L. Franklin & A. Travelstead will work with Sergios as a fundraiser.
 5. **Elections – *Tony Travelstead*** - Committee met after the last council meeting. February 18, 2026 statement of candidacies will go out with a due date of March 4, 2026. March 25, 2026, ballots will go out with a deadline of April 8, 2026. New members will be seated at the meeting on May 6, 2026. The following council members have terms that end unless re-elected): Ann Coward, Christopher Vick, Cyndy Green, Rick Pierrson, Jason Phillips, Marianne Schoonover, Jamie Schrader, Elizabeth Cheek, & Kristen Matthews.)
 6. **Public Information – *Thomas Becker*** – The committee met and discussed the hybrid open forum which will be March 19, 2026. HR has the requested topics to cover at the forum.
 7. **Range – *Tony Travelstead/Ann Coward*** – Committee has not met. A. Travelstead stated we are waiting on the contract from ACsEs to be finalized. T. Richardson stated the contract is done, but the Excel sheet showing everyone's increase needs to be updated. A. Travelstead stated that once that's published online, it will be reviewed to see if we want to add anything to our (FOIA) request.
- F. Constituency Committees**
1. **Academic Calendar Committee – *Todd Duermyer*** – (no report)
 2. **Advisory Committee to the Director of Public Safety – *Andy Hawkins***
Committee has not met.
 3. **Technology Advisory Committee – *Ann Coward*** – Committee has not met. Committee was highlighted in SIU Today.
 4. **Honorary Degrees – *Todd Duermyer*** – (no report)
 5. **Intercollegiate Athletics Advisory – *Tony Travelstead*** - Committee has not met.
 6. **Naming University Facilities – *Marianne Schoonover*** - Committee met January 21, 2026. The document in Teams details the following information: Ocean Relaxation Room in Student Health Programs (\$10K gift from Louis Callen); Yunker-Dore Family Courtyard in CHHS Community Care and Education Center courtyard (\$250k gift from Jennifer & Martin Dore); The Charles and Tracy Hamilton Hangout at CHHS Living Learning Community at Mae Smith recreation room (\$25k gift from Charles & Tracy Hamilton); and Rick Wostratzky Scoreboard at Intramural Fields (\$25k gift from Richard "Rick"

Wostratzky).

7. **Parking and Traffic Appeals – Mickel Cordes** – Meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2026. (The meeting on January 28, 2026, was cancelled due to weather, and the meeting on January 30, 2026, was cancelled because of conflict.)
8. **Recreational Sports and Services Advisory – Shari Garnett** – (no report)
9. **Student Center Advisory – Todd Duermyer** – (no report)
10. **Traffic and Parking – Stacia Werner** - Committee has not met. No report.
11. **University Joint Benefits –Dina Timmons/Elizabeth Cheek** – Committee has not met.
12. **Staff Excellence Committee – Cyndy Green** – Committee met January 29, 2026, and set the agenda. The deadline was extended to the following Monday for nominations to be turned in. Our next meeting to discuss them is February 20, 2026, and we will vote after that.

G. Special/Other

1. **Chancellor’s Planning and Budget – Elizabeth Cheek/Marianne Schoonover**
Committee has not met.
2. **Employee Advisory Committee to the Merit Board – Elizabeth Cheek**
The committee met January 29-30, 2026, at SUCSS in Urbana. Installation of new members include Rafael Edgardo Canas – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Elizabeth Cheek – Southern Illinois University Carbondale; Stephanie Contreras-Juarez – Governors State University; Brandy Perry – University of Illinois-Chicago; and Mary Serio – Northeastern Illinois University (will be installed at April meeting). Discussion topics on the agenda included the survey, open and continuous testing, extra help, register maintenance, salary, compensation, and benefits. The next meeting is April 23-24, 2026, at ISU. The results from the SUCSS’ survey are in Teams. Survey results showed that employees ranked benefits—particularly insurance and leave time—as the strongest factor encouraging them to remain at the university, followed by compensation, promotional opportunities, professional development, and flexible work options. When asked whether staff reductions affected their daily responsibilities, 46% reported increased duties within their classification, 42% reported increased duties outside their classification, and 12% saw no change. Employees also ranked what they value most in the workplace, listing compensation and benefits first, followed by work–life balance, job security, positive workplace culture, and recognition. The university’s transparency regarding employment opportunities received an average score of 3.36, with only 14 respondents rating it highly. Awareness levels varied: 19% of employees knew who their State University Civil Service Employee Advisory Committee representative was, while 51% knew how to access the State University Civil Service System webpage. Those who were aware of their Civil Service Council representatives were 30%.
3. **Legislative Advisory – Ann Coward** – Information will be in Teams regarding opinion letters clarifying FLSA exemptions for minimum pay, bonuses, duties, etc. and 2026 desk guides or Illinois employment statues (Workplace Transparency Act, more employee protections, human rights acts, AI disclosures, Victims Economic Security Safety Act, personal use of company devices permitted, new expanded leave laws - the family neonatal one, the blood and organ donation leave, and Illinois military).
4. **Network Empowering Women Committee – Diane McIntyre** – No new updates.
5. **System Staff Advisory – Elizabeth Cheek** – The committee met and decided to continue to offer Professional Development training.
6. **COLA Dean Search Committee – Dina Timmons** – (no report)

IX. Old Business

- Future Guests

- o No guest speaker for March 2026.

- Tentative guest speaker for April is Tim Leonard, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics.

X. New Business

- E. Cheek stated Room 307 in the Student Services Building has been reserved for the first Wednesday for the next three years for Civil Service Council meetings. The meeting on July 5, 2028, was changed to July 12, 2028, with no objection.
- A. Coward stated the search committee for the Executive Director for Extended Campus role had two candidates, but the search was paused. Taylor Presley has now been appointed as the Interim Executive Director for Online and Extended Campus.

XI. Non-Agenda Items

- D. McIntyre shared concerns regarding comments added (outside of a direct supervisor) to employee JAQs for the compensation study. A. Coward commented on how she remembers how employees were to be able to see the comments made from the supervisor as well, but she has not seen hers. D. McIntyre stated I don't know if anybody did. D. McIntyre stated if any three people FOIA information, then that information has to be shared publicly.
- T. Richardson stated the petition went public that our union put forward to grab the Food Service Administration and Academic Advisors (for the ACsE Union). We are waiting for the whole process to go through. They are not members yet, but they are kind of covered by us until that's all resolved. They will have their own section in the contract. A. Coward asked about title changes regarding CBIZ. T. Richardson stated we have discussed it because we have four of our people who are going to promote out because of a change of classification, but then we have four or five people who will actually be going lower. And looking into it, it seems like those are the people who didn't submit a JAQ. We're trying to get clarification on that and are waiting to hear back from Labor and Employee Relations on all of that. A. Coward stated that is one thing that will be requested on the FOIA to know which titles because HR is formally going to request to change through SUCSS. E. Cheek stated that would be something the employee will have to pick up on as well and do within 15 days of getting their letter from HR if they move it forward to SUCSS. D. McIntyre asked if HR is going to send out communication that (150) employees have 15 days to go to SUCSS or is it being shared by Civil Service? E. Cheek stated she shared that information with Chancellor Lane, AVC Nick Wortman, and Chief of Staff David Shirley. The information has to come through HR. A. Travelstead stated or it could be sent out in mass to everyone.
- A. Travelstead stated Director Charlie Cox in Accounting Services is retiring. There are two candidates being considered for the role. Information for the Fiscal Officer Listserv should go to Julie Castle.

XII. Adjournment

Motion: M. Schoonover

Second: T. Richardson