



MINUTES

**Claims Panel Meeting
of the Board of Trustees of the
State Universities Retirement System
Tuesday, April 4, 2023, 8:30 a.m.
State Universities Retirement System
Main Conference Room
1901 Fox Dr., Champaign, IL**

The meeting of the Claims Panel of the Board of Trustees of the State Universities Retirement System (SURS) convened on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 8:30 a.m.

The following Claims Panel members were present: Mr. Daniel Gaumer, Hearing Officer; Ms. Suzanne Mayer, SURS Executive Director; and Mr. Richard Figueroa, SURS Board of Trustee member.

Others present: Ms. Bianca Green, General Counsel; Mr. Albert Lee, Associate General Counsel; Ms. Heather Kimmons, Associate General Counsel; Ms. Jennifer Bartell, Senior Claims Manager; Ms. Karen Nyi and Ms. Annette Ackerman, Executive Assistants; Ms. Cara Peeler, Retirement Team Manager; Ms. Janet Cummings, Area Wide Reporting; Ms. Carolyn Clifford of the law firm of Ottosen, DiNolfo, Hasenbalg & Castaldo (via Zoom); Ms. Kristen Houch, Director of Legislative and Stakeholder Relations (via Zoom); Ms. Alicia Route, Legislative Analyst (via Zoom); Ms. Denise Shelton, Medical MSR; Mr. Fatmir Jusufi, Claimant (via Zoom); Ms. Sheila Tukes, Claimant; Ms. Cynthia Jackson, Claimant; Ms. James Ellis, Witness; Mr. Tyler Tall, Sr., Witness.

Claims Panel roll call attendance was taken. Hearing Officer Daniel Gaumer, present; Executive Director Suzanne Mayer, present; and Trustee Richard Figueroa, present via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Gaumer presented the open session minutes from the Claims Panel Hearing of February 28, 2023.

Ms. Mayer made the following motion:

That the open session minutes from the February 28, 2023, Claims Panel Hearing be approved as presented.

Ms. Figueroa seconded the motion which passed via the roll call vote referenced below:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	aye

Mr. Gaumer presented the closed minutes from the Claims Panel Hearing of February 28, 2023, for approval.

Ms. Mayer made the following motion:

That the closed session minutes from the February 28, 2023, Claims Panel Hearing be approved as presented and remain closed.

Trustee Figueroa seconded the motion which passed via the roll call vote referenced below:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	aye

PRESENTATION OF CLAIM – FATMIR JUSUFI

The claim of Mr. Fatmir Jusufi was called for hearing. Mr. Jusufi opted to appear via video conference. Mr. Gaumer admitted documentary evidence into the record consisting of 184 pages. The admitted record includes the Claimant's Statement of Claim and the SURS Staff Response to the same. Ms. Heather Kimmons provided a verbal summary of the issues to be addressed by the Claims Panel. Mr. Jusufi agreed with the summary. Mr. Jusufi was sworn in by the court reporter, Ms. Janet Cummings. The Claimant presented his case. Ms. Bartell was then sworn in by Ms. Cummings and was then called to testify on behalf of SURS.

Upon the conclusion of the claim presentation, Hearing Officer Dan Gaumer closed the evidentiary proofs.

The Claims Panel members agreed to hear all of the claims scheduled for this date in open session and then move into closed session to deliberate all of them during one closed session.

PRESENTATION OF CLAIM – SHEILA TUKES

The claim of Ms. Sheila Tukes was called for hearing. Ms. Tukes opted to appear in person at SURS. Mr. Gaumer admitted documentary evidence into the record consisting of 214 pages. The admitted record includes the Claimant's Statement of Claim and the SURS Staff Response to the same. Ms. Tukes did not have the complete record with her at the hearing and SURS staff printed pages 206 through 214 for her. Ms. Tukes was sworn in by Ms. Cummings, the court reporter from Area Wide Reporting. Mr. Albert Lee provided a verbal summary of the issues to be addressed by the Claims Panel. Ms. Tukes agreed with the brief summary, with one change, noting the reference to her

designation as an employee of City College of Chicago from 1993 to 2012. Ms. Tukes presented her case to the panel and provided new evidence. Next, Ms. Bartell was sworn in by Ms. Cummings, and was called to testify on behalf of SURS.

Hearing Office Dan Gaumer granted the parties' joint request to suspend the hearing to give the Claimant the opportunity to submit additional records for SURS staff to review relative to her employment history. Ms. Tukes provided additional records to SURS staff. Copies of those records were made, and SURS staff will review the same. This case will be rescheduled at a later date if after reviewing all the new records, SURS staff still believes the claim should be denied.

PRESENTATION OF CLAIM – CYNTHIA JACKSON

The claim of Ms. Cynthia Jackson was called for hearing. Ms. Jackson and witnesses Mr. James Ellis and Mr. Tyler Tall Sr. opted to appear in person. Mr. Gaumer admitted documentary evidence into the record consisting of 117 pages. The admitted record includes the Claimant's Statement of Claim and the SURS Staff Response to the same. Ms. Jackson, Mr. Ellis and Mr. Tall were all sworn in by Ms. Cummings. Ms. Heather Kimmons provided a verbal summary of the issues to be addressed by the Claims Panel. Ms. Jackson agreed with the brief summary. Ms. Jackson presented her case. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Tall testified on behalf of the Claimant. Next, Ms. Bartell was sworn in and called to testify on behalf of SURS.

Upon the conclusion of the claim presentation, Hearing Officer Dan Gaumer closed the evidentiary proofs.

CLAIMS PANEL DELIBERATIONS

Ms. Mayer made a motion to move into closed session, pursuant to §2(c)(4) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, to consider the evidence and testimony presented in open session in the Jusufi and Jackson cases. Mr. Gaumer seconded the motion which passed via the roll call vote referenced below:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	absent

Trustee Figueroa returned to the closed session at 11:35 a.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Upon completion of the closed session deliberations, the Claims Panel returned to open session, at approximately 11:55 am.

Ms. Mayer then made the following motion for the Jusufi Claim:

To affirm the staff decision, finding that Fatmir Jusufi has not proven by a preponderance of the evidence that he is entitled to the relief sought, and that a written decision of factual findings and

conclusions be drafted by the Hearing Officer and signed by members of the Claims Panel voting in favor of the motion.

Trustee Figueroa seconded the motion, which passed via the following roll call vote:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	aye

Ms. Mayer then made the following motion for the Jackson Claim:

To affirm the staff decision, finding that Cynthia Jackson has not proven by preponderance of the evidence that she is entitled to the relief sought, and that a written decision of factual findings and conclusions be drafted by the Hearing Officer and signed by the members of the Claims Panel voting in favor of the motion.

Trustee Figueroa seconded the motion, which passed via the following roll call vote:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	aye

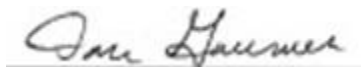
PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

There was no further business for the Claims Panel and no public comment. Trustee Figueroa moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mayer and passed via the following roll call vote:

Mr. Gaumer	-	aye
Ms. Mayer	-	aye
Trustee Figueroa	-	aye

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel L. Gaumer
Hearing Officer

dlg:aa