

*Press Proof (Not for Publication)*

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

February 26, 2026

This meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois was held in the Isadore and Sadie Dorin Forum, Rooms E and F, 725 West Roosevelt Road, Chicago, Illinois, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, beginning at 1:32 p.m. Attendance via videoconference was also available at Room 380, Henry Administration Building, 506 South Wright Street, Urbana, Illinois.

Chair Jesse H. Ruiz called the meeting to order and asked the secretary to call the roll. The following members of the Board were present: Ms. J. Carolyn Blackwell, Mr. Ramón Cepeda, Ms. Tami Craig Schilling,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Joseph Gutman,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Suzet M. McKinney, Mr. Wilbur C. Milhouse III, and Mr. Jesse H. Ruiz, Dr. Bryan S. Traubert.<sup>1</sup> Ms. Sarah C. Phalen and Governor J. B. Pritzker were absent. Ms. Ariana A. Mizan, voting student trustee, Urbana, was present. The following nonvoting student trustees were in attendance: Mr. Quinn S. Basta, student trustee, Chicago; and Mr. Joe Humphrey, student trustee, Springfield.<sup>1</sup> President Timothy L. Killeen was present.

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<sup>1</sup> Ms. Craig Schilling, Mr. Gutman, Dr. Traubert, and Mr. Humphrey attended via remote videoconference.

Also present were Mr. Scott E. Rice, University counsel; and Dr. Jeffrey A. Stein, secretary of the Board of Trustees and of the University.

Mr. Ruiz welcomed everyone to the meeting and said the Board would consider a key initial step in the process of selecting a new president for the University of Illinois System.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Ruiz announced a public comment session and asked if there were any requests for public comment. Dr. Stein indicated there were no requests for public comment at this meeting.

#### AGENDA

Mr. Ruiz stated that the Board would be considering a recommendation to approve the composition of the Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President. He asked Dr. Stein to give a summary of the anticipated timeline for the search. Dr. Stein stated that a review of search firm proposals was underway, and he told the Board that letters requesting nominations for members to serve on the search committee would be distributed after the Board approves its composition. He said the deadline for nominations would be April 8, 2026. Dr. Stein stated that the Board would likely approve the selection of a search firm at its March 19, 2026, meeting, and he said a special meeting would likely be held in late April for the Board to approve members of the search committee and issue a charge to the committee. He said the Search Committee to

Assist in the Selection of a President would likely meet for the first time in May, with town halls to follow. He gave an overview of the remaining timeline and expressed appreciation for the work of Mr. Rice and Ms. Jami M. Painter, senior associate vice president and chief human resources officer, University of Illinois System, who have been assisting him with these details. He said a timeline would be shared with the public soon.

Mr. Rice noted that approval of the composition of the committee being discussed today is a key step in meeting the Board's legal obligation to hire a president, and he thanked Dr. Stein and Ms. Painter for their efforts. Ms. Painter added that the timeline being discussed is realistic and will allow time to find the best candidates.

Trustees discussed the composition of the committee and its size. Dr. Stein noted that two representatives from the alumni associations have been added to the composition due to changes in the structure of the alumni associations and to allow for representation from the alumni associations from each university. He said two additional administrative positions are also being added, and Chairman Ruiz discussed the benefit of expanding representation to the search process.

Mr. Ruiz referred to the recommendation to approve the composition of the Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President, stating that State statute directs the Board to elect a president to serve this University. He said that to do so, the Board would seek the assistance of a search committee to advise the Board throughout the search process, comprised of individuals from essential constituent groups of the System.

He said the item being considered outlines a 23-member committee that would include three members of this Board; eight faculty members; three students; one academic professional staff member; one civil service staff member; three administrative officers; three members of the alumni associations; and a representative of the University of Illinois Foundation.

Mr. Ruiz referenced Dr. Stein's remarks regarding the anticipated timeline and said that immediately after this committee composition is approved, the Board of Trustees would begin a consultative process to populate the search committee. He reviewed the timeline and asked President Killeen to comment.

President Killeen stated that the hiring of the president is the most important responsibility of the Board, and he expressed appreciation for the Board's inclusive process. He said the composition of the search committee reflects the best of the University's tradition, noting the broad participation of shared governance. President Killeen referred to the University's momentum and said the next president will inherit a thriving University System. He stated that he would work toward a smooth transition and thanked the Board for their leadership.

Mr. Ruiz noted that he attended lobby day at the Illinois capitol, along with Mr. Basta. He said it was uplifting to see the reception of the University, and well as the gratitude for its contributions to the state.

At 1:46 p.m., Mr. Ruiz stated that there was one agenda item requiring action by the Board. With no additional comments or questions regarding this

recommendation, Dr. Stein read the title of the item, “Approve Composition of the Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President, 2026.”

Approve Composition of the Search Committee  
to Assist in the Selection of a President, 2026

(1) By State statute, the Board of Trustees is directed to “...elect a regent who shall be charged with the general supervision of the educational facilities and interest of the university. Said regent shall be known as President of the University and his term of office shall be at the pleasure of the board of trustees.”<sup>2</sup>

In fulfilling this responsibility, the trustees wish to have assistance from essential constituent groups of the University of Illinois System. To provide this assistance, the Board hereby establishes a Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President, to include the following members:

1. Three members of the Board of Trustees.
2. Eight faculty members from the broad, diverse, and engaged faculties of the System’s three universities: Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield. These members shall be selected by the Board from candidates suggested by the respective university senates and referred to the Board by the University Senates Conference.
3. Three students, one from each of the System’s three universities. These members shall be selected by the Board from candidates suggested by the coordinated efforts of the student government organizations of the respective campuses, in consultation with the student

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<sup>2</sup>110 ILCS 305/4, University of Illinois Act.

trustees. Consideration shall be given to undergraduate, graduate, and professional student involvement.

4. One member of the academic professional staff. The Professional Advisory Committee at each university will be asked to submit names of nominees to the University Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (UPPAC), which shall forward names of candidates for consideration and designation by the Board.
5. One member of the civil service staff. The Staff Advisory Council at each university will be asked to make nominations to the System's Employee Advisory Committee, which shall forward names of candidates for consideration and designation by the Board.
6. Three administrative officers, who shall be selected by the Board after consultation with the president and chancellors.
7. Three members from the University of Illinois alumni associations at Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield. These members shall be selected by the Board of Trustees from candidates suggested by the boards of directors of the three alumni associations, respectively.
8. One member from the University of Illinois Foundation. This member shall be selected by the Board of Trustees from candidates suggested by the Board of Directors of the University of Illinois Foundation.

On motion of Mr. Milhouse, seconded by Dr. McKinney, this recommendation was approved by the following vote: Aye, Ms. Blackwell, Mr. Cepeda, Ms. Craig Schilling, Mr. Gutman, Dr. McKinney, Mr. Milhouse, Ms. Mizan, Mr. Ruiz, Dr. Traubert; No, none; Absent, Ms. Phalen, Governor Pritzker.

(The student advisory vote was: Aye, Mr. Basta, Mr. Humphrey.)

Mr. Ruiz thanked Dr. Stein, Mr. Rice, and Ms. Painter for their efforts and reiterated that selecting the University's leader is one of the most important responsibilities of the Board. He referenced efforts to ensure the search reflects the values of the University. Mr. Ruiz said he looks forward to gaining valuable feedback from the town halls and said these will provide an opportunity for voices to be heard.

#### OLD BUSINESS

There was no business presented under this aegis.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Ruiz asked if there was any new business to discuss, and there was none. Mr. Ruiz announced that the Board was scheduled to meet on March 19, 2026, in Springfield.

#### MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Ruiz requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. On motion of Mr. Cepeda, seconded by Dr. McKinney, the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m. There were no "nay" votes.

JEFFREY A. STEIN  
*Secretary*

JESSE H. RUIZ  
*Chair*