

**HIGHER EDUCATION TRAVEL CONTROL BOARD**  
**December 11, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members**

*Present:*

Bruce Bennett, Illinois Community College Board  
Dana Biernbaum, Western Illinois University  
Connie Hess, SIU School of Medicine  
Mary Kentzler, Illinois State University  
Karen Kissel, Governors State University  
Paul McCann, Eastern Illinois University  
Jasmin McIntosh, Northern Illinois University  
Maxine Sandretto, University of Illinois  
Louise Williams, Chicago State University

*Absent:*

Peggy Ho, Northeastern Illinois University  
Peggy Podlasek, Illinois Board of Higher Education

*Guests Present:*

Rhonda Vail, Western Illinois University  
Pat Walsh, University of Illinois  
Cheryl Webster, Western Illinois University

**Proceedings**

- Maxine Sandretto called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- Pat Walsh conducted roll call. Eight members were present for video conference (2-GSU, 2-UIS, 3-UIUC, 1-WIU). Maxine Sandretto requested a motion to allow Jasmin McIntosh to participate via phone. A motion was made by Mary Kentzler and seconded by Paul McCann. Motion approved.
- Maxine Sandretto also recognized guests present at Western Illinois University and University of Illinois.
- The minutes for the July 31, 2012 meeting were presented, no changes were noted. Maxine Sandretto requested a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. A motion to approve as submitted was made by Dana Biernbaum, seconded by Connie Hess. Motion approved.

**1st Quarter Exceptions for FY13**

Chicago State University – 1 exception for \$456.00  
Eastern Illinois University – 21 exceptions for \$768.42  
Governors State University – 10 exceptions for \$849.61  
Illinois Board of Higher Education – No exceptions to report  
Illinois Community College Board – No exceptions to report  
Illinois Math and Science Academy – 6 exceptions for \$1,319.12  
Illinois Student Assistance Commission – 2 exceptions for \$18.00  
Illinois State University – 75 exceptions for \$5,636.68  
Northeastern Illinois University – 24 exceptions for \$6,143.82  
Northern Illinois University – No exceptions to report

Southern Illinois University Carbondale – 184 exceptions for \$13,402.98  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville – 31 exceptions for \$1,467.43  
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine – No exceptions to report  
State Universities Civil Service System – No exceptions to report  
State Universities Retirement System – 19 exceptions for \$3,529.48  
University of Illinois at Chicago – 24 exceptions for \$2,545.35, partial report  
University of Illinois at Springfield – Report not yet available  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – Report not yet available  
Western Illinois University – 59 exceptions for \$2,826.97

Mary Kentzler suggested that University of Illinois at Springfield and Urbana-Champaign exception comment should be changed from “No exceptions to report” to “Report not yet available”, due to the delay in receiving these reports. Change will be made. Dana Biernbaum noted that Western Illinois University “Exception Type” shows explanations rather than exception type. Dana asked if this field should be included in the report. Mary Kentzler confirmed that it is a required field. Dana will correct all future Western reports to indicate exception type as “Lodging”. Maxine Sandretto requested a motion to accept the exception reports as presented. Paul McCann made a motion to accept the report as presented with the changes made for the University of Illinois. Dana Biernbaum seconded. Motion approved.

### **Other Business**

- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville’s Controller requested that the HETCB discuss per diem rates. Maxine Sandretto informed the Board that she attended the State Travel Regulation Council (TRC) meeting October 16. The TRC was informed of the need for the TRC to officially approve all rates each year. There was discussion of the per diem rate, but no support for trying to make a change at this time, given the State’s budget issues. It was approved. There was discussion regarding an increase in hotel rates for downstate. Guests from hotel management, from the Springfield area, attended the meeting and gave a presentation making the point that an increase in rates would bring in more taxes to the State, which would basically make it no more costly to the state, overall, to increase these rates. Maxine Sandretto pointed out that there could still be budget issues in the agencies that would pay the higher rate, so TRC would need to check with their boards regarding impact of any planned changes. She also suggested to the visitors that it might be advisable for them to gather support from other downstate hotel managers, outside of the Springfield area. The TRC did not take action as yet on the hotel rates; however, there are plans for a second meeting sometime next year. Maxine will route to the HETCB a proposal to determine if there is support from agency and university officials. The Board discussed the many lodging exceptions that are reported each quarter as a result of low amount allowed by the state. It was noted that state rates are 60% of federal rates and are very low. Maxine Sandretto suggested there is a need for a better rate scale for major metropolitan cities, other than Chicago and Washington, D.C., and suggested it would be much simpler to tie these to the allowable federal rates. Maxine Sandretto asked if the HETCB would like to take forward to the TRC a request to raise per diem rates. Connie Hess supports taking a request forward to the TRC. Maxine Sandretto will follow up and keep the Board informed of future TRC meetings.
- Maxine Sandretto asked if there was any further discussion regarding Jasmin McIntosh’s inquiry regarding “all inclusive” hotels and “package deals”. Jasmin did ask how others break out airline, car, hotels that are bundled as one. Connie Hess responded that Southern Illinois University requests supporting documentation that the package deal is less expensive. Mary Kentzler at Illinois State University said they require a breakdown at booking; however, they discourage this type of booking. Maxine Sandretto, University of Illinois, said the U of I also discourages this type of booking due to the difficulty in unbundling.

- Maxine Sandretto noted that the IRS has increased the mileage rate effective January 1, 2013, to 56.5 cents. She reminded all that the HETCB follows suit with the U. S. General Services Administration (GSA). The GSA site is being monitored and the HETCB will be advised if/when the rate changes.
- Maxine Sandretto presented an inquiry from Louise Williams at Chicago State University regarding an Accounting Bulletin from the State of Illinois Comptroller's establishment of a new Detailed Object Code for the reporting of mileage reimbursements to State Employees. It was determined that this is not required of the HETCB, but relates only to submissions for reimbursement that are made directly to the State Comptroller. Members indicated this does not apply to anyone on our Board.
- Dana Biernbaum from Western Illinois University presented three questions:
  - WIU travelers going to Chicago were told that WIU was on list to receive approved rates for Chicago. Maxine Sandretto said she will contact Kelly Shaw at the state to correct this.
  - Fox World Travel contacted WIU soliciting their business. Dana inquired if other agencies/universities had been contacted. No one else responded that they had. Maxine Sandretto informed the Board that UI has three preferred agencies that they conduct business with, and these were chosen through an RFP.
  - WIU inquired if other agencies/universities reimbursed for boarding or seat assignment fees. Others responded that they would deny these charges because by law, state travel is to be arranged in the least costly method. Boarding and seat assignment fees are considered for the personal benefit of the traveler.
- Maxine Sandretto was asked what travel management system the University of Illinois uses. *Infor* was chosen as the vendor through an RFP selection process. This will eliminate paper vouchers. The University built in its business rules and this system is hosted on the University servers.

The next meeting of the HETCB is scheduled for January 29, 2013 at 9:30 am.

Motion was made by Dana Biernbaum to adjourn, seconded by Bruce Bennett. Meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Submitted by Maxine Sandretto, Chair