

**ILLINOIS STATE POLICE MERIT BOARD
MINUTES
1st QUARTER BOARD MEETING – January 14, 2026**

Present were Illinois State Police Merit Board Chairman Tim Touhy, Secretary Michelle Carrera, Member Dr. Linda Flowers, Member Dr. Chala Holland, Executive Director Emily Fox, and Chief Legal Counsel Daniel Dykstra.

Ms. Stephanie Garrett, Illinois State Police Chief Legal, Ms. Kim Shultz, Joint Committee on Administrative Rules Executive Director, and Mr. Bruce Bialorucki, Illinois Troopers Lodge also attended the meeting in person.

The meeting was held at 555 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois. Chairman Touhy opened the meeting at 10:30 AM.

Chairman Touhy asked the Board Members and guests to introduce themselves.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the 4th Quarter Board Meeting minutes held on October 15, 2025.

Executive Director Fox updated the Board on the Applicant Process. The deadline to apply for Cadet Class 154a – traditional was October 1, 2025. Applicant testing was held on October 4, in New Lenox, and on October 18, and October 22 in Springfield. After testing, 251 backgrounds were initiated. Background review and interviews will be conducted in March, with the class starting in June 2026. The Board is currently accepting applications for Cadet Class 154b – Lateral which is set to begin in September 2026. The deadline to apply for CC154b is February 1, 2026. Cadet Applicant PFIT and Recruitment Exam testing will be conducted on January 24, in Burbank, and February 7 and February 11 in Springfield. Background Review and interviews are scheduled to be conducted in June, with the class starting in September 2026.

Executive Director Fox updated the Board on the 2026 Promotional Process. The Board will be testing to the rank of Sergeant and Master Sergeant in 2026. Testing to the rank of Master Sergeant will be conducted August 31-September 4, at the Merit Board office in Springfield. Testing to the rank of Sergeant will be conducted September 14-18, at the ISP Academy and Merit Board office in Springfield

Executive Director Fox updated the Board on the amendments to the Administrative Rules. Director Fox and Chief Legal Counsel Dykstra met with representatives from the FOP and JCAR staff on January 6, 2026. At the conclusion of that meeting, the FOP offered the following suggestions related to the Promotional Process.

First, the FOP proposed that the Job Knowledge Test and the Assessment Exercise each be weighted at 45 percent, for a combined total of 90 percent. Second, the FOP suggested increasing the seniority component from a maximum of five points to ten points, accruing at a rate of one-half point per year of service. Currently, seniority accrues at a rate of two-tenths of a point per month of service in hard rank. Third, the FOP recommended defining the Job Knowledge Test components to be limited to department policy, the Illinois Vehicle Code, criminal law, and collective bargaining agreements. Currently, a new reading list is published by April 1 each year that identifies all source materials, specifies the exact sections from which questions are developed, and provides a breakdown of the number of questions from each source. While the job knowledge exam sources are not defined in rule, participants receive the complete source list at least six months in advance, which includes, but is not limited to, the sources listed by the FOP.

This information is being provided to Board Members today for informational purposes only. Board staff will evaluate the potential impacts of the requested changes, research comparable practices at similar agencies with comparable promotional processes, and, as appropriate, consult with our testing vendor for recommendations. Following that review, if staff determines that any of the proposed changes are in the best interest of the Board and the promotional process, a rule amendment and/or policy change will be presented to the Board for consideration and a vote at a future meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to go into closed session.

Chairman Tim Touhy, Secretary Michelle Carrera, Member Dr. Linda Flowers, Member Dr. Chala Holland, Executive Director Emily Fox, and Chief Legal Counsel Daniel Dykstra attended the closed session portion of the meeting.

The Board discussed the Trooper Nicholas Stroud matter.

The Board discussed the Special Agent Patrick Kehoe Joint Motion & Settlement Agreement.

The Board discussed the Trooper Rasheed Jeffries Joint Motion to Dismiss.

The Board discussed the Trooper Samantha Hower Joint Motion to Dismiss.

Chief Legal Counsel Dykstra updated the Board on the Discipline Report.

The Board discussed keeping the October 15, 2025, closed meeting minutes confidential.

The Board voted unanimously to go out of closed session and return to open session.

The Board voted unanimously to terminate Trooper Nicholas Stroud.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the Joint Motion & Settlement Agreement in the Special Agent Patrick Kehoe matter, suspending Special Agent Kehoe for 180 days.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the Joint Motion to Dismiss in the Trooper Rasheed Jeffries matter based on the resignation of Trooper Jeffries.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the Joint Motion to Dismiss in the Trooper Samantha Hower matter based on the resignation of Trooper Hower.

The Board voted unanimously to keep the October 15, 2025, closed meeting minutes confidential.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Carrera". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Michelle Carrera, Secretary