

# FUNDAMENTALS

Special Election Edition

IMRF

ACTIVE MEMBER EDITION

VOLUME 30 | NUMBER 4  
FALL 2015

## Why the Board of Trustees needs your vote

IMRF's Board of Trustees governs IMRF and protects your benefits. Ultimately, you decide who is speaking for you—your vote counts!

As an IMRF member, you have a unique opportunity to elect your own Board of Trustees.

“We have eight Trustees, and they're all elected. A lot of retirement systems have people appointed,” said Louis W. Kosiba, IMRF Executive Director.

When a board has appointed members, conflicting interests between who appointed the trustee and who the board is supposed to represent can be a concern.

“The Teachers' Retirement System has people appointed by the governor. They

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“Democracy is not a  
spectator sport.  
You have to participate.”

—IMRF Executive Director  
Louis W. Kosiba

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might not have the same interests as the teachers,” said Kosiba. “The Chicago systems have the city treasurer on their boards,” he continued, “and the city's interest and the retirement systems' interests are not always the same.”

### Ensuring IMRF's success

“We really have a unique situation where everyone is elected by our members,” said Kosiba. “All of the Trustees are vested IMRF members, so every board member has an interest to ensure IMRF's success.”

### Your vote counts

“Democracy is not a spectator sport,” emphasized Kosiba. “You have to participate. We have an opportunity to elect people for these slots as opposed to someone being appointed by the governor, so it's a good thing if people do vote,” he said.

“Membership really needs to know that their voice is heard, and just as in any election, that their vote actually



does count,” added Employee Trustee Natalie Copper.

### Take the time to vote

“Fill out that ballot and mail it in,” encouraged Copper. “You need people who are strong, people who are committed. So put your faith in them and mail that ballot in, because otherwise your voice will not be heard.” ■





## Board responsibilities

Some of the Board's most important duties include:

- Overseeing IMRF's administration.
- Approving benefit payments.
- Approving the budget.
- Setting asset allocation for IMRF investments.
- Hiring and firing investment managers.
- Setting actuarial assumptions used to calculate employer contribution rates.
- Setting employer contribution rates and enforcing payment.
- Ensuring the success of IMRF's Strategic Plan.
- Setting IMRF's annual Legislative Agenda.

# IMRF's Board of Trustees exists to protect your future

An eight-member Board of Trustees governs IMRF:

- Three Employee Trustees elected by active members like you.
- One Annuitant Trustee elected by retirees.
- Four Executive Trustees elected by IMRF employers.

IMRF's Trustees are fiduciaries, which means they are required to act solely in the interests of you and your beneficiaries, and to make sure that your benefits are there for you.

## What IMRF looks for in a Trustee

IMRF expects its Trustees to prepare for and attend meetings, and to work as a team to address issues faced by IMRF.

"IMRF needs individuals who are inquisitive, individuals who like a challenge, individuals who can work with their colleagues to make significant decisions concerning the operations of IMRF," said Louis W. Kosiba, IMRF Executive Director.

Trustees do not need a background in investments and actuarial science—training is provided. They do, however, need to have a high level of curiosity and dedication. Patience is also a necessity.

"You have to be extremely patient, because you're dealing with legislation, which moves at its own pace," Employee Trustee Natalie Copper said.

"You can know basic investments, but if you don't have the patience to go through it, you'll still be lost," she continued. "You have to have the patience to go through all the paperwork, and the patience to listen to members when they're coming before you, such as in the Benefit Review Committee," she said.

Empathy is also important. "You cannot have preconceived ideas about what is written on paper when it is a member coming before you—paperwork doesn't tell everything," explained Copper. "So I think you have to have empathy as well."

## Protecting your benefits around the clock

"It's a 24/7 job," said Copper. "You have to be informed. You can't take a day off. Membership is working every day for their pension, so when you took that oath, you made a promise that it will also be your job to take care of it. These are people's lives. They work hard for their pension; they deserve it." ■

# 2015 Employee Trustee election: Vote for your IMRF Board representatives

Did you participate in IMRF during the month of September 2015? Then you are entitled to vote in the election for two IMRF Employee Trustees, each for a five-year term of office from January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2020. Included in this election packet you will find:



- This newsletter, which includes ballot instructions and candidate biographies.
- A ballot (vote for two candidates on the ballot).
- A postage-paid return envelope.

## How to complete the ballot

### Step 1

- Complete your ballot using a black or blue ink pen or black lead pencil.
- **You will vote for two candidates on this ballot, each for a five-year term of office.** Completely fill in the oval in front of the name of the candidate you wish to vote for. See sample below.
- Want to know more about your candidates? **Candidate biographies are included on pages four and five of this newsletter.**
- **Write-in candidates:** You may vote for an employee who is participating in IMRF, will have at least eight years of service credit by December 31, 2015, and who is not shown on the ballot, by printing his or her name in the space provided and filling in the oval in front of that line.

### Step 2

- **After you complete the ballot, place it in the enclosed return addressed envelope and sign the envelope Certificate before sealing.**
- **For your vote to count, you must sign the Certificate on the return envelope.** The Illinois Pension Code requires this certification for each ballot to certify that you are a participating member in IMRF and are eligible to vote. Once sealed, the folded-over flap on the return envelope will prevent your signature from being visible.
- **Envelopes with a blank Certificate will not have the ballot removed and the vote will not be counted.** An outside tabulating agency opens the envelopes and immediately separates the ballot. At no time is your voted ballot identified with your signed Certificate.

Fill in the oval completely.  
You can use a pen or pencil.



YES

Correct!

Do **not** use a red pen or pencil.  
**DO NOT check or "x" the circles.**



NO  NO  NO

Wrong!

# Four candidates for two E

## Jill Boreham

Plainfield, IL

**Current Position:** Human Resources Manager for the Fountaindale Public Library District.

**Length of Service:** In this position and with the Fountaindale Public Library District from December 2007 to the present.

**Current Job Duties:** Jill Boreham has served Fountaindale Public Library District in a leadership role since 2007. As Human Resources Manager she is responsible for all human resource activities for the District working with senior-level management, including Fountaindale's Executive Director, Paul Mills, to create fair and consistent HR policies and procedures. Her duties include compensation, benefits, employment, employee relations, recruitment, and training and development. She is an Authorized Agent for Fountaindale, and when Jill first started at the District, her first task was to coordinate retiree benefits and assist employees with disability benefits. Prior to Fountaindale, she added another seven years of Human Resource experience through her work in the for-profit sector.

**Other Pertinent Information:** Jill continues to guide Fountaindale through many organizational and compensation changes. She prides herself on developing and implementing solutions to address areas that she's identified need improvement. Additionally, she works tirelessly to keep up with many legislative changes that affect the library's labor force. She's active in the HR community building relationships and augmenting her knowledge. It is her commitment, experience, and unique perspective that will bring added value to IMRF as a Trustee and to all the members she will serve.

## John Piechocinski

Plainfield, IL

**Current Position:** Head Custodian for Plainfield Community Consolidated School District.

**Length of Service:** With this employer since 1976, in this position since 1986.

**Current Job Duties:** I serve as Head Custodian for Plainfield Community Consolidated School District 202, Will and Kendall Counties. As the Head Custodian of Timber Ridge Middle School, I directly manage and supervise the custodial staff, working with the Administration and staff to provide a clean and effective learning environment for the students and staff. I also coordinate with various community groups that use the building throughout the year. Continuous service with the District for 39 years with the last 29 as a Custodial Supervisor.

**Other Pertinent Information:** Someday I will join the ranks of the retired and IMRF will be my primary source of income. I am committed to seeing that IMRF remains a viable pension system for over 180,000+ public employees. I also want to ensure that IMRF benefits are protected and enhanced for those public employees and their families who rely upon them. I am devoted to preserving the funding mechanism of the system and the political independence of the Board. All eight (8) of the IMRF Trustees are elected. None are political appointees. Of those eight (8), only three (3) can be elected by employees. I am a recommended candidate of both the IEA and AFSCME, and I'm determined that IMRF annuity, disability, and survivor benefits remain intact.

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## Vote for two candidates, each

Ballot instructions are on page three of this newsletter. Voted ballots must be  
Envelopes received after that date and time will not b

# Employee Trustee positions

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## **Bradley G. Trent**

Rockford, IL

**Current Position:** Deputy Highway Commissioner for Rockford Township.

**Length of Service:** In this position from September 25, 1997, to the present. With Rockford Township from December 21, 1981, to the present.

**Current Job Duties:** As Deputy Highway Commissioner, my responsibilities include supervising 14 employees, fleet maintenance of over 50 trucks and heavy equipment, budget and financial forecasting, the maintenance of 150 miles of roads including snow plowing operations, responding to residents' calls for service, and working with state legislators on highway issues.

**Other Pertinent Information:** I am a past state board member and president of the ILME (Illinois League of Municipal Employees) which was the group that lobbied for the creation of IMRF. I have an associate's degree in accounting. My job duties will help me as a trustee with IMRF budgets and also my experience working with state legislators while on the ILME board. We have one of the best public retirement funds in the nation, and we need to closely monitor the view of the public and our state legislators to make sure we will continue to have the same or better benefits in the future.

## **Trudy Williams**

Canton, IL

**Current Position:** Administrative Assistant for the Fulton County State's Attorney's Office.

**Length of Service:** In this position from December 1995 to the present. With the Fulton County Circuit Clerk's Office from February 1993 to December 1995.

**Current Job Duties:** I am an Administrative Assistant in the State's Attorney's Office under the direction of John R. Clark, Fulton County State's Attorney. I assist in preparing and maintaining files on offenders that are prosecuted in our office. I also assist with the civil work that is done in conjunction with the responsibilities that the State's Attorney has as legal counsel for the County of Fulton.

**Other Pertinent Information:** I serve as President of AFSCME Local 3433 in Fulton County, a position held for 14 years, and I am also a member of the AFSCME Council 31 Executive Board.

The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund oversees pension benefits for more than 173,000 active employees, and its Board of Trustees plays a crucial role in ensuring that the pension benefits on which we all depend for a secure retirement are protected. In various roles from steward to union president, I have been a determined advocate for public service workers. Over the years I have heard many concerns, and more recently, fears about public sector pensions from the members of my local—those close to retirement and those just starting out. I am seeking this position to work to preserve the fiscal security of the pension fund and the continuation of pension benefits as we know them, as I intend to make sure that, in exchange for our years of dedicated service, the promise of a secure retirement is kept.

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for a five-year term of office.

received by IMRF **no later than 4:30 PM on Friday, December 4, 2015.**

opened and the enclosed ballot will not be counted.

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From the Executive Director:

# IMRF in the news

*Whether you live in an urban or rural area, it is likely you have heard or will hear something about IMRF in a newspaper or on the radio. IMRF has a social media presence as well.*



Louis W. Kosiba  
IMRF Executive Director

I tend to view media coverage as falling into one of three categories: IMRF Mentioned; IMRF Pushed; or IMRF Exposed. Today, IMRF takes an active role in engaging, monitoring, and responding to the media. This is in stark contrast to the not-too-distant past when IMRF (and other public pension systems) were never in the media eye. We were under their “radar.” But with huge assets, liabilities, and responsibilities, those days are over.

## **IMRF mentioned**

This is not typically a story about IMRF. Rather, the reporter explains what happened at a council meeting and IMRF is mentioned because the council is reviewing a budget or policy. IMRF follows up with reporters if there was a significant error. Often, IMRF staff offers to conduct an “IMRF 101”

with the reporter so they obtain a better understanding of who we are.

## **IMRF pushed**

These are stories IMRF distributes to various media outlets across the state in the form of a press release. Examples are stories about awards received by IMRF, trustee elections, local workshops sponsored by IMRF, or a letter to the editor. These stories are designed to generate a positive image of IMRF.

## **IMRF exposed**

These stories are intended, by the reporter, to place IMRF in a bad light. The reporter has an agenda and wants to expose practices or benefits he or she does not support. Examples include stories identifying high pension benefit recipients (\$100,000+ a year), pension

spiking and payouts to deceased members or retirees. Admittedly, these stories are not pleasant to read because the reporter either explicitly or implicitly implies that IMRF is at fault or that public pensions are bad for taxpayers.

IMRF exists in a challenging environment. You, the public and the press have a right to question IMRF operations and to expect accurate, honest, and straightforward answers. For it is only through speaking the truth that IMRF will earn and retain your trust. ■



## **Don't forget to take our volunteerism survey!**

As we celebrate the Year of the Volunteer, IMRF wants to know more about how you help out in your community. To fill out our survey, visit [www.imrf.org](http://www.imrf.org), hover over “About IMRF,” click on “Year of the Volunteer,” and then click on “Year of the Volunteer Survey” in our Quick Links on the right side of the page.



# Attend a free IMRF retirement planning workshop!

## Workshop topics include:

- How and when to file for retirement.
- How earnings and service affect your retirement benefit calculations.
- How to purchase past service credit.

## Who should attend?

- Vested members who want to learn about benefits.
- Members within five years of retirement.
- Spouses, partners, or others who assist with your retirement planning.

The schedule for our 2015 retirement planning workshops has been updated through the end of the year. You will be able to view next year's schedule early in 2016 at [www.imrf.org](http://www.imrf.org). We recommend attending a workshop as soon as you're vested, then a second time five years before your earliest possible retirement date, and once more when you're ready to retire.

### 2015 Pre-Retirement Workshop Dates and Locations

#### November

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME
(Wed) 11/04	Salem	1 PM
(Wed) 11/04	Joliet	5 PM
(Sat) 11/07	Peoria	1 PM
(Tues) 11/10	Danville	1 PM
(Thurs) 11/12	DuQuoin	9 AM
(Tues) 11/17	Aurora	9 AM
(Tues) 11/24	Charleston	5 PM

#### December

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME
(Tues) 12/01	Rockford	9 AM
(Wed) 12/02	Mt. Prospect	1 PM
(Wed) 12/02	Homewood	5 PM
(Thurs) 12/03	Robinson	5 PM
(Sat) 12/05	Wheaton	9 AM
(Tues) 12/08	Naperville	5 PM
(Sat) 12/12	Springfield	9 AM
(Sat) 12/12	Tinley Park	10 AM

## Is an optional Personal Benefit Review right for you?

### Do you need a Personal Benefit Review?

- Have you already attended a retirement planning workshop?
- Do you have specific account questions that weren't answered in the workshop?

If you answered yes, a Personal Benefit Review might help you answer your questions.

### What to bring to your appointment

- Bring a pension estimate or your Personal Statement of Benefits—available through your Member Access account or by calling 1-800-ASK-IMRF (275-4673).
- Bring the questions you have that are specific to your IMRF account.

A Personal Benefit Review is an optional, one-on-one, 15-minute meeting with an IMRF Field Representative to discuss specific account issues. We know your time is precious—if you don't have particular questions or concerns about your account, there's no need to attend one of these sessions. *Individual time is limited; make sure you are on time and prepared!*

### 2015 Personal Benefit Review Dates and Locations

#### November

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME
(Wed) 11/04	Champaign	4 PM
(Sat) 11/07	Peoria	10 AM
(Thurs) 11/12	Bradley	10 AM
(Tues) 11/17	DuQuoin	10 AM
(Wed) 11/18	Danville	NOON
(Wed) 11/18	Lemont	4 PM
(Fri) 11/20	Oak Brook	10 AM
(Tues) 11/24	Aurora	9 AM

#### December

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME
(Tues) 12/01	Charleston	9 AM
(Thurs) 12/03	Oak Brook	10 AM
(Tues) 12/08	Benton	10 AM
(Thurs) 12/10	Naperville	10 AM
(Tues) 12/15	Homewood	10 AM
(Tues) 12/22	Springfield	5 PM

## IMRF 2015 Board of Trustees

John Piechocinski  
*president*  
Employee Trustee  
Plainfield Community Consolidated  
School District

Tom Kuehne  
*vice president*  
Executive Trustee  
Village of Arlington Heights

Jeffrey A. Stulir  
*secretary*  
Employee Trustee  
Rock Island County Sheriff's  
Department

Natalie Copper  
Employee Trustee  
Evanston School District 65

Gwen Henry  
Executive Trustee  
DuPage County

David Miller  
Executive Trustee  
North Shore Water Reclamation  
District

Sue Stanish  
Executive Trustee  
Naperville Park District

Sharon U. Thompson  
Annuitant Trustee  
(Formerly) Lee County



### IMRF

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*Locally funded, financially sound.*

## FUNDAMENTALS

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## 2015 Employee Trustee Election

Ballots enclosed; candidate biographies inside

Vote today and let your voice be heard!

Why does this month's issue come in an envelope? Because it's your special election edition! Turn to pages four and five of this newsletter to read the biography for each Employee Trustee candidate and for instructions to complete the ballot included in this mailing. Then, make your vote count by returning the enclosed ballot to IMRF in the envelope provided. IMRF must receive your ballot **no later than 4:30 PM on December 4, 2015.**