

Social Security Advisory Board
Minutes
Board Meeting
January 8, 2015

Location: 400 Virginia Avenue, S.W., Suite 625
Washington, D.C. 20024

Time: 9:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

SSAB Members: Henry Aaron, Chair
Lanhee Chen
Alan Cohen
Bernadette Franks-Ongoy
Jagadeesh Gokhale
Dorcas Hardy

Presenters: **Andrew LaMont Eanes**, Senior Advisor to the Acting Commissioner and nominee for Principal Deputy Commissioner, Social Security Administration
Nancy Berryhill, Deputy Commissioner for Operations, Social Security Administration
Van Roland, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Operations
Mike Kramer, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Operations (Acting)
Erik Jones, Associate Commissioner, Office of Public Service and Operations Support
Rosemary Stricks, Deputy Associate Commissioner, Office of Public Service and Operations Support
Cynthia Bennett, Associate Commissioner, Office of Telephone Services (Acting)
Ann Robert, Associate Commissioner, Office of Disability Determinations
Robin Sabatino, Associate Commissioner, Office of Electronic Services and Technology
Daniel L. Hatcher, Professor of Law, University of Baltimore
Manasi Deshpande, Ph.D. Candidate in Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Pre-doctoral Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)
David Wittenburg, Associate Director of Health Research, Mathematica Policy Research

SSAB Staff: Claire Green, Staff Director
Jackie Chapin, Policy Chief
Jeremy Elder, Policy Analyst
Joel Feinleib, Staff Economist

Sterling Laudon, Policy Attorney
Alec Moore, Policy Analyst
Sarah Weaver, Management Analyst
Hong Han, Associate
Anita Kelly, Detailee
Ellen Skirvin, Associate

During its January meeting, the Board held several fact-finding sessions in the morning and afternoon, and met in executive session throughout the day.

In the morning, the Board first met with Andrew LaMont Eanes, who was nominated by President Obama in July 2014 to serve as the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Principal Deputy Commissioner. Pending confirmation, Mr. Eanes is currently working as a Senior Advisor to Acting Commissioner Carolyn Colvin. Mr. Eanes introduced himself to the Board and provided some background on his experience working in the telecommunications industry. He also described the work he is doing in his current role as Senior Advisor; most notably developing a succession management plan at SSA. Currently about 50% of the agency is eligible for retirement, and SSA has no formal succession plan in place.

Later in the morning the Board met with Nancy Berryhill, who serves as the Deputy Commissioner for Operations – the largest component at SSA. Ms. Berryhill was invited to provide an overview of the workloads of that office as well as the challenges it currently faces. These challenges, brought about primarily by budget cuts in recent years, have caused the agency to consider other service delivery options in addition to face-to-face contact. These include self-help “kiosks,” additional communication features on the SSA website, and more flexible video options for handling claims.

In the afternoon, the Board met with Daniel L. Hatcher, a Professor of Law at the University of Baltimore. Mr. Hatcher primarily discussed children who receive SSI benefits and the state's role as representative payee for those children. Specifically, his discussion pointed out potential problems with this arrangement, such as the state's use of foster children's Social Security benefits to fund foster care agencies and the private companies that help them develop revenue maximization strategies for this purpose.

Lastly, the Board met by internet connection with Manasi Deshpande and David Wittenburg to discuss SSI research and reform options. Manasi Deshpande is a Ph.D. Candidate at MIT and Post-Doctoral Fellow at NBER, and David Wittenburg is an Associate Director of Health Research at Mathematica Policy Research. Ms. Deshpande gave a presentation on her doctoral research, which focused on the effects of removing children from SSI on the earnings and income of those children in adulthood as well as their parents in the long-term. David Wittenburg's presentation emphasized how access to better administrative data, work incentives, and transition planning could more adequately prepare SSI children for adulthood.

I certify that the minutes written for the January 8, 2015 meeting of the Social Security Advisory Board are correct.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Aaron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Henry J. Aaron

Chairman
Social Security Advisory Board