



19 February 2018

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Dee Brennan

SUBJECT: Executive Director Report – February, 2018

Executive Director Goals FY 2018

- Continue to implement the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.
- Analyze the strategic plan and update it as needed.
- Ensure financial sustainability for RAILS by finding efficiencies and cost savings, streamlining processes and procedures, and setting service priorities that still serve all RAILS members.
- Lead discussion of LLSAP funding changes based on need for sustainability, equity and stewardship.
- Support development and implementation of ILL/resource sharing overlay.
- Implement ExploreMoreIllinois.org program
- Develop RAILS expertise in Design Thinking methodology
- Develop long term plan to consolidate buildings and delivery hubs (continuation)
- Encourage resource sharing and cooperation among different types of libraries
- Measure the importance and impact of RAILS services.
- Communicate with board members so board members can make timely, informed decisions.

My monthly reports are organized according to the goals of the strategic plan and these goals.

Resource Sharing

As is also mentioned in the operations report, we have worked with NIC, the Northern Illinois Cooperative (library members are the communities/districts of Talcott, Woodstock, North Suburban Library District, Nippersink, Rockford University, Harvard Diggins, Cherry Valley and Belvidere) on determining future steps for the consortium. Their library management software is at end of life so they must decide soon how to move forward and are leaning at this point

towards joining PrairieCat. Rockford University is talking with CARLI about possibly joining that consortium.

Membership Standards

We completed the beta test of approximately 50 libraries across Illinois and are still analyzing the data. When our analysis is complete we will present the results at a board meeting. Veronda and I are working with the ILA committee that is revising *Serving our Public* to be sure that system membership standards and *Serving our Public* are complementary and not in any conflict or contradiction.

Access to Information

Service to the unserved

Veronda and I met with Kim Caviness, Chief Content Officer at Imagination (a content strategy and marketing firm in Chicago, <https://www.imaginepub.com>) to discuss her enthusiastic willingness to do some pro bono work for us on a project to expand service to the unserved near the Gail Borden Public Library District (Elgin). We will be taking a field trip to Gail Borden with Kim and her team to talk with Carole Medal, the director, and her team about the scope and nature of the project.

Member Engagement

Strategic plan listening tour

I will be traveling to 4 libraries over the next couple of weeks to meet with members and hear their input on our strategic plan update. I will be at Glenwood Lynwood on February 21, Indian Trails on February 22, Freeport on March 1 and Kewanee on March 2. We will hold an online meeting for special librarians on March 15, school librarians on March 16 and academic librarians on April 5.

ILA legislative meet-ups

Several members of the RAILS staff have attended the various ILA legislative meet-ups. Thanks to Joe Filapek, Jim Kregor, Veronda Pitchford and Anne Slaughter for traveling to the meet-ups

in Bloomington, Galesburg, Chicago, Tinley Park and Buffalo Grove and Oak Brook. Karen Goyer and Jody Rubel also attended in Oak Brook to assist with registration and logistics.

Continuing Education and Consulting

Directors University and Elevate planning continue. Registration for Directors University opens this week; as of Saturday there were 45 applications for Elevate.

Organizational Excellence

We have begun work on updating the RAILS logo and branding in general. Since the current RAILS logo references talking book services which we no longer provide (unfortunately), it seems to be appropriate to update the logo and our brand as we update our strategic plan.

Leadership and Innovation

Joe, Veronda and I attended the ALA midwinter conference in Denver February 7 through 12. My meetings were focused on the national IMLS grant Simply E for consortia, the ASCLA-sponsored ebook summit and advocacy for school libraries. I will update the board at the meeting.

Stewardship

We did receive the remainder of our FY 17 area and per capita grant in the amount of approximately \$3.9 million. We await the state portion of our FY 18 funds, approximately \$7.8 million.

Earlier this winter, we worked with the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) on a survey of the Cataloging Maintenance Center (CMC). This is a service, overseen by IHLS and funded by the State Library, to provide specialized cataloging services to system members statewide. The CMC provides original and upgraded cataloging of eligible collections, a service that many libraries find crucial for providing access to works of local authors, local history and genealogical materials, and other resources of local or special interest. In addition, the CMC helps fulfill an educational need of Illinois library staff by offering cataloging/RDA training and by answering individuals' cataloging questions.

The CMC also supplies high quality OCLC records to the LLSAPs to replace substandard bibliographic records from individual LLSAP member libraries, thus improving access to information resources for library users.

The survey showed that RAILS members are not being adequately served by the CMC for a variety of reasons including lack of awareness of the service and having cataloging-related needs that are not being met by the CMC's current service line-up. We have been discussing whether we need to include funding for RAILS cataloging services in our budget for FY2019. We would prefer to be able to use the IHLS service but also need to be responsive to RAILS member needs for cataloging assistance.

ILDS and LASA

On July 1, we will enter the third year of a contract for the Illinois Library Delivery Service with an increase in price that will bring RAILS an additional \$10,670 in revenue. We are meeting with Laboratory for Applied Spatial Analysis staff on March 14 to hear their initial findings about changes and improvements to delivery services. We are very hopeful that LASA will present us with significant opportunities for cost savings.