

23 March 2018

**TO: RAILS Board of Directors**

**FROM: Deirdre Brennan**

**SUBJECT: Strategic plan update report**

This memo is an overview of the update process so far.

During February and March, I hosted 4 listening sessions for members at Glenwood Lynwood Library, Indian Trails, Freeport and Kewanee. Total attendance was 51. Many issues were discussed within the framework of “what keeps you up at night?”

- The unserved
- Safety in the library
- The needs of an increasing diverse population of users
- Articulating the value of the library to users, funders and officials
- Educating the public about the great variety of services available at the library
- Keeping the library relevant and preparing the library for the future
- Funding: property tax freeze, understand levies and alternative revenue sources
- Succession planning for the library workforce
- Networking and connecting with others – all libraries, but especially small ones

On March 15 and 16, we are holding online meetings to get input from specific library types; special libraries on March 15 and school libraries on March 16. We will meet with academic librarians on April 5. The four sessions we have held so far were general, open to any type of library. Additionally, we had the “what keeps you up at night” conversation with the consortia committee and with the board.

We are also getting ready to send out a needs assessment via survey monkey to all member libraries. The survey will be based on the input we have gathered during all of our listening sessions.

When we have completed this data gathering, we will organize it by broad categories so that we can begin to develop goals and objectives. I hope to have a draft to the board by May.