

## RAILS Board Member Job Description

### General Description

The RAILS Board of Directors is composed of 15 individuals who work as a team on issues affecting the long-term future of the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) and its member libraries. The board includes:

- Eight board members from RAILS public libraries
- One individual employed by a RAILS academic library
- One individual employed by a RAILS school library
- One individual employed by a RAILS special library
- Four individuals elected at large and currently employed or current members of the governing board of a RAILS public, academic, school, or special library

All board members represent the overall interests and needs of RAILS member libraries as a whole across a 27,000 square mile area, rather than individual libraries, institutions, or specific communities/regions.

Board members are elected by the RAILS membership and serve without compensation. (RAILS reimburses board members for travel and other necessary expenses.) The RAILS Board may also appoint board members to fill vacancies between elections.

### Term

The term of office for a RAILS Board member is three years. No board member may serve more than a total of six years unless two years have elapsed since the sixth year of service.

### General Duties/Responsibilities

- Attend and actively participate in 11 board meetings per year either in person or at a [RAILS videoconference location](#). (RAILS will reimburse all travel and lodging costs to attend board meetings.) Review agendas and all supporting documents prior to each meeting.
- Actively serve on at least one [board committee](#)
- Monitor the system's finances and overall financial health and approve all budgets and expenditures
- Establish, review, revise, and approve policies for the effective management of the system
- Hire and evaluate the performance of the RAILS Executive Director
- Stay informed about RAILS programs/services by reading the weekly *RAILS E-News* and other means [by attending member updates, meetups and other RAILS outreach events](#)

- Promote the latest RAILS news, including information about programs/services, to other staff and trustees at your library and/or to other RAILS members from your type of library
- Serve as an ambassador and advocate for RAILS, RAILS member libraries of all types (academic, public, school, and special), and for libraries in general

### Requirements

- Cannot have more than two unexcused absences from board meetings during the system year
- Must be a legal resident in the RAILS geographic region
- Complete Open Meetings Act training within 90 days of being seated on the RAILS Board
- File an annual Statement of Economic Interest as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act
- File an annual Conflict of Interest form
- Maintain familiarity with Illinois library system laws\*, the Freedom of Information Act, the Open Meetings Act (OMA), the Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act, the State Official and Employees' Ethics Act, and with Robert's Rules of Order
- New board members must attend an orientation session (approximately four hours) at the RAILS Burr Ridge service center prior to beginning service on the board or shortly thereafter. RAILS will reimburse all travel/lodging costs.

### Acknowledgement

(To be signed after election/appointment)

I acknowledge that I have read this job description and can meet the responsibilities and requirements listed.

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Signature

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Date

\*See additional information about board service in the Reaching Across Illinois Library System Bylaws, [Article Five](#) and the Illinois Library System Act, [section 3030.250](#).

## **Draft charge for RAILS board advocacy committee**

The purpose of the RAILS board advocacy committee is to:

Educate board members about issues affecting RAILS and libraries that may require advocacy efforts locally, regionally or nationally. For the purposes of this committee, advocacy means being informed about issues and able to speak persuasively and knowledgably to library funders, supporters, legislators and other stakeholders when appropriate. Such issues may include:

Funding – state and federal

Intellectual freedom

Net neutrality

Projects and initiatives that RAILS works on

The committee will work collaboratively with the ILA Public Policy Committee and Advocacy Committee and may attend meetings or act in a liaison role for RAILS to these committees. Committee members will attend advocacy events offered by the ILA and the ALA.

Committee members:

RAILS board members

RAILS Executive Director

RAILS Director of Communications

## **Draft charge for committee/task force on the unserved**

Recognizing the importance of extending service to the approximately 1 million unserved residents in Illinois, 673,689 of which are in RAILS, RAILS has established a task force to explore solutions to the unserved.

RAILS adopted a plan in October of 2016 which has been updated but should be reviewed and changed as decided by the committee.

The committee will also:

- Document progress achieved since the adoption of the plan in 2016.

- Prioritize goals and objectives in the plan and develop appropriate action steps.

- Be a voice for the unserved by bringing the issue to the attention of local libraries and boards of trustees.

- Develop a thorough understanding of the reasons why there are unserved residents and the implications both for the individuals affected, libraries and Illinois as a whole.

- As appropriate, share information and work collaboratively with the RAILS Board Resource Sharing Committee, ILA Public Policy Committee and ILA Advocacy Committee.

Membership:

- 2 board members

- Member library directors and trustees

- ISL staff

- RAILS staff: Executive Director, Director of Membership Development and Resource Sharing, Member Engagement Manager