

Document 8

25 November 2019

TO: RAILS Universal Service Committee

FROM: Deirdre Brennan

SUBJECT: Overview of November 26, 2019 meeting

Committee members, thanks so much for your patience as we scheduled this meeting!

We have accomplished a great deal since our last meeting in March. At the same time, there is much more work to be done.

At the March meeting, the committee made several requests and also had questions. We have worked on all of the committees ideas since that time, and will provide detailed information at the meeting. Undoubtedly, our work and answers will raise more questions and prompt yet more work – all moving us forward to provide enhanced service to unserved residents. This memo is a brief overview of what we will be discussing at the meeting. Relevant documents are included in the packet.

- The committee suggested adding information on access to public library service to the Multiple Listing Service information sheet so that house buyers are aware of the availability of public library service when they buy a home. I have talked with local realtors and with regional realtor associations without much progress.
- We are still working on changes to our website that will make resources about serving the unserved easier to find. We will provide an update at the meeting.
- The committee asked for an overview of the reasons why residents are unserved. Greg McCormick of the state library has provided information.
- We have surveyed our member libraries on what services they provide to unserved residents. We had a very large number of responses and received lengthy comments. We will provide a summary and analysis.
- Grant Halter, our Data Coordinator, has created a dashboard with a great deal of interesting data about the unserved which he will demo at the meeting.

- At our Member Update in October, there was lengthy and spirited discussion of the survey and laws related to the unserved. We will provide an overview.
- One outcome of the Member Update discussion was our realization that we, along with ISL and Illinois Heartland, need to create an FAQ for member libraries explaining the laws about nonresident cards and related topics.
- RAILS developed a proposal for annual statewide funding of electronic databases to be added to the Secretary of State's budget. These databases would be available to all system member libraries and to unserved residents. The proposal is included in the packet.
- Our attorneys at Ancel Glink drafted an amendment to the Public Library District Act designed to remove barriers to libraries merging. This document is included in the packet. I will report on the progress of this amendment related to the ILA legislative agenda and questions that ILA committees have had.
- The 2020 Census provides opportunities to reach out to unserved residents who visit libraries to fill out the census form. RAILS received a \$750,000 grant from IDHS to assist in census outreach efforts.
- Baker and Taylor is marketing [Pop Up Library](#) as a way to extend library services into the community and remove barriers to digital borrowing. It might be a way of serving the unserved in some parts of Illinois.
- The Joliet Public Library has established Little Free Libraries in unserved areas of Joliet. Catherine Yanikoski will brief us on this project.