

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, April 24, 2020 | 1:00 PM

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER–
Paul Mills, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed all attendees via zoom videoconference.
2. ROLL CALL OF RAILS BOARD MEMBERS:
Ms. Fister called the roll of the RAILS Board members:
Telephone/Zoom: Dave Barry, Sue Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Dee Runnels, Nadia Sheikh, Thomas Stagg
Absent: Percy Harris
3. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mr. Mills asked that when anyone is speaking, especially when making a motion, to please state their name so that we understand who is speaking and for an accurate recording of the minutes.
Guests via zoom: Deirdre Brennan, Monica Harris, Anne Slaughter, Mary Witt, Jim Kregor, Mark Hatch, Joe Filapek, Ryan Hebel, Stacy Palmisano, and Emily Fister
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS
Ms. Fister received no public comments in advance of the meeting and there were no comments via zoom.
5. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
Ms. Sheikh moved for the adoption of the agenda. Ms. McHone-Chase seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Dave Barry, Susan Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Louise, Scott Pointon, Dee Runnels, Nadia Sheikh, Tom Stagg. Nays: none
6. APPROVAL OF RAILS BOARD MINUTES, FINANCIAL REPORTS AND EXPENDITURES
 - 6.1 RAILS Board Minutes of February 21, 2020 Regular Meeting
Mr. Pointon moved for the adoption of the approval of the board minutes of the February 21, 2020 Regular Meeting. Mr. Barry seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Dave Barry, Susan Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Louise, Scott Pointon, Nadia Sheikh, Tom Stagg. Nays: none. Abstention: Dee Runnels.
 - 6.2 RAILS Financial Report and Approval of Expenditures, February 2020
Mr. Kregor reported the February 29, 2020 unassigned General Fund (\$16.7 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 17.8 months of operations. Cash and investment balances decreased \$0.7 million from the January 31, 2020 balance as RAILS received no Area and Per Capita (APC) grant payments. RAILS has received the entire funding

of the FY2019 APC award and 35.6% of the FY2020 award. Mr. Kregor asked for approval for expenditures for February 2020 in the amount of \$ 793,045.24. Ms. Nemece-Loise moved for the approval of the check voucher/register for February 2020. Ms. Cox seconded and roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Dave Barry, Susan Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemece-Louise, Scott Pointon, Dee Runnels, Nadia Sheikh, Tom Stagg. Nays: none

6.3 RAILS Financial Report and Approval of Expenditures, March 2020

Mr. Kregor reported due to the financial stress of the pandemic interest rates declined from 2.5% to just over 1%. Expenditures are below normal as no library materials have been purchased and since delivery operations were suspended as of March 17, fuel costs are virtually zero. Special revenue funds are active due to spending for the census grant and the L2 replacement project. The RAILS Fiscal Accountability policy requires that we go out to bid every 5 years for our annual audit. Sikich, Inc. has been the accounting firm of record since the inception of RAILS. In late February, we received four proposals. The review team of Jim, two members of the finance department and Monica Harris, evaluated the credentials and prices and are recommending the switch from Sikich to the firm of Lauterbach & Amen. Lauterbach is a well-respected firm that does a lot of business with municipal entities and came in \$3000 lower than the lowered price of Sikich. The audit will begin in June and some preliminary work has already begun. Ms. Nemece-Loise thanked Jim and his team for their work and diligence in this process. Mr. Pointon moved for the approval of the check voucher/register for March 2020 in the amount of \$ 781,061.12. Ms. Hollister seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Dave Barry, Susan Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemece-Louise, Scott Pointon, Dee Runnels, Nadia Sheikh, Tom Stagg. Nays: none

7. REPORTS

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Mr. Mills stated that this has been an extraordinary time for libraries and the State of Illinois and he is proud what libraries are doing to virtually serve the residents of Illinois and especially proud of the leadership and advocacy role that RAILS Board and staff have taken during this time.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports-Committee Chairs

7.2.1 Advocacy Committee

Mr. Campbell reported the committee met virtually this week and discussed program submittals for the ILA and AISLE conferences, whatever form these conferences may take. The committee discussed ways to share resources between school and public libraries based on the upcoming budget crisis; ways to encourage participation in the upcoming trustee forum and other professional development and perhaps hosting a virtual trustee cocktail hour to share ideas about dealing with the shutdown. The next meeting is scheduled for May 20.

7.2.2 Consortia Committee

Mr. Mills said the consortia committee met on Monday April 20 and much discussion revolved around what the different consortia were doing during the shutdown including collaborations and planning for reopening. There are many differences in the fiscal and geographical nature of the consortia and their members. Ms. Slaughter reviewed the

LLSAP support grant formula at the meeting, explaining that it is transparent and data driven. The grant application will be sent to the LLSAPs June 15 and is due September 1. Mr. Mills said the support grant is dependent upon state funding and the consortia members are all cognizant of that fact.

7.2.3 Executive Committee

The committee has not met.

7.2.4 Policy Committee

The committee has not met.

7.2.5 Resource Sharing Committee

The committee has not met.

7.2.6 Universal Service Committee

Ms. Brennan reported the committee has not met, but wanted to highlight that the State Library has relaxed the rules regarding non-resident library cards. Some libraries are using this opportunity to reach out to and serve unserved schoolchildren.

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Ms. Brennan said that much has changed since she submitted her written report as there have been developments every day since the shutdown. RAILS staff very much appreciates the support of the board and your knowledge that we are supporting our members in every way possible. The last day RAILS staff was at work was March 16 and all office staff is successfully working at home. We have had three special member updates, the last one had over 700 attendees and we had to increase our zoom capabilities. Libraries are worried about their patrons and users, and our role is to provide guidance. Discussions and issues have evolved since the beginning of the shutdown; initial concerns were focused on closing, how and how long; then a focus on staffing questions, furloughs and unemployment; now the discussions are regarding curbside service and reopening and future funding. With the ever-changing situation and the Governor extending the stay at home order, we worked to clarify the role and position of libraries. Julie Tappendorf opined, with the caveat that she has not actually read the official order, that libraries are closed because boards chose to close, not because we are not an essential business, therefore the decisions lie within the board whether or not to reopen and when. Libraries are governmental entities, not businesses. At the end of March RAILS reached out to IMLS regarding guidance into the safe handling and cleaning of library materials for when libraries reopen. Disinfecting materials and keeping staff and the public safe is a huge member concern. There is a 25 member steering committee for a study about safe handling of materials.

RAILS is keeping statistics regarding what libraries are offering as far as virtual services; libraries are coordinating 3d printing efforts to work with Amita Health Hinsdale; we have lists and map of libraries that are closed, and draft reopening plans on the site as well. Ms. Runnels talked about the state of the Moline Public Library closing and that the city had cut over \$400,000 of the library budget because the city will be facing a \$10 million short fall in their own budget. The library board is looking at ways to keep open and offering services.

7.3.2 Quarterly Consortial Reports

Ms. Brennan said the consortial reports will show what is being done at the library level, the consortial level and the systems level. Ms. Gregory commented that CARLI is dealing within online learning, and current migration to a new system has added challenges. Budget challenges for academic libraries will be prevalent due to refunds for housing and summer programs.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

There was no report.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 System Area and Per Capita Grant Application Operational Plan

Ms. Brennan reported that the operational plan and budget is based on the guidelines from the State Library, and the Systems Act. The plan follows our strategic plan goals as well. Knowing that there may be changes due to this covid-19 pandemic, we will be agile and make changes, as we know more about the financial situation of the state. Top goals include looking at our eRead vendor for possible changes; working on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to build a culture of acceptance in RAILS and sharing that information with members; and there are plans to expand universal service as well. The Goal 2 of "telling the library story" will be particularly important at this time to assist libraries in showing how they are essential. We will begin to require that all libraries have a strategic plan in place that may help in handling the issues that arise such as a pandemic; we will assist them with the development of plans. The complete application will be presented in full at the May meeting for board approval.

8.2 Executive Director Evaluation

Mr. Mills reported that the process of using an online portal to complete the evaluation of the Executive Director worked well in the past and we will use this process again. The survey will go out shortly and should be completed by Friday May 8. The results will be shared with Ms. Brennan and the board the next week and the results will be discussed on Friday, May 22 in executive session at the RAILS board meeting.

9. AGENDA BUILDING FOR THE NEXT RAILS BOARD MEETING

The May RAILS board meeting will be held on Friday, May 22, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. The location to be announced depending upon the stay at home order.

10. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 p.m.