

VIRTUAL MEETING
RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 12, 2020 | 9:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting to attend

<https://railslibraries.zoom.us/j/98698299459?pwd=YmJPSTFCb1NGOEhqejlUUW5RdzFzZz09>

Meeting ID: 986 9829 9459

Passcode: 993753

Dial in number: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

MINUTES

1. Welcome—Jenna Nemec-Loise
Ms. Nemec-Loise, Advocacy chairperson, greeted members and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. Designation of Minute Taker—Stacy Palmisano
3. Roll Call of Members
Committee members in attendance via Zoom: Michael Campbell, Percy Harris (joined at 9:15 a.m.) Sarah McHone-Chase (left meeting at 10:00 a.m.), Jenna Nemec-Loise, Thomas Stagg
4. Introductions, Guests, and Announcements
Guests in Attendance Via Zoom: Deirdre Brennan, Halle Cox, Anna Duff, Monica Harris, Stacy Palmisano, Mary Witt
5. Public Comment
No public comments
6. Adoption of the Agenda
Michael Campbell moved, and Sarah McHone-Chase seconded, that

THE RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE AGENDA BE ADOPTED WITH A CHANGE IN ORDER DUE TO GUEST HALLE COX'S TIME CONSTRAINT. AGENDA ITEM 7 B WILL BE MOVED TO 7 A.

The motion carried. Roll call was taken: Ayes: Michael Campbell, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jenna Nemec-Loise, and Thomas Stagg. Nays: none.

7. Approval of the Minutes of the September 17, 2020 RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting
Thomas Staff moved, and Sarah McHone-Chase seconded, that

THE RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 MINUTES BE APPROVED.

The motion carried. Roll call was taken: Ayes: Michael Campbell, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jenna Nemec-Loise, and Thomas Stagg. Nays: none.

8. Discussion of progress on advocacy efforts
 - a. Recap the October 21, 2020 ILA Virtual Conference session
The committee recapped the ILA Virtual Conference presentation titled *The Library Ecosystem, Essential Collaboration Between Public and School Libraries*. Committee members Jenna Nemec-

Loise and Michael Campbell along with Deirdre Brennan, RAILS Executive Director, participated in the webinar. Christy Semande, President of AISLE, and Amy Walsh, School Librarian, Joliet West High School joined the webinar as panelists. Overall, the presentation was a success with 24 people attending. Ms. Semande shared with the audience that while in some areas of Illinois school districts are eliminating or reducing the role of school librarians in other areas school administrators are actively looking to hire school librarians and are finding it difficult to find qualified candidates. Ms. Nemec-Loise would like to learn more about the school librarian preparation programs within the state to see if RAILS can help with advocacy efforts to ensure qualified applicants are available for hire. The audience responded favorably that the content offered at the webinar had good practical examples.

b. Discuss ways to advocate for special libraries

Ms. Cox, Director of the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center and RAILS Board member, joined the meeting to discuss ways to advocate for special libraries. Special libraries are a diverse group with variety of revenue streams and minimal staffing. The Special Libraries Association (SLA), the American Library Association (ALA), the Illinois Library Association (ILA), the RAILS list serve, and any industry specific library associations Ms. Cox suggested as valuable ways to advocate for special libraries. Reaching out personally and letting special libraries know the benefits of RAILS and encouraging partnerships between special libraries and school libraries, academic libraries and public libraries through grant collaboration and resource sharing would prove beneficial, according to Ms. Cox. The committee discussed the question of how RAILS can support special libraries. Ms. Cox suggested offering networking events, tours of special libraries to encourage partnerships, and reaching out to special libraries through the RAILS list serve to offer help and support. Dan Bostrom, RAILS Member Engagement Manager, is actively involved with SLA and their Illinois chapter and the RAILS' My Library Is.. website has created advocacy talking points for special libraries. Due to the issue of minimal staffing and solo librarians within special libraries, it has proven difficult for RAILS to get responses and to find ways to support their libraries. Ms. Cox concluded by stating publically funded and semi-public special libraries will need more support from RAILS' services and advocacy in comparison to corporate funded special libraries.

Action steps:

1. Ms. Nemec-Loise and Ms. Cox will work together on drafting an email for the RAILS list serve.
2. Ms. Witt and Ms. Brennan will follow up with Mr. Bostrom and will report to the committee on his progress with special libraries.

c. Discuss partnership opportunities for school and academic libraries

Ms. Nemec-Loise opened the conversation looking for ways that school libraries and academic libraries can collaborate to make the transition seamless for students from K-12 schools to universities. Ms. McHone-Chase has found that most students that come to Northern Illinois University lack the research and the writing skills to do a research project and that students have minimal experience visiting a library and teachers are not instructing on the research process. The conversation focused on the partnership between high school librarians and academic librarians being more beneficial than a partnership with K-8 school librarians. Ms. McHone-Chase stated that at Northern Illinois University, they have the ability to know what areas their student population are coming from and they focus outreach to those schools. This direction may be an opportunity for partnerships. Ms. Brennan discussed that the Association of Illinois School Library Educators, AISLE, is open to partnerships but a factor facing schools is the underfunding of school libraries. The last issue discussed was the importance of teaching research early within the K-12 curriculum.

Action steps:

1. Ms. Nemec-Loise and Ms. McHone-Chase will meet and brainstorm some practical steps.

2. Ms. Brennan will attend the next AISLE meeting and report to the committee.

d. Discuss items from the ILA Trustee Forum

Mr. Harris announced that he is officially the new manager for the ILA Trustee Forum which will meet on November 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. Among the topics to be discussed at the meeting will be setting up a webinar for librarians and trustees that will focus on COVID-19, enhancing communications with library trustees, adding more webinars, the ILA Trustee newsletter, podcasts, and the ILA Virtual Conference. Mr. Harris will forward the meeting information to the committee.

9. Agenda building for next meeting

1. Follow up from discussion about advocating for special libraries
2. Follow up with the partnership opportunities for school and academic libraries
3. Mr. Harris to share more details about the ILA Trustee Forum
4. Ms. Brennan will report on communication ideas to contact library trustees

The committee agreed that the next meeting will be early to mid-December. Ms. Palmisano will send out a Doodle poll to find the next meeting date.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Advocacy Committee Members:

- Jenna Nemec-Loise, Chair
- Michael Campbell
- Percy Harris
- Sarah McHone – Chase
- Tom Stagg
 - Ex Officio: Deirdre Brennan, Monica Harris, Mary Witt