

**VIRTUAL MEETING  
RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, February 11, 2021 | 3:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome**

Ms. Nemec-Loise, Advocacy chairperson, greeted members and called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Ms. Nemec-Loise read the following: In accordance with the Government Emergency Administrative Act PA100-0640, the RAILS Board of Directors finds an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent and believes it is in the best interest of RAILS to hold a virtual meeting to perform essential business. This meeting will be recorded as per the statutory requirements.

**2. Roll Call of Members – Karen Goyer**

*Telephone/Zoom:* Michael Campbell, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Thomas Stagg  
*Absent:* Percy Harris

**3. Introductions of Guests and Announcements**

*Burr Ridge:* Monica Harris (*ex-officio*)

*Telephone/Zoom:* Deirdre Brennan (*ex-officio*), Anna Duff, Karen Goyer, Amy Walsh, Mary Witt (*ex-officio*)

There were no announcements.

**4. Public Comment**

There were no comments.

**5. Adoption of the Agenda**

Mr. Stagg moved and Mr. Campbell seconded, that

THE RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE AGENDA BE ADOPTED.

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

**6. Approval of the Minutes of the January 14, 2021 RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting**

Ms. McHone-Chase moved, and Mr. Stagg seconded, that

THE RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE JANUARY 14, 2021 MINUTES BE APPROVED.

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

**7. Discussion of Progress on Advocacy Efforts and Topics**

**7.1. How future AISLE meetings facilitate conversations regarding partnerships between school and academic libraries**

The focus of collaboration has been on the relationship between School and Public

Libraries. The RAILS Advocacy committee will look at how School and Academic libraries can collaborate for the success of students as they move from high school to university. Ms. Nemec-Loise suggested the committee work specifically with high school librarians who are part of AISLE to facilitate partnership opportunities through the work they are already doing. Ms. Walsh added the school librarians are working to help students with college and career readiness skills and to use libraries for scholarly work.

Ms. Nemec-Loise would like to add the topic of cross-walking Illinois state school standards or AASL (American Association of School Librarians) standards with IACRL (Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries) or ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) standards to the agenda of the combined group meeting between AISLE, RAILS, IHLS and ILA. Framing the topic in a way to encourage action is important. The group meets next on March 2, 2021.

Ms. Walsh stated a collaboration between high schools and local colleges could be immediately put into action. High school students taking dual credit classes with the local junior college need instruction using the college libraries.

AISLE was contacted by Keith Curry Lance who is working on a national study of school libraries. The study is missing data for approximately 800 schools, of which over a half are in Illinois. Ms. Brennan stated it is difficult to advocate for libraries without having complete data. The Illinois library systems, ISL, and AISLE are aligned in being determined to address this issue. Ms. Nemec added that when gathering data, it is important to be clear about the definition of what is a school library and a school librarian, and to determine who reports they have a school library program and school librarian, but do not actually meet the criteria.

**7.2. Discuss common ground around e-resources**

Ms. Harris stated the recent state database survey indicated many libraries would like to have more e-resources available to them. RAILS is working to increase benefits offered through the Deals and Discounts program. RAILS could make a bigger difference with more robust data. The lack of school data has affected the ability to negotiate for better e-resource pricing. The expansion of the eRead offerings from the grant RAILS received has had a huge impact on our libraries.

Mr. Campbell suggested RAILS approach the Follett Corporation for data on the resources schools currently have. Follett manages the databases used by most schools. On Thursday, March 4, 2021, a virtual event titled "System E-Content and E-Resources for Illinois Educators" will be hosted by RAILS, IHLS, and AISLE.

**7.3. Ideas around virtual meetups**

It was agreed this topic would be revisited at another time.

**7.4. Report from Trustee Roundtable - January 20, 2021**

Mr. Stagg reported 170 people signed up for the meeting. The presentation by Alex Todd (Director, Prospect Heights Public Library District) covered budgetary topics such as cost of living allowances and financial details that should be of importance to trustees. Joe Filapek (RAILS & Aurora Public Library District Trustee) discussed ideas for educational opportunities for trustees.

**7.5. Report from ILA Trustee Forum Board meeting**

Mr. Stagg reported Percy Harris talked about the possibility of producing a podcast and using the IDPH television studio for trustee forum activities. The next ILA Trustee Forum Board meeting will be held in March.

**7.6. Upcoming February Legislative meetup discussion**

Deirdre Brennan reported the legislative meetups have been well attended. The legislators at the South Suburban meetup seemed knowledgeable about what has been taking place in libraries and are very supportive. Ms. Brennan also attended the Southern Illinois meetup where legislators were less informed and more measured in their responses. The Chicago meetup was postponed due to low signup. The North Suburban and West Suburban meetups are scheduled for next week. U.S. Senator Jack Reed has refiled a \$5,000,000,000 Build America’s Libraries Act. RAILS will apply for funding if the act is approved. It was agreed to reach out to Senators Durbin and Duckworth to support the Build America’s Libraries Act.

Ms. Harris stated the legislators are interested in how to address specific issues. Ms. Nemec-Loise pointed out we must turn the path of support into educated action. Ms. Walsh suggested the problem of shared spread of misinformation across our country is a timely talking point for the importance of libraries and an information literate community.

**7.7. Follow up on action items**

**7.7.1. Reach out to Laura Turner and Beth Tepen**

There is no information to report at this time. This topic is postponed to a future date.

**7.7.2. Find out more about collaboration from PrairieCat**

Amy Walsh is the author of the Delegates School Library Partners document that was distributed to committee members. The document outlines how Joliet High School and Manhattan-Elwood Public Library collaborate with each other and with other area public and school libraries.

**8. Agenda Building for Next Meeting**

Suggestions for agenda items should be sent to Deirdre Brennan or Karen Goyer.

- Continue to report on feedback from legislative events.
- Consider contacting the ROE (Regional Offices of Education) to supply data on public school libraries. Ms. Walsh will reach out to Ms. Brennan with the name of a contact at ROE. It is important to keep in mind that keeping track of certain statistics is likely different for public, independent, and private schools. They may also have different requirements for what constitutes a qualified librarian or library staff member. When collecting data, we must be inclusive of not only public, but also independent and private schools.

**9. Adjournment**

Ms. Nemec-Loise thanked the board for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.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