

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, March 26, 2021 | 1:00 PM

**Minutes**

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Michael Campbell, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, March 26, 2021, and welcomed all attendees.

2. ROLL CALL OF RAILS BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Fister called the roll of the RAILS Board members:

RAILS Burr Ridge: Paul Mills, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Alex Vancina

RAILS East Peoria: Sue Busenbark, Thomas Stagg, Dianne Hollister

Telephone/Zoom: Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Beth Tepen

Absent: Percy Harris

3. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Campbell 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.

Burr Ridge: Deirdre Brennan, Monica Harris

East Peoria: Kendal Orrison

Illinois State Library: Greg McCormick, Karen Egan

Via telephone/Zoom: Anna Duff, Jim Kregor, Ryan Hebel, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Mark Hatch, Mary Witt, Anne Slaughter, Emily Fister

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.1 Adoption of the Agenda

5.2 Approval of RAILS Board Minutes of February 26, 2021 Regular Meeting

5.3 Approval of Expenditures: February, 2021 – Jim Kregor

Ms. McHone-Chase moved for the adoption of the consent agenda. Ms. Kenney seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Susan Busenbark, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Tom Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Michael Campbell. Nays: none

6. RAILS Financial Report

Mr. Kregor reported the total General Fund revenues of \$ 8,736,479 through February were \$262,709 above budget due to (\$316,846) Area and Per Capita payments, partially offset by decreased Investment income of (\$96,146). On March 12 RAILS received an Area and Per Capita grant payment of \$1,936,144. The remaining outstanding balance of the FY2021 APC Grant is \$6,435,000. February 28, 2021 unassigned General Fund (\$15.6 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 16.9 months of operations.

March spending will increase due to the Board approval of the retroactive salary increase and purchase of laptop computers, but will still be below budget for the year.

## 7. REPORTS

### 7.1 Report from the RAILS President

There was no report.

### 7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports

#### 7.2.1 Advocacy Committee

Ms. Nemec-Loise said the latest meeting included feedback from ILA legislative meetups, planning for school library data collection, and working towards more engagement with the Illinois State Board of Education. She relayed that the committee is looking into how to convey the importance of library advocacy for all library types and setting up collaborations between high school and academic libraries.

#### 7.2.2 Consortia Committee

The Committee will meet on April 19, 2021.

#### 7.2.3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The Committee has not met.

#### 7.2.4 Executive Committee

The Committee has not met.

#### 7.2.5 Policy Committee

The Committee has not met, but will meet in April.

#### 7.2.6 Resource Sharing Committee

The Committee has not met.

#### 7.2.7 Universal Service Committee

The committee has not met.

### 7.3 RAILS Reports

#### 7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Ms. Brennan went over portions of the American Rescue Plan 2021 document, including the library funding summary. She said funding will not just be going to the state library but to state and local governments, so we will need to be proactive in seeking funding for libraries. She highlighted the quarterly LLSAP reports that contain information about their services. She said there was a recent REALM meeting with members of the CDC Vaccine Team in attendance. A main topic at the meeting was how libraries and museums can play a role in increasing public's trust in the vaccine. Ms. Brennan announced that today is the final day for Board election nominations to be submitted. Ms. Harris explained that the ALA report on vaccines included in the packet was the result of a request from ALA Virtual Midwinter on January 26 to ask the CDC to re-categorize library workers from 1c to 1b. She said the survey of state associations saw responses from forty-one states and provides a snapshot of libraries from Feb 8 to March 2. In response to the survey question of whether the vaccine rollout plan was consistent across the state or varied by local jurisdiction, the majority said it was consistent. Only two states said they were exactly following CDC guidelines while the rest made at least some modifications. Nineteen states did their own advocacy to their state to get library workers moved to 1b but none of them saw a change. Ms. Harris said

this may have been part of the reason ALA did not intervene.

#### 7.3.2 RAILS Service of the Month Report: Member Engagement –Dan Bostrom

Mr. Bostrom explained some of his various approaches to member engagement, which include outreach, customer service, marketing and communications. He said RAILS has had success with replacing in-person networking with online roundtables. He said online site visits are held on an as-needed basis. Roundtable topics are selected based on current RAILS initiatives, suggestions from members, and popular topics on the email list. For outreach, he has been working on collaboration with ICRL, SLA Illinois, Health Science Librarians of Illinois, AISLE, and the My Library Is... Advisory Team.

#### 7.4 Illinois State Library Report

Mr. McCormick reported that the secretary's budget has moved forward through the committee hearing processes with sustaining funding at the FY21 levels for library and literacy programs. He stated that regarding the American Rescue Plan Act, the Illinois State Library has received initial indication that it will provide over 4.7 million dollars in federal money, to be expended by September 30, 2022. He said the Illinois State Library, along with other state library agencies, met with IMLS regarding their expectations for this funding and will meet again next week to put together plans on how this will be implemented. He said the funding will create a significant budget increase, moving from roughly five and a half million dollars to well over 10 million dollars in federal funding for FY22. He talked about how the act will impact local public libraries. Mr. McCormick said the Illinois Library Association is encouraging local public libraries to look at what is going to local governments that might also be applicable to libraries. He announced that FY22 Project Next Generation grant applications are being accepted through March 30, the Public Library Construction Act funding deadline is April 15, and Live and Learn Construction grant applications are currently being processed. He stated that school library grants were just awarded for the 2021 School Library Per Capita grant program and Public Library Per Capita grant applications have all been received. In response to the question of how funding from the American Rescue Act will be allocated, Mr. McCormick said that purchases and grants may require approval by IMLS on a case by case basis. The need for more data on school libraries was briefly discussed. Ms. Egan shared that on the school grants submitted this year, there were 2,652 school buildings eligible. In comparison, there were 2,723 during FY20.

### 8. NEW BUSINESS

#### 8.1 Membership Change

Dan Bostrom presented the Center For Change School, a school that offers an alternative education program for students who suffer behavioral, emotional, and social concerns. Ms. Cox moved for the approval of the Center for Change School for full membership in RAILS and to request final approval from the Illinois State Library. Ms. Spratford seconded and a roll call was taken: Ayes: Kristine Kenny, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemecko, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Sue Busenbark, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, Michael Campbell. Nays: None. The motion carried.

#### 8.2 Joint Meeting with IHLS and ISL

Ms. Brennan reported that it has been a few years since we have had a joint meeting with the Heartland library system and the State Library. The board agreed that it may be easier to hold

this meeting virtually and possibly more than once a year. Ms. Brennan will contact Leslie Bednar and get some possible dates for the meeting.

### 8.3. FY 2022 Budget

Ms. Brennan reported that the preliminary budget will be presented at the April meeting with the final budget due to the State Library June 1<sup>st</sup> as part of the Annual Per Capita Grant. RAILS creates the annual budget from the ground up and the grant is the only funding source. Mr. Kregor said fifty percent of the budget is delivery (30%) and LLSAP support (20%).

### 8.4 Strategic Planning

Ms. Brennan reported the first RAILS strategic plan was done in 2013-14 when RAILS was a brand new organization. That included hired consultants, with a great deal of outreach and focus groups at the cost of about \$25-30K. An update in 2017-18 was done by staff and included listening sessions and meetings. She said it is time for a fresh perspective as trends and future needs change. RAILS has just started getting proposals. The board asked to share the list of potential vendors.

### 8.5 Future of virtual/in-person meetings

Mr. Campbell reported that as we are now in Phase 4 of the five-phase Restore Illinois mitigation plan he wanted to get thoughts about planning for future meetings. Ms. Fister will send options for future meetings. Mr. Campbell reiterated that everyone should determine their attendance according to their own comfort level.

## 9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 9.1 Board engagement survey results

Ms. Brennan went over results from the Board engagement survey. Some suggestions to be put into action were providing members with information about networking opportunities on a regular basis, taking a break in Board meetings, and having a summary of actionable items at the end of agenda item discussion. It was suggested that a document with a list of these actionable items be sent out post meeting. Another suggestion was written reports from committee meetings, highlighting important items. For consistency and succinctness, RAILS Staff will create a report submission form. Ms. Brennan said she would do a follow-up report on the survey results.

### 9.2 Statewide database proposal update

Ms. Brennan said the proposal was sent to key legislators and Ms. Spratford received a reply from House minority leader Jim Durkin's staff that they are reviewing it. Ms. Brennan asked that all share the updated talking points with colleagues, boards, and legislators.

## 10. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

### Report on the unserved in Illinois

Ms. Brennan reviewed the reports from 2000 and 2005 and noted that the issues have not changed much in the past 20 years. The reports both mention information on the multiple listing service and statewide library services for children. There was discussion about efforts to address the unserved in Illinois. She said there are still about 10% of residents unserved. Based on board discussion, Ms. Brennan concluded that looking into what type of coalitions may be

formed regarding the unserved will be discussed at the next Universal Service Committee agenda.

11. RAILS BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no reports.

12. AGENDA BUILDING FOR THE NEXT RAILS BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be held on Friday, April 23, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Items for the agenda include an update on RAILS Discounts and Group Purchases, and a report on the future of delivery, the Executive Director evaluation, and the budget.

13. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.