

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, April 23, 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, April 23, 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

RAILS Coal Valley: Sue Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Tom Stagg, Dianne Hollister, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina

Telephone/Zoom: Halle Cox, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Percy Harris (1:20 p.m.)

Absent: none

3. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS – Michael Campbell

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.

Coal Valley: Deirdre Brennan, Carolyn Coulter, Emily Fister-minute taker

East Peoria: Kendal Orrison

Illinois State Library: Greg McCormick, Karen Egan

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

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – Michael Campbell

There were no public comments.

4. CONSENT AGENDA – Michael Campbell

5.1 Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Stagg requested the adoption of the agenda be removed from the consent agenda.

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

5.3 Approval of Disbursements: March, 2021 – Jim Kregor

Ms. McHone-Chase moved for the approval of the consent agenda after removing the adoption of the agenda. Mr. Vancina 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

Mr. Stagg made a motion to amend the agenda to allow item 8.2, Report from Elizabeth Lindsay-Ryan, to begin at 1:30 pm to accommodate her schedule. Ms. Tepen 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

5. RAILS Financial Report

Mr. Gregor reported revenues remain above budget and expenditures are well below budget due to expenditure deferrals and savings resulting from pandemic restrictions. Expenditures increased in March, primarily due to the implementation of unbudgeted wage and salary increases, retroactive to July 1, 2020. The March 31, 2021 unassigned General Fund (\$16.7 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 18.1 months of operations. He stated the group purchases are reimbursement revenues. Estimates for laptop replacements are \$125,000 and proposals are expected at the end of April. The entire amount (\$80,928.37) of the fraudulently cashed funds pertaining to the three stolen checks has now been recovered.

6. REPORTS

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

There was no report.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

Mr. Campbell reported that written reports were sent for the Advocacy, Consortia and Policy committees.

7.2.1 Advocacy Committee - Jenna Nemec-Loise

There were no updates or questions for the written report.

7.2.2 Consortia Committee - Paul Mills

There were no updates or questions for the written report.

7.2.3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee-Dianne Hollister

The Committee will meet April 26, 2021.

7.2.4 Executive Committee - Michael Campbell

The Committee has not met.

7.2.5 Policy Committee - Thomas Stagg

Mr. Stagg reported the Committee met before the Board meeting and will bring proposed bylaws changes to the May board meeting for review and approval.

7.2.6 Resource Sharing Committee - Monica Harris

The Committee will meet May 10, 2021.

7.2.7 Universal Service Committee – Sue Busenbark

The Committee will meet June 10, 2021.

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Ms. Brennan reported RAILS recently had a meeting about Find More Illinois with ten libraries interested in joining. She announced that on May 11, at the RAILS Online Roundtable: Strategic Planning for Trustees, Mr. Greg Pronevitz will report on an online strategic planning toolkit he developed to assist libraries with costs of strategic planning. She said Mr. Pronevitz will also give a delivery report at the next RAILS Member Update and Mr. McCormick will speak about library funding. Ms. Brennan said RAILS has also been working on implementing suggested changes from RAILS Board members for RAILS reports and meetings.

7.3.2 RAILS Service of the Month Report: RAILS Discounts and Group Purchases

Ms. Heath reported RAILS helped members save over one million dollars in discounts during FY2020. She said discounts on curbside services and online reading programs have been some of the latest additions. She has also begun exploring resources for K-12 and added middle school and elementary packages this year through EBSCO. Ms. Heath said she welcomes feedback on current discount pricing and issues libraries are having, as such information helps with talking to vendors. She said Communico, which has over fifty participating libraries, made pricing changes due to library concerns she passed on. She informed that RAILS recently purchased an online resource called Consortia Manager in order to grow the program. It will increase efficiency of the purchasing and billing processes, including member communications with group purchases. Ms. Heath pointed out that Deals and Discounts page can be found on the RAILS library website and urged members to check it monthly since it is constantly updating. She mentioned added resources such as a Homeless Training Institute to train librarians on assisting homeless patrons, MyLibro lowered pricing, RDA Toolkit renewal, and available webinars.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

Mr. McCormick reported that he will attend the next RAILS Member Update. He said the Build Americas Library Act, a federal bill, is currently being worked on. He said libraries did come up in the discussion on the budget. The Illinois Senate bill 2232 is an accompanying piece to the increases for school library and public library per capita programs, which will likely go to the house by the end of the day or next week. He relayed that since the last board meeting the secretary awarded the final Public Library Construction Grants. The Illinois State Library has reviewed Live and Learn Construction Grants and will be making those award announcements in the next coming days. He said all the public library per capita grants for 2021 have been received and 638 out of 639 will receive funding. He said the Illinois State Library is looking into what will occur next year with system grants and Project Next Generation.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 FY 2022 Budget and Draft Operational Plan (discussion only) Deirdre Brennan, Jim Kregor

Ms. Brennan announced the operational plan and budget application is due June 1. She went over the RAILS operational plan and budget. She said RAILS has been somewhat below budget this year but expects to be over budget next year. She relayed that the RAILS budget amount has not changed in ten years. She said hiring and retaining delivery staff has become an issue because other organizations are able to offer competitive salaries. As a result, RAILS may have to increase delivery staff salaries. Ms. Brennan said RAILS is in need of new vehicles, a new phone system and laptops. She explained that delivery and LLSAP support take up a lot of the budget, approximately 50%. She said redoing the RAILS website is estimated to cost \$57,000. RAILS will issue an RFP for delivery soon to see if additional outsourcing can be implemented to save money. She said e-resources have become more crucial due to the pandemic and My Library Is... work has helped libraries tell their stories. Mr. Kregor said 45% of the budget goes to personnel costs and said RAILS must keep salaries and wages competitive with the outside world. It was asked what the backup plan may be if an increase in funding never comes. Ms. Brennan responded that she will firstly work hard to advocate for the funding and secondly, she agreed to bring a list of things that could be cut to the board next month. Mr. Kregor pointed

out that RAILS does have the capacity to absorb the costs over the short term and the current reevaluation of some programs, such as CE and outsourcing delivery sources, may have huge, beneficial cost implications. Discussion about talking points for Board members to advocate for budget increase also took place.

8.2 Report from Elizabeth Lindsay-Ryan on RAILS EDI efforts

Ms. Lindsay-Ryan reported she is working with the RAILS climate team and with the board EDI committee. She said the content structure includes beginning with terminology, targeted learning, skill building with scenarios, and equitable decision-making. For staff development the next phase will be relationships, then skill building actions in spring of 2021. She said the workplace climate team is doing an audit of the organization. It is a collaborative process of thinking through how to make everyone feel welcome and included. The overarching goal is to make everyone feel respected and valued and able to reach their full potential. The climate team is going through a process, with the inventory phase first. She explained that the focus will be on four relationships: staff members, staff partners, staff board, and staff. In regards to the overall timeline, she began work in July and said implementation should happen over the course of summer and fall. She relayed that EDI Subcommittees have been made created to focus on specific topics. On the horizon, she foresees creation of a cohort model to deliver this process to other libraries.

8.3 Executive Director Evaluation

Mr. Campbell announced that members will be sent a survey link for Deirdre's annual evaluation that is due by Friday, May 7. He said the findings will be discussed in a closed session during the June meeting.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1 Strategic Planning

Ms. Brennan reported that RAILS is still waiting for two proposals, so there is no update at this time.

9.2 Board engagement survey results and follow up

Ms. Brennan said RAILS has implemented some changes suggested by Board members. She talked about the calendar addition request. Suggestions were made for adding ILA events and legislative meetups so new board members know what to expect month by month. Ms. Brennan said she added a megaphone symbol in the report to highlight examples of advocacy topics. Additional changes include taking breaks in meetings, providing written committee reports, and added networking opportunities.

9.3 Statewide database proposal update

Ms. Brennan said the HB2071 amendment one has five co-sponsors, with the chief sponsor as representative Martin McLaughlin. She said ILA noted that there is also a companion bill about Open Education Resources. Ms. Brennan will continue to update the Board as this issue progresses.

10. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

The Future of Delivery

Ms. Harris announced that quarantining of materials in RAILS delivery ended on April 12. She said the future of RAILS delivery will involve looking into automation. Mr. Hatch explained RAILS owns the Burr Ridge and Coal Valley service centers but leases the Bolingbrook location. He said the landlord wants RAILS to sign a five year lease but a decision will not yet be made, due to the pending RFP. He talked about safety precautions in place, including hand sanitization stations, social distancing, and electrical static disinfection sprayers. Mr. Hatch said RAILS' current delivery operation is a hybrid of in-house and out-house deliveries. Continental Transportation Logistics (CTL) is our outsource company. He said we resumed regular delivery in June of this year with 91% of the libraries opting back in and 6.7 million items being processed so far. He talked about a recommendation to switch the shuttle delivery exchange point to save money. RAILS switched its 38 vehicles to Ford vehicles, which have better fuel economy but Mr. Hatch is hoping to see electrical vehicles in the future. He talked about logistics required to exchange materials each evening between the hubs and IHLS. He said we need to automate processes and use tablets to capture route data. Looking toward the future, he said libraries can convert to computer generated labels, change barcode placements, and implement a process to give data on a daily basis rather than quarterly.

11. RAILS BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Board meeting wrap up:

- from Biz Lindsay-Ryan presentation: identifying useful work for members, perhaps sharing her training as an advocacy tool for EDI to members;
- list of items to be cut from budget to avoid a deficit budget;
- need to provide advocacy info to board and members for more money for systems;
- the Executive Director evaluation survey will be sent out after meeting and is due to Michael by May 7;
- add CE events, ILA meet ups and trustee training to the calendar per the board engagement survey;
- delivery more conversation about changing exchange point for cost savings

Mr. Harris reported that ILA Trustee Forum May workshop Boot Camp for Trustees is May 15 . Topics include: Finance 101, Succession Planning, Strong Relationships Between Boards and directors.

Ms. McIntosh reported that the 19th Annual Information Literacy Summit on April 29-30 will be held online and free. It is hosted by Moraine Valley Community College, DePaul University, and College of DuPage. Topics include: misinformation, disinformation, and information literacy.

12. AGENDA BUILDING FOR THE NEXT RAILS BOARD MEETING

The May RAILS Board meeting will be held on Friday, May 28, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. PLEASE note the 10 am start. Items on the agenda for May will be a Six-Month Review of Closed Session Minutes, approval of the Area and Per Capita grant application, an update on the Explore More Illinois program, and under board development-the state of resource sharing in Illinois.

13. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.