

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, May 28, 2021 | 10:00 AM

Minutes

1. Welcome and call to order
Michael Campbell, President of the RAILS Board, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. on Friday, May 28, 2021.
2. Roll call of RAILS board members
Fister called the roll of the RAILS Board members:
RAILS Burr Ridge: Michael Campbell, Paul Mills, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Alex Vancina
RAILS East Peoria: Dianne Hollister, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen
Telephone/Zoom: Sue Busenbark, Halle Cox, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Jenna Nemec-Loise,
Absent: Percy Harris
3. Recognition of guests
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: Karen Egan
Via telephone/Zoom: Anna Duff, Jim Kregor, Ryan Hebel, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Mark Hatch, Mary Witt, Anne Slaughter, Jody Rubel, Jessica Barnes, Leila Heath, Kathy Parker, Charm Ruhnke, 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 April 23, 2021 Regular Meeting
 - 5.3 Approval of RAILS Board Policy Committee Minutes of April 23, 2021
 - 5.4 Approval of RAILS Board Executive Committee Minutes of May 14, 2021
 - 5.5 Approval of Disbursements: April, 2021 – Jim KregorMcHone-Chase moved for the approval of the consent agenda. 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
6. RAILS Financial Report
Kregor 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.

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Campbell reported that a closed session would be held at the end of the board meeting.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

7.2.1 Advocacy Committee

Nemec-Loise had no updates to the report.

7.2.2 Consortia Committee

The committee did not meet.

7.2.3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Hollister had no additions to the report.

7.2.4 Executive Committee

Campbell said the committee met and the topics discussed at the committee meeting will be discussed under agenda item 9.2.

7.2.5 Nominating Committee

Parker reported that the committee recruited some diverse candidates, but those candidates did not win any offices. The newly elected board members for public library trustees: Alice Creason from Richton Park Public Library District, Karen Voitik from Shorewood-Troy Library. Thomas Stagg was re-elected. For the two at-large seats: Robin Helenthal from Peoria Public Library, and Patricia Smith from Robert W. Rowe Library were elected. Unfortunately, three of our current board members, Michael Campbell, Percy Harris and Sarah McHone Chase were not re-elected. Parker will be at the June meeting to present the proposed slate of officers for FY2022.

7.2.6 Policy Committee

Stagg reported that the committee met on April 23 and the results will be discussed under agenda item 8.1.

7.2.7 Resource Sharing Committee - Monica Harris

Harris had no updates to the report but said they welcomed new committee member Lois Bruno, director of the NILRC-Network of Illinois Learning Resources in Community Colleges.

7.2.8 Universal Service Committee

Busenbark reported that the committee will meet on June 10.

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Brennan noted that some revisions to the annual board calendar; the review of the closed session minutes will be January and June, and the discussion of the review of the executive director is in May not June. She said staff is working on a draft Covid vaccine and mask policy that will be reviewed by the policy committee. The new offices for East Peoria are a mile away from the current facilities and she thanked Mark, Monica and Kendal's team for their diligence in getting a quick turnaround for this new facility.

7.3.2 RAILS Service of the Month Report: Explore More Illinois program

Barnes reported the Explore More Illinois program provides cultural and recreational passes and is open to all Illinois public libraries. It was started in April 2019, shut down in March 2020, restarted April 2021. She reviewed some data including:

- Over 350 libraries participate including more than 50 IHLS libraries that were added during the shutdown
- Updated and streamlined website: exploremoreillinois.org
- 17 attractions currently participating with more on the way
- No cost for libraries or attraction, RAILS pays for the annual software platform fee
- Allows patron access to attraction around the state providing experiences not all would have the opportunity without the discounts
- Creating partnerships with organizations around the state

McIntosh asked about the possibility of non-public libraries participating; the RAILS staff has been discussing this and will report back. A list of talking points was included in the packet.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report

Egan said the Illinois State library has been reviewing a number of grant applications. They are looking at the FY22 Project Next Generation Grants and FY22 Digital Imaging Grants. Live and Learn Construction Grant recipients should have received award letters by now and the official press release will be coming out shortly. The Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Aid grants have been reviewed and awards are pending. As of yesterday, Senate Bill 2232 passed, which increases the Public Library Per Capita Grant Award from 1.25 to 1.475. She said the Illinois State Library expects that the FY21 awards will be at the higher amount but must wait for the Governor to sign the bill before issuing the awards. The Secretary's budget for FY22 was submitted to sustain library and literacy programs at the FY21 level. She announced that System Area Per Capita Grant applications are due next week. She said the Illinois State Library is winding down the awards for the Federal Cares Act funds and ramping up the American Recovery Plan Act of 2021 awards that will be announced soon. She provided some examples on how funding could be used: for libraries' services that were affected by the pandemic, library modifications that do not require construction, such as movable wall dividers, and finding ways to support job seekers in the community.

8. New business

8.1 Bylaws Changes

Stagg said language in Article two was changed to reflect the mission statement, language regarding number and composition of the Nominating Committee was added, and EDI language regarding recruitment was added. Scott Pointon moved and Halle Cox seconded that the RAILS Board approve the Bylaws changes as presented. Roll call was taken. Ayes: Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemecek-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Teppen, Alex Vancina, Sue Busenbark, Michael Campbell. Nays: None.

8.2 Election report and role of Nominating committee

Brennan reported that the RAILS Nominating Committee is more of an election oversight committee than a true nominating committee. She explained that the current name implies they select the nominees, however, that is not the case. They do not decide who will be the candidates for the Board, but recruit by encouraging members to apply. She said only 200 libraries vote out of 1,260. RAILS is looking into how to increase engagement. It was suggested that a question of whether libraries voted be added to the Certification form. Another suggestion was to have people running attend a RAILS Board meeting to have some interaction with RAILS. An increase in marketing the importance of the Board's work was suggested and increasing the visibility of RAILS board members was also discussed.

8.3 Compensation plan and organizational chart changes

Harris reviewed the memo in the packet. The position, Manager of Library Programs and Resources, held by Leila Heath, has grown in scope to include new responsibilities and the program itself has grown. Therefore, RAILS reevaluated that position with HR Source which recommended it be upgraded to director level. Brennan said Heath has really brought a lot to the program and has many ideas for developing it even further. Mills moved and Nemec-Loise seconded that the Compensation Plan and Organizational Chart Changes be approved as presented. The motion carried. Roll call was taken. Ayes: Dianne Hollister, Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Sue Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox. Nays: None.

9. Unfinished business

9.1 Strategic Planning

Brennan spoke highly of RAILS Strategic Planning consultant, Stephanie Chase's ideas for RAILS. Brennan would like Stephanie to meet with the Board soon. Competing proposal fees were discussed. She said Harris will be the point person and RAILS may form a steering committee of RAILS Board and staff.

9.2 FY 2022 Draft Budget and Operational Plan

Campbell reported that the Executive committee met on May 14th to discuss the FY21-22 budget and the Executive Director's recommendations. He mentioned that one-time large expense items in the budget are hiring a strategic planning consultant, website redesign, and EDI consulting. The Committee would recommend a revisit of the budget after the 1st quarter of the new fiscal year, and recommends to the Board that the budget be approved as presented. Brennan reviewed her memo to the committee which included possible changes to the budget, such as : Advocate for an increase in the Area and Per Capita grant, as there has been no increase in funding since RAILS was formed in 2011; request funding from the state library for projects such as L2 and cataloging of foreign language materials; identify possible internal restructuring that will reduce expenditures, due to retirement of Jim Kregor and other Finance staff members; possible restructure of financial support for LLSAPs, and reviewing the Delivery Outsourcing RFP responses and options.

Brennan added that the packet includes the budget narrative Jim Kregor prepared, which involves an overview of RAILS financial activities. She had a conversation with Greg McCormick and Leslie Bednar about the structural deficit. The Illinois State Library is willing to reimburse RAILS for the

Library Learning (L2) site and special cataloging of world languages. She said RAILS added EDI language to the Plan of Service to ensure that RAILS begins to have the same expectations of our partners and vendors as we do of ourselves. Brennan talked about restructuring RAILS internally to save costs and monitor expenses. Alex Vancina moved and Kris Kenney seconded that the RAILS Universal Service Committee approve the FY 2022 Draft Budget and Operational Plan as presented. The motion carried. Roll call was taken. Ayes: Kris Kenney, Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Sue Busenbark, Michael Campbell, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister. Nays: None.

10. Board Development

The state of resource sharing in Illinois

Harris screen-shared the RAILS Resource Sharing Plan. She said delivery is a huge form of resource sharing and the projected volume for FY21 is a little over eight million ite She said that compared to overall library circulation numbers, holds are remaining steady. The delivery RFP is live and responses are due July 12th. E-content and e-resources are another huge area of resource sharing. She said Deals and Discounts have grown by 20%. E-Read participation grew 21%, with 60% of that growth coming from school libraries. Harris said as RAILS ends the buying period, the focus will shift to evaluating how people are using the resources the grant provided. A lot came out of the pandemic about how virtual tools could be extended in the future.

Charm Ruhnke, Peru Public Library Director, talked about resource sharing. She said her library sees a lot of travelers who use their computers or reciprocal sharing. For most public libraries reciprocal borrowing and delivery are the main forms of resource sharing. Delivery underpins all the physical resource sharing and at the local library level, we see a higher rate of books being returned because of delivery. She said her library has seen an increase in audio books and those numbers have not been dropping. She is curious to see how the relationship between physical items and e-resources will look over the next few years. She discussed the importance of finding creative ways to convey to new Board members and Library Directors the crucial benefits of reciprocal borrowing. Modelski, Information Scientist from Ecolab, a special library, said ILL borrowing has been a very important resource that allows each party to share and learn from the other.

11. RAILS Board Member Reports

There were no reports.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next RAILS board meeting

Campbell announced the next RAILS board meeting will be held on Friday, June 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Items on the agenda include a Six-Month Review of Closed Session Minutes, an update on RAILS Continuing Education programs, and under Board development, a report on collaboration between RAILS, AISLES, IHLS, and ILA. Brennan said we will have the Nominating Committee present the slate of officers. She said topics will include making Board members more visible, strategic planning, and the tenth anniversary of RAILS.

13. Closed session

Campbell announced the Board will move into closed session to discuss matters pertaining to personnel, as per *5 Illinois Compiled Statutes*, chapter 120, paragraph 2, section (c) 1, which states: *Exceptions. A public body may hold closed meetings to consider the following subjects: The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.*

Campbell stated that the RAILS board would move into closed session. Live stream will stop, and will then resume when we move out of closed session. Non-board member zoom meeting participants will be moved in a “waiting room” until the board moves out of closed session.

Kenney left the meeting. McHone-Chase moved to go into closed session to discuss the evaluation of the Executive Director. Spratford seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Roll call was taken. Ayes: Sarah McHone-Chase, Jennifer McIntosh, Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Sue Busenbark, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, and Michael Campbell. Nays: None.

Sue Busenbark and Jennifer McIntosh left the meeting during closed session.

Pointon moved to move back into open session, Vancina seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Roll call was taken. Ayes: Paul Mills, Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, and Michael Campbell Nays: None.

11. ACTIONS TO FOLLOW-UP TO CLOSED SESSION

Mills moved that Deirdre Brennan’s salary be adjusted to a 3% increase as of July 1, 2021.

Pointon seconded and roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Jenna Nemec-Loise, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Halle Cox, Dianne Hollister, Sarah McHone-Chase, Paul Mills and Michael Campbell Nays: None.

12. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m.