

RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 10, 2022 | 3:00 p.m.

Minutes

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Robin Helenthal, Advocacy Committee chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Helenthal read the following: In accordance with the Governor's Emergency Proclamation, 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.

2. Roll Call of Members

Goyer called the roll of Committee members.

Zoom: Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh

Absent: Sarah McHone-Chase

3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements

Guests in attendance at RAILS Burr Ridge: Monica Harris (*ex-officio*)

Guests in attendance at East Peoria: None

Guests in attendance via Zoom: Karen Goyer (minute taker), Ryan Hebel, Katherine Henc, Joseph Filapek, Mary Witt (*ex-officio*)

There were no announcements.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Consent Agenda

5.1. Adoption of the Agenda

5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Minutes of February 10, 2022

Alice Creason moved, and Juanita Harrell seconded, that

THE RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Roll call was taken. Ayes: Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh. Nays: none. Absent: Sarah McHone-Chase.

6. Unfinished Business

6.1. Report on ILA Legislative Meet-ups

Members reported on the ILA Legislative Meetups they attended. There was low attendance by legislators at the Northwestern Illinois Meet-up. ILA presenters did a good job of explaining what area libraries have accomplished and what their legislative priorities are to the legislators attending.

6.2. Legislative update

Harris reported on the status of library related bills. Harrell recommended the LegiScan bill tracking tool for an easy way to follow the status of bills. SB3497 Expansion of the Cards for Kids

Act has passed the Senate and is in the House. Representative Martin Moylan is the House sponsor. RAILS is already working on how to support libraries with the questions they might have and whether they want to put the Cards for Kids Act expansion question before their board. The bill provides that a library board may adopt regulations waiving the nonresident fee for persons under the age of 18. It is not a mandate. Walsh pointed out the Cards for Kids expansion is an opportunity for public libraries to partner with the school district to hold library card sign-up at the local school registration.

HB 3254 amends the Instructional Materials of the School Code. Harris noted the bill provides that “the selection of each book to be included in a reading assignment, course material and instruction, or other school curricula related to literature must first receive prior approval from the school board before the book may be included”, giving school boards control of curriculum and books. The bill is progressing but is tabled, pursuant to Rule 40.

ILA is in support of the following bills: HB4758 seeks to expand the offer of broadband availability to public libraries similar to that which is offered to K-12 school buildings via the state’s Connect Illinois program. There is a final action deadline extended to March 31. SB3167 on eBook pricing has been re-referred to the rules committee but has not progressed. Similar legislation in other states has been challenged in the courts. It allows libraries to receive eBook pricing on reasonable terms and under reasonable technological protection measures.

7. Unfinished Business

7.1. Research on how school district library grant money is applied within each district
There are reports that some schools may have absorbed funds meant for libraries. The Illinois State Library (ISL) confirmed that acceptable use for the library grant funding requires funds be used on behalf of the library. Grant money used for other reasons would result in disqualification from library grant funding. ISL and AISLE are interested in pursuing this issue. The RAILS data researcher is looking into how we could investigate use of library grant funds.

7.2. Advocate for budget increase approval

The Secretary of State budget request for FY2023 includes \$2.8 million in potential additional funding for the System Area and Per Capita Grant program that would benefit all three library systems in Illinois. Committee and RAILS members were encouraged to advocate for the Secretary of State budget increase approval by contacting their legislators.

7.3. Material challenges

Materials challenges has been the topic at many of the recent AISLE meetings and in the media. FOIA requests related to material challenges in the last 3 months have exceeded the previous 12-month period. Filipek demonstrated the RAILS Pulse page on material challenges. RAILS supports our member libraries with continuing education events, links to best practices and resources, and ways to connect libraries. Filapek noted it is important to find the right messaging to present to school boards and administrators to articulate the foundations of intellectual freedom.

7.4. Discussion of committee meeting time and school representation

Members discussed changing the Advocacy Committee meeting time to align with school librarian schedules. Members voted to meet at 4:00 p.m. in April. Another vote will be taken to amend the meeting time for the remainder of the FY22 schedule when all committee members are present.

Amy Walsh moved, and Alice Creason seconded, that the RAILS Board Advocacy Committee meeting time be changed to 4:00pm for the April 14, 2022 meeting

Roll call was taken. Ayes: Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh. Nays: none. Absent: Sarah McHone-Chase.

8. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the next RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting
The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on APRIL 14, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

The topics for the April meeting agenda are:

1. Legislative update
 2. Vote on changing the meeting time for the remainder of the FY22 schedule
 3. School data report - Janette Derucki
 4. Continue discussion on material challenges – committee members will share challenges in their area
 5. Media literacy curriculum in high schools (May meeting)
9. Adjournment
Helenthal adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.