

**REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING**

Friday, March 18, 2022 | 1:00 PM

**Draft minutes**

1. Welcome and call to order  
Thomas Stagg, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, March 18, 2022
2. Roll call of RAILS board members  
Fister called the roll of Board members  
Burr Ridge: Halle Cox, Jennifer McIntosh, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik  
East Peoria: Susan Busenbark, Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg  
Zoom: Alice Creason, Dianne Hollister, Kris Kenney, Beth Tepen, Monica Tolva,  
Absent: none
3. Recognition of guests and announcements  
Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Emily Fister  
East Peoria: Kendal Orrison  
Zoom: Sharon Swanson, Janette Derucki, Samantha Daly, Jessica Barnes, Katherine Henc, Ryan Hebel, Stacy Palmisano, Mark Hatch, Mary Witt, Joseph Filapek, Leila Heath, Elena Mendoza, Dan Bostrom, Gwen Harrison
4. Public comments  
There were no public comments.
5. Consent agenda
  - 5.1 Adoption of the Agenda
  - 5.2 RAILS Board Minutes of February 25, 2022 regular board meeting
  - 5.3 Approval of disbursements –February 2022 –Sharon SwansonVancina moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Pointon seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
6. RAILS Financial Report  
Swanson reported the February 28 unassigned general fund cash and investment balance (\$22.4 million) would fund approximately 23.3 months of operations. Revenues through February of over \$10 million were over \$1.45 million above budget. RAILS received the \$12,162.81 in FEMA grant funds yesterday, 3.17.22. This was the amount that we had applied for at the beginning of the pandemic, then the criteria excluded us, and then they changed the criteria at which point RAILS was eligible. Expenditures through February of almost \$8.2 million were approximately \$483,000 below budget. A second round of catalog membership grant awards will be made near the end of the fiscal year. Delivery department expenditures through February were below budget in nearly all cost categories except for vehicle expenses due to an increase in fuel and vehicle repairs and maintenance for the aging of RAILS' fleet. Swanson answered questions regarding listed expenses.

Hatch answered questions regarding leasing versus buying vehicles. Swanson introduced and welcomed new finance department employee Elena Mendoza.

## 7. Reports

### 7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Stagg had no report.

### 7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports-Committee Chairs

Stagg said committee reports were included in the packet. The Executive committee interview for the last candidate for the board vacancy has not been scheduled.

7.2.1 Advocacy Committee – Robin Helenthal

7.2.2 Consortia Committee - Thomas Stagg

7.2.3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee-Dianne Hollister

7.2.4 Executive Committee – Thomas Stagg

7.2.5 Policy Committee – Alex Vancina

7.2.6 Resource Sharing Committee – Monica Harris

7.2.7 Universal Service Committee – Sue Busenbark

### 7.3 RAILS Reports

#### 7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Harris reported that Cook County has changed the forms for filing statements of economic interest for 2022. We are waiting for guidance from our attorneys and we will send the information to the board as soon as it is received. Work is being done on the FY 22-23 budget which is part of the plan in conjunction with the FY 2023 Area & Per Capita Grant and a draft will be presented in April and due to the State on June 1. Materials challenges are highlighted on the RAILS Pulse Page and Harris encouraged members to review. The second round of My Library is... grants for member school libraries are open for application and can be as much as \$5000 with a deadline of April 18. Additional information on the expanded Cards for Kids Act (SB3497) was discussed including that the bill has moved through committee in the Senate and is now waiting for a vote in the House. ILA's Executive Director, Diane Foote will be retiring someone time in the next year after five years in the position.

Harris introduced Janette Derucki who spoke on the School library data project that she is working on. Derucki reviewed the project which examines library data for schools that is currently incomplete or missing. They are using different sources for filling in the missing data, including certification data. She will be giving a thorough report at the Advocacy meeting next month.

Harris said "Find More Illinois" continues to grow with new members including the Pinnacle catalog group.

McIntosh reported that Academic Libraries do get materials challenges but related to that is strict internet filters in public spaces. Librarians are trying to negotiate with college leadership and having conversations about censorship and academic freedom and could use additional guidance on the subject.

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

Barnes gave a brief history of the Cultural and Recreational Pass Program, Explore More Illinois. Patrons can access Explore More Illinois at any time with internet access. RAILS covers the cost of Explore More Illinois for RAILS member libraries. The improvements, additions, and goals for the future of Explore More Illinois with both RAILS and Heartland were discussed. The challenges of Explore More Illinois during the pandemic were recognized. As of March 2022, 320 RAILS libraries and 84 IHLS libraries are signed up for the program. Attractions include museums, historical societies, performing arts centers, botanical gardens, and park districts. Attraction offers include discounts on admission, parking, gift stores, and annual memberships.

### 7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

Harrison reported on the applications for the Project "Next Generation" are due March 30th, 2022. Project Next Generation (PNG) offers grant funding to public libraries for the establishment of educational after-school programs for middle school to high school students. Public libraries construction grant applications are due April 15th. This grant program assists public libraries with construction costs. Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Aide grant applications are currently being processed. Award Letters have been recently mailed to school districts for school APC grants. Libraries applying for FY2023 grants may receive emails requesting their unique identifier. If your library is registered in "sam.gov" a unique identifier has been assigned to you. The national library service has updated its eligibility standards and they were expanded beyond a certification from a doctor for children and adults with reading disabilities. Harrison recommended the training she received from RAILS called "Becoming an Upstander".

## 8. Board development

### Specialized Libraries: Trends and Challenges -

Bostrom gave an overview of trends in Specialized Libraries. The first is a focus on Return on Investment (ROI) where specialized librarians are constantly seeking ways to quantify their work and provide value to their organization. Another trend is a shift to digital platforms with purchases of expensive platforms, digital document delivery, and large organizations with no central locations. The third trend of Vendor negotiation/content buying is in line with the shift to digital which often requires specific agreements with vendors for licensing and content. Cox reported that Specialized Libraries are incredibly individualized within the type with different governance, funding mechanisms, audiences, and missions. She shared her perspective from the Law Library which is also open to the public. Their primary mission is to support residents in Kane County, and they have developed programs to draw in the general public to the library such as Lawyers in the Library and boy scout merit badge programs. With the pandemic, they have been tasked with creating user-friendly documents for the court system. Most specialized libraries are in a land grab for space and must deal with justifying funding because the needs of library staff are not understood by others in the organization. She said RAILS does a great job for specialized libraries since most are understaffed and need professional support and encouragement, networking, and group purchasing benefits.

Creason left the meeting at 2:32 p.m. A break was taken at 2:32 p.m. and resumed at 2:45 p.m.

9. RAILS board member reports

Pointon reported that the White Oak Library is having its Annual STEM event on April 9, after having to cancel for the past two years. The Comicopolis event will go forward on July 23 with expectations of more than 2000 attendees. Kenney reported that March 5-6 the Northern Illinois Lego Train Club was exhibited at the Poplar Creek Library with over 500 attendees. Vancina reported it is the two-year anniversary of the passing of the New Lenox library referendum and will now start construction of the new digital media lab.

10. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next board meeting

The next board meeting will be Friday, April 22 at 1 pm. Included on the agenda will be an Executive Committee recommendation on Filling the Vacancy of Patricia Smith, RAILS Quarterly Consortial Reports, an update on RAILS Discounts and Group Purchase Offers by Leila Heath. Jennifer McIntosh & Dr. Denise Cote will give an update on open education resources (OER).

11. Closed session

The Board moved into closed session to discuss matters pertaining to collective negotiating, as per 5 Illinois Compiled Statutes, chapter 120, paragraph 2, section 2(c)2, which states:

*Exceptions. A public body may hold closed meetings to consider the following subjects: (2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.*

Cox moved that the board move into closed session. Voitik seconded and the motion was approved on a roll call vote. Ayes: Sue Busenbark, Halle Cox, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Kris Kenney, Jennifer McIntosh, Scott Pointon, Becky Spratford, Beth Tepen, Monica Tolva, Thomas Stagg, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik  
Nays: none

12. Actions in follow-up to closed session

None.

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.