

RAILS Board Universal Service Committee Meeting

September 8, 2022 | 1:00 pm

RAILS Burr Ridge and Videoconference Sites

125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527 | 630.734.5000

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Alice Creason, Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

2. Roll Call of Committee Members

Palmisano called roll of the RAILS Universal Service Committee members. Present virtually: Gail Bush, Alice Creason, Jennifer McIntosh, Carol Medal (joined at 1:24 pm), Becky Spratford, Lynn Stainbrook, Beth Tepen, Catherine Yanikoski. Absent: none

3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements

Creason 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.

RAILS Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Stacy Palmisano (designated minute taker)

Zoom: Deirdre Brennan, Leila Heath, Greg McCormick, Gwen Harrison, Tom Stagg

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Consent Agenda – Alice Creason

5.1. Adoption of the Agenda

5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Universal Service Committee Minutes of June 9, 2022

Spratford moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Stainbrook seconded and a roll call was taken. Ayes: Gail Bush, Alice Creason, Jennifer McIntosh, Becky Spratford, Lynn Stainbrook, Beth Tepen, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: none

6. Welcome New Committee Chair

Brennan welcomed Creason as the committee chair. Creason is a RAILS board member, an academic librarian at Lewis University and a trustee at Richton Park Public Library. Brennan praised outgoing chair Sue Busenbark who served two terms as a RAILS Board Trustee and Chairperson of the Universal Service Committee. Creason stated that she is looking forward to being the chair of this committee.

7. Illinois State Library Advisory Committee (ISLAC) Update

McCormick reported that the first meeting of the ISLAC Committee was on August 25, 2022. Among the many topics discussed at the meeting, a subcommittee will be formed with a focus on universal library service, though a name for the subcommittee has not yet been determined. The membership to the subcommittee is currently being assembled which will include representation by at least one public library trustee. Brennan is a voting member of the committee.

8. Unfinished Business

8.1. Multiple Listing Service Update

Bush reported that four letters of support to request additional data of public libraries to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) have been given to Sandra Brown, a real estate broker whom Bush has been working with. The letters of support were collected from the Illinois State Library, Illinois Heartland Library System, Illinois Library Association, and from RAILS. Brown is staying on top of this project with Midwest Real Estate Data (MRED). MRED is the aggregator of the MLS in the Midwest which contains data for properties that are for sale. MRED covers the RAILS membership area within the state of Illinois, but does not cover the entire state.

9. New Business

9.1. Statewide Online Educational Resource Program

Brennan reported that the statewide educational resource program is the number one priority this year for the Illinois Library Association's Public Policy Committee. Support appears to be universal for the program, but funding is the biggest issue. McIntosh brought up that the name of the program is very similar to Open Educational Resource(OER) and that there may be confusion between the two programs.

9.2. Alternative Funding Resources for Cards for Kids Participation

Yanikoski introduced the topic of alternative funding resources for libraries that want to or are participating in the expanded Cards for Kids Act. Many libraries are facing budget constraints in offering these important services to new card holders that do not contribute funding for those services. When doing research, Yanikoski found that Joliet Township had a responsibility to supply funds to the community toward a family educational resource and also found that the school township has funds available towards literacy. This raises the question of whether cities, counties, schools, and townships have funds available that libraries can tap into to support services for the unserved. The discussion continued with Stainbrook asking if a mathematical formula can be created to determine the cost of the unserved in a community so that a standard dollar amount for need can be established, and that amount is what needs additional funding. Under the law, McCormick added that a municipality that does not offer library service can have an intergovernmental agreement with a library to have their population have access to library services paid for by that municipality. McCormick will review the questions on the Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR) to see if it includes intergovernmental agreements and if additional funds have been received. The history of how community colleges were consolidated into districts within the state and therefore all Illinois residents are served by a community college district was discussed as a potential statewide approach to achieving universal library service. Brennan will discuss with Grant Halter, RAILS Data Analysis Manager, if data exists on Illinois literacy levels for the unserved versus the literacy levels of the residents receiving library service. Another discussion point was the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and their early learning standards which is outside of the scope of the K-12 school system. The committee wishes to learn more about which Illinois agency is responsible for supporting the standard for pre-K early literacy and whether the public library systems should be a more formal part of that process. Lastly, the committee discussed international organizations such as the Kiwanis, the Lions Club, and the Rotary Club that have priorities on literacy as possible advocacy partners. Deirdre suggested that along with this committee, that the new subcommittee of ISLAC, that

was mentioned earlier in this meeting, take up this topic as a part of their priorities.

9.3. Community College Funding Inequities

McIntosh introduced to the committee the topic of funding inequities in community colleges. Community colleges are funded differently and a per capita grant may be a solution to the inequities. The proposed statewide educational resource program, mentioned earlier in this meeting, would also benefit academic libraries with their online resources collection. Bush reported that all residents of the state pay taxes to their district community college but the library services offered to the residents vary considerably. Bush added that unfortunately the college library is not on the forefront of the mind of community colleges. If the model of community colleges were to be used as a way to have universal library service in the state, then funding for additional community resources would have to be a priority.

10. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next RAILS Board Universal Service Committee Meeting

The agenda for the next committee meeting will consist of updates on the agenda items from this meeting. Brennan reported that Gail Bush has resigned as a member of the committee, but she will continue to work on the MLS project and report the progress to RAILS to keep the committee informed. The next Universal Service Committee meeting will be on December 8, 2022 at 10:00 am.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 pm.