

RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

January 12, 2023 | 4:00 p.m.

125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Minutes

1. Welcome and Call to Order
Robin Helenthal, Advocacy Committee chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Helenthal read the following statement: 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 Committee Members
Goyer called the roll of Committee members.
Zoom/Telephone: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Sarah McHone-Chase, Thomas Stagg (4:06), Kara Thorstenson, Amy Walsh
RAILS East Peoria: Robin Helenthal
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Guests in attendance at RAILS Burr Ridge: Karen Goyer (minute taker), Monica Harris (*ex-officio*), Mary Kate Murray
Guests in attendance via Zoom: Rosie Camargo, Joe Filapek, Ryan Hebel, Mary Witt (*ex-officio*)
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 December 8, 2022
Creason moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Harrell seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Kara Thorstenson, Amy Walsh. Nays: none. Caldicott was not present for the vote.
6. Unfinished Business
 - 6.1. Legislative and Advocacy Update
Harris reported ILA Advocacy plans to host one meeting for new Illinois legislators to educate them on library issues; a second meeting will be held to train library staff on how to reach out to their legislators. ILA will present at the 2023 ILA Youth Institute, Reaching Forward, and Reaching Forward South conferences. ILA PPC members will meet with officials in Washington D.C. Veronda Pitchford (Califa Group) and Lynn Stainbrook (Rockford Public Library) will represent Illinois at these meetings. The Illinois Secretary of State Library Enhancement team has developed a list of priorities to be released soon. Legislatively, new bills will be introduced this week. Legislative action is expected to increase in February.
 - 6.2. Advocacy Committee Goal - Find More Illinois Talking Points
Nothing new was shared.
 - 6.3. Advocacy Committee Goal – School Library Issues and Talking Points Feedback
Nothing new was shared.

7. New Business

7.1. Advocacy for Cards for Kids Act

Harris presented the document: “Talking Points in Support of Public Act 102-0843 (Cards for Kids Act Expansion)”, which includes information for public libraries to use in presenting the Cards for Kids Act and Expansion to their boards. The original Cards for Kids Act requires public libraries to offer non-resident library cards with waived fees for K-12 students who live in unincorporated areas and who are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches. The expansion of the Cards for Kids Act that took effect on May 13, 2022, allows public library boards to adopt regulations that waive non-resident fees for persons under the age of 18, removing the requirement that students must be eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches. Harris moved through the talking points, highlighting equity. The hope in promoting Public Act 102-0843 is that students in underserved areas will have access to public library resources required for their education that they might not otherwise be able to access at their school libraries or elsewhere.

Harris opened the floor for discussion. Clarification was provided on where students should be directed to receive non-resident library cards. The Cards for Kids Act and its Expansion do not change rules regarding where students would obtain a public library card. The question was raised about whether home-schooled students would be eligible for the benefits of the Expanded Cards for Kids Act. The expanded act gives authority to library boards to adopt regulations that waive nonresident fees for persons under the age of 18 years old, which could easily encapsulate homeschooled, public school, and private school students. Caldicott stated that Overdrive will help coordinate the Intergovernmental Agreement between public and school libraries to provide students with access through an app to any eBook or audiobook the public library buys, expanding library service to all students at the school. RAILS plans to gather data on the Cards for Kids Act Expansion to share with members in the future.

8. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the Next RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting

The next meeting will be held on February 9, 2023, at 4:00pm.

Topics suggested for the next meeting are: Open educational resources, updates on current library issues, and the Illinois Secretary of State Library Enhancement team report, if available.

9. Adjournment

Helenthal adjourned the meeting at 4:34 p.m.