

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, January 20, 2023 | 1:00 PM

MINUTES

1. Welcome and call to order
Alex Vancina, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2023.
2. Roll call of RAILS board members Palmisano called the roll of the Board Members:
Burr Ridge: Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Julie Milavec, Rene Leyva, Jennifer McIntosh, Becky Spratford, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik
East Peoria: Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Thomas Stagg
Zoom: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Beth Tepen
Absent: none
3. Recognition of guests and announcements
Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Mary Kate Murray, Justin Schmidt, Stacy Palmisano (designated notetaker)
East Peoria: Kendall Orrison
Zoom: Gwen Harrison, Mark Hatch, Sharon Swanson, Leila Heath, Mary Witt, Janette Derucki, Jessica Barnes, Dan Bostrom, Karen Goyer, Deborah Mitchener, Ryan Hebel, Sam Daly, Deborah Mitchener
4. Public comments and announcements
There were no public comments.
5. Consent agenda – Alex Vancina
 - 5.1 Adoption of the Agenda
 - 5.2 RAILS Board Minutes of November 18, 2022 Regular Meeting
 - 5.3 RAILS Board Minutes of November 18, 2022 Closed Session Meeting
 - 5.4 Approval of Disbursements: November – December 2022
Caldicott moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Camargo seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
6. RAILS Financial Report
Swanson reported that through December, revenues were \$2,171,694 above budget primarily from having received an additional Live & Learn APC payment in November. Through December, RAILS has received \$7,790,570 or 65.6% of our total FY2023 Area and Per Capita Grant revenues. Expenditures through December were \$483,232 below budget. General Fund revenues through December were above budget primarily due to above-budget Area and Per Capita grant revenues and higher than budget investment income. RAILS received a fourth Live and Learn payment, and the fifth Live and Learn payment is vouchered with the Illinois Comptroller's office and is expected to be received very shortly. Investment Income of \$316,192 through December

was nearly 713% above budget as money market interest rates have continued the historic increases far beyond the .423% budgeted rate. The Federal Reserve increased interest rates by 50 basis points in December, and they are not expected to lower the rate until calendar year 2024. Personnel, travel, materials, and continuing education expenditures were all below budget. RAILS's calendar year 2023 employer contribution rate for unemployment insurance increased slightly from the prior year's rate. This was due to the state experience factor increasing from 111% to 127%. RAILS's IMRF employer contribution rate remained unchanged from the prior year rate of .96%, which is an enviable rate to be able to maintain. LIRA, the insurance cooperative that RAILS is a part of, had a very modest overall premium increase of 4% for calendar year 2023.

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina reported that the RAILS Executive Committee interviewed six candidates for the open Executive Director position and three were chosen to be interviewed by the board.

7.2 RAILS board committee reports - Committee Chairs

There were no additions or questions regarding the reports included in the packet.

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 - Alex Vancina

7.2.5 Policy Committee – Jennifer McIntosh

7.2.6 Resource Sharing Committee – Becky Spratford

7.2.7 Universal Service Committee – Alice Creason

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS monthly report

Harris highlighted from the report that the Illinois Library Association (ILA) has made changes to the Legislative Meetups for 2023. A formal report from the Secretary of State Library Enhancements Transition Committee for the new Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulas was developed to include a potential list of priorities. In December, Harris met with staff from the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS), in Champaign, IL. There is a preliminary plan to organize the leadership teams from both systems to meet in person, possibly in Springfield. Harris and Chicago Public Library (CPL) Commissioner Chris Brown continue to meet regularly. Commissioner Brown will be a guest on the RAILS' Sparks podcast next month to discuss The Book Sanctuary, the CPL project to support intellectual freedom. Harris also discussed that on July 1, 2023 there will be a revised fee structure for eRead Illinois. Lastly, Harris discussed the Statewide Online Trustee Development Portal. IHLS received a grant from the Illinois State Library to create the portal. RAILS representatives on the Advisory Committee for the trustee portal are Joe Filipek, RAILS Director of Consulting and Continuing Education, RAILS Board members Spratford, and Stagg. While Villarreal, RAILS Board member, and Harris, RAILS Interim Executive Director will participate on the Feedback Committee.

7.3.2 RAILS Service of the month: Explore More Illinois

Barnes, RAILS Special Projects Librarian, shared highlights of Explore More Illinois (EMI). EMI is RAILS' online cultural and recreational pass program for Illinois libraries. EMI had its most successful year in 2022; Barnes discussed the year's highlights including reservation statistics, new and popular attractions, a contest that boosted member engagement, and the launch of a Community College Pilot Program. In 2023, Explore More Illinois looks to add even more attractions, host another contest for member libraries, and plan networking opportunities for member library staff, including the launch of an Explore More Illinois Networking Group. RAILS is moving toward a rebranding of the Explore More Illinois program in 2023 to reflect program growth. Representatives from Illinois Heartland Library System and Chicago Public Library will be included in the conversations of re-branding EMI.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report

Harrison reported that the Illinois State Library is working with the new administration and new Secretary of State and State Librarian Alexi Giannoulis after 24 years with the previous Secretary, Jesse White. The Illinois State Library Advisory Committee (ISLAC) will meet on January 26. Harris will present the School Data Project at the ISLAC meeting.

8. New business

8.1 Organization Chart Revision

Due to additional staff being hired, Harris reported that the RAILS organizational chart was updated.

Voitik motioned for the approval of the RAILS organizational chart. Spratford seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.2 Membership Changes

8.2.1 New members

General George Patton School District #133 of Riverdale, Illinois requested to join the RAILS membership.

Caldicott motioned for the approval of adding General George Patton School District #133 to the RAILS membership. Camargo seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.2.2 Membership withdrawals

Bostrom reported that from 2020 through 2022 RAILS did not request the withdrawal of libraries that were uncertified. Due to the pandemic and in consultation with the Illinois State Library (ISL) it was decided to wait on officially withdrawing the libraries. After recent conversations with ISL Director Greg McCormick, it was decided to move ahead with that process.

Villarreal motioned to withdraw from RAILS' membership the list of libraries reported in document 8.2.2, and to request final approval from the Illinois State Library. Harrell seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. Unfinished business

9.1 Remote Work Policy

Harris presented the finalized draft of the Remote Work Policy to the board. The RAILS Board

Policy Committee and lawyers from Ancel Glink reviewed and approved the document. The policy was created to align with current practices and will replace the RAILS Teleworking Policy. The RAILS Board Policy Committee will regularly review the Remote Work Policy to ensure that the document is kept up to date.

Villarreal motioned to approve the Remote Work Policy. Leyva seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

9.2 Board Election Process

The RAILS board members completed a survey with questions regarding board diversity within the board election process, as well as questions on travel preferences for upcoming board meetings; there were thirteen responses. Harris reported that the RAILS Board Policy Committee requested the survey to determine what the board prioritizes regarding diversity. Based on the survey results, the top three diversity categories for board candidates were racial diversity, geographic location, and library type. As for the travel question, 46% of the respondents reported that they would be willing to travel up to three times a year to locations other than Burr Ridge. The continued conversation focused on ways to reach library workers of all levels to educate them that all voices are needed on the RAILS Board. There was a suggestion of a “get out to vote” campaign by sending materials through delivery to libraries that can be handed out to staff.

10. Board development

RAILS Service Inequities Research Project

Derucki, RAILS Data Research Specialist gave a presentation on the RAILS Service Inequities Study. In November 2022, RAILS began an exploratory research project to examine member perceptions of service inequities. The project also seeks to understand and evaluate member perceptions of inequity, to identify RAILS methods and levels of member engagement, and to propose actions to ensure service equity. The project will continue until June 2023 and will include interviews, data collection and analysis, focus groups, and ultimately a final report and recommendations.

11. RAILS board member reports

Spratford reported that La Grange Public Library District hired a new director. Villarreal mentioned that the Lake Villa District Library’s outdoor space plan will soon have renderings available. Milavec shared that the Downers Grove Public Library’s construction project has completed phase one, and phase two will begin. Harrell stated that the DuPage County Law Library has re-started school tours. Also, the DuPage County Courthouse has recently hired their second African American male judge, and their first African American female judge. Camargo was happy to report that the Niles-Maine District Library has seated a new board member and has lifted their hiring freeze. Camargo also shared that South Holland Public Library has completed their brand-new library and will hold a grand opening celebration soon, along with a Wakanda Night on February 24.

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

There will be a special board meeting on January 24, 2023 starting at 10:00 a.m. that will include interviews of three executive director candidates. The next regular board meeting will be on Friday, February 24, 2023.

13. Closed session

Vancina announced that the Board will move into a 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.*

Voitik motioned that the Board move into a closed session. Villarreal seconded and the motion was approved on a roll call. Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Rene Leyva, Jennifer McIntosh, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik. Nays: None

Villarreal motioned that the Board move out of closed session and into open session. Camargo seconded, and the motion was approved on a roll call vote. Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Rene Leyva, Jennifer McIntosh, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik. Nays: None

14. Actions in follow-up to closed session

No actions taken.

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.