

RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 9, 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 Members

Goyer called the roll of Committee members.

Zoom/Telephone: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Kara Thorstenson, Amy Walsh

Absent: Thomas Stagg

3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements

Guests in attendance at RAILS Burr Ridge: Karen Goyer (minute taker), Monica Harris (*ex-officio*)

Guests in attendance via Zoom: Anna Behm, Ryan Hebel, Mary Witt (*ex-officio*)

Helenthal announced the appointment of Monica Harris as the RAILS Executive Director.

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 January 12, 2023

Caldicott moved for the approval of the consent agenda. McHone-Chase seconded, and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Kara Thorstenson, Amy Walsh. Nays: none.

6. New Business

6.1. Open Educational Resources

McHone-Chase gave a presentation on Open Educational Resources. Open Education is defined as resources, tools, and practices that are free of legal, financial, and technical barriers and can be fully used, shared, or adapted digitally. Open Education seeks to offer more affordable and effective teaching and learning. Open Educational Resources (OER) means materials in any medium that are openly licensed for which users can create new, expanded, or edited versions. Openly licensed materials are permitted through Creative Commons, inclusion in the Public Domain, or permission granted by the copyright owner. There are 6 types of open licenses within Creative Commons. OER is not course content with a traditional copyright, educational

materials found on the web, free electronic resources, or Open Access materials. OER is important because it provides equity through affordability, the ability to customize materials for people with disabilities or learning needs, and the ability to be tailored to the audience. The challenges in OER are the time, cost, digital divide, and faculty awareness and perceptions. In Illinois, work toward OER is being done by CARLI (Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois) and IACRL (Illinois Association of College & Research Libraries). Senator Durbin recently introduced the Affordable College Textbook Act. Creason noted libraries are expected to purchase extra textbooks toward equity efforts but might not have the funds to do so. Textbooks often have a limited checkout period.

Anna Behm, RAILS eContent Specialist, represents RAILS in the SCOERS project run by CARLI. RAILS provides support by serving on the advisory committee, reviews applications and publicizes the project. Behm explained the U.S. Department of Education awarded CARLI \$1.08 million for the SCOERS program which aims to support student success with OER. CARLI awards grants to institutions to fund the creation and remix of OER materials for introductory courses on the subject of The Human Condition: Care, Development, and Lifespan. The projects will go into a repository and create a roadmap for any institution who wants to do this work in the future. More information about this project can be found on the CARLI website at <https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/collections-management/IllinoisSCOERS>.

Harris explained the OER Campus Kickstart: Award for Growing Illinois OER Programs. IACRL will award five \$500 grants to implement OER in Fall 2023 or Spring 2024 courses. Applications will be evaluated higher if the institution demonstrates: small size, minority serving, how a financial incentive may help set a precedent for more OER programming, or is a campus with small, newly established, unsupported, or non-existent OER efforts. Applications are due March 31, 2023.

7. Unfinished Business

7.1. Legislative and Advocacy Update

Harris shared updates from the February ILA Public Policy Committee. The ILA Advocacy committee discussed the upcoming legislative meetups sessions. *Get Ready to Advocate* on February 22, 2023 prepares library advocates to meet with their legislators. *Library 101 for Legislators* on February 27, 2023 will bring together newly elected legislators and library advocates. Harris encouraged everyone to register for these events. Committee members can work with their own legislators on library issues and report back. ILA will present advocacy programs at the Reaching Forward, Reaching Forward South, and the Illinois Youth Services Institute conferences.

The ILA Executive Board reported on the success of their development activity on Navigating Equity in Your Organization. In March, ILA will share more on ALA's Fly-In event. Two library representatives from Illinois will attend those meetings in Washington, D.C. ILA's main topic of discussion was on the list of legislative bills potentially affecting libraries. The bill list can be viewed at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X1hoYp3AcHLzeoGChX1K8kxR8uEAXCtE/view>. The important bills to watch are HB 1011, which sets forth a list of books about racism to be required reading for students in public elementary and secondary schools; ILA opposes HB 1238 allowing for delinquent taxes to be paid in installments which would impact the flow of money taxing bodies receive; HB 1408 makes permanent the ability to allow public bodies to meet virtually if the chief official of the public body feels it is in the best interest of the body for health and safety; HB 1481 is the diversity in literature bill. While it encourages diverse collections, it

would require materials be approved by the school board which could be detrimental to freedom to read. Some bills of interest are not on the Illinois bill list but have been enacted in other states; namely HB 1072 which requires a school board to ensure curriculum and learning materials are posted on the school district's Internet website. ILA opposes HB 1072 and is discussing strategies for dealing with this type of legislation. This is early in legislative cycle, and many more bills are expected to be added in the coming months.

7.2. Secretary of State Library Enhancements Team report

Harris gave an overview of the Secretary of State Library Enhancements Team report. The report recommendations include strengthening relationships with RAILS and other entities and using the Illinois State Library budget to provide a statewide library database. The report shows focus on digital equity, interagency collaboration, DEI, the unserved, and sustainability. The report agrees with many of the issues RAILS has been working on. The Library Enhancements team identified short-term and long-term actions for each potential strategy related to the recommendations. Caldicott appreciates the proposal to attract and retain qualified library media specialists but noted the report does not address requiring school districts to hire certified school librarians. Walsh noticed the recommendation to strengthen collaborative relationships does not mention AISLE (Association of Illinois School Library Educators) or ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education).

7.3. Library Issues Updates

On the issue of school library advocacy, Walsh stated the AISLE advocacy team will draft a letter to send to school districts upon notification that a school librarian is retiring. In the letter, AISLE will offer to post the job opening to AISLE members. The purpose of the letter is to encourage the district to fill the position with a certified school librarian. The AISLE website plans to have a form available for retiring school librarians to notify AISLE of their retirement and request the letter be sent to their district.

Relating to materials challenges, Caldicott shared a link to the American Library Association form to tell your members of Congress to reject censorship and defend the freedom to read:

<https://americanlibraryassociation.cmail19.com/t/i-l-qhidrc-tijjdyhkh-y/>

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

The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on March 9, 2023 at 4:00 pm. The tentative agenda item for the next meeting is Materials Challenges.

9. Adjournment

Helenthal adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.