Virtual Meeting
RAILS Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

November 2, 2022 │10:00 am

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order
   Hollister, EDI chairperson, greeted members and called the meeting to order at 10:03 p.m.

2. Roll Call of Members
   Palmisano called the roll of the RAILS Board EDI Committee. Present: Megan Ballengee, Victoria Blackmer, Cristina Bueno, Nate Gass, Dianne Hollister, Michelle Mistalski, Vanessa Villarreal, Anna Wassenaar. Absent: Rosie Camargo, Amber Hayes, Andrea Robinson, Sarah Steiger, Leah White

3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
   Hollister read the following: In accordance with the Governor's Disaster 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.

   Guests in Burr Ridge: Deirdre Brennan, Monica Harris, Stacy Palmisano (note taker)

   Guests in attendance via Zoom: Joseph Filapek, Samantha Daly

4. Public Comments
   There were no public comments

5. Adoption of the Consent Agenda
   5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
   5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Minutes of August 31, 2022
   Villarreal moved to approve the consent agenda. Mistalski seconded and a roll call was taken; Ayes: Megan Ballengee, Victoria Blackmer, Cristina Bueno, Nate Gass, Dianne Hollister, Michelle Mistalski, Vanessa Villarreal, Anna Wassenaar. Nays: none

6. Reports
   6.1. RAILS Report
   Harris brought attention to several EDI related continuing education opportunities in November and in December that are listed in the RAILS Report.

      6.1.1. Cohort Update
      Filapek reported that the EDI Cohort held their first session on October 13, 2022 with a total of 38 members. The cohort will meet monthly for a total of seven months. Participants will engage in readings, videos and self-reflection writing that will be reported on Moodle, an open-source learning management system. The cohort's next meeting will be on November 10, 2022.

   6.2. BIPOC Library Workers Networking Group Report
   Mistalski reported that the BIPOC Library Workers Networking Group, (BIPOC LWG) will create a mentorship program website that will allow members to connect with one another and provide mentorship to those who are new to their position, field, or interests within libraries.

The group is in the process of collecting resources to build the website. Several members of the BIPOC LWG attended the Illinois Library Association Annual Conference where they hosted a table to recruit new members. A goal in 2023, is to create a BIPOC/Queer presenters list to include authors, professional development trainers, and more.

7. Committee Members Sharing of EDI Initiatives

Hollister started the conversation by sharing EDI initiatives from Bloomington Public Library, (BPL) where Hollister is a Library Trustee. To name a few initiatives, BPL created a draft Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement, an inclusive language guide, a calendar highlighting various cultural events for staff awareness and also developed a land acknowledgement statement. Villareal reported that Vernon Area Public Library District has installed signage in different languages and staff are wearing buttons that list their second language. As a member of the Illinois Library Association's, (ILA) Best Practices Committee, Wassenaar is collecting information on EDI assessments from libraries as part of an EDI toolkit. A Fast Facts Survey was created by Wassenaar which is located on the RAILS website homepage. Palmisano will email the link to all of the committee members to fill out the survey. Mistalski shared that Northbrook Public Library recently completed an EDI organizational assessment from the Blackberry Collection and a two-part EDI training for managers and the library's EDI Committee members. The training was very thorough and included agreeing on common definitions and ways to read the assessment report. Gass shared that Cook Memorial Public Library District has included accommodation language to their Winter programing, free feminine products in their women and family restrooms, added tablets with multi language periodicals downloaded, included ViX+, a Spanish-language streaming service to their Roku devices and has also translated their library information brochure and welcome signage into multiple languages.

7.1. Saving Initiatives List on EDI Pulse Page on RAILS' Website

The committee members in attendance agreed to share their library's EDI initiatives on the RAILS website on the EDI pulse page.

8. New Business

8.1. Review the EDI Committee Charge

The charge for the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee was reviewed. The document was found to be current and it was determined to review the charge yearly at the beginning of each fiscal year.

8.2. Discuss the Objectives in Strategic Plan #2 to Integrate into Committee's Work

Harris reviewed the three objectives within the strategic goal number two from the 2022-2025 RAILS Strategic Plan. The goal and the three objectives focus on RAILS' EDI work both internally and with RAILS member libraries. RAILS is moving forward on all three objectives by establishing this committee to advise on developing and providing resources to support EDI efforts at member libraries. Also, by creating a staff Climate Team to aid in examining internal policies, procedures and core services, and by working with the RAILS Board and the Board Nominating Committee to implement ways to diversify the RAILS board. Candidate photos and statements were added to the most recent RAILS Board election. The addition of a candidate video is under consideration along with additional candidate questions for next year's election. RAILS is focusing on staff diversity in our hiring practices and also reviewing the language in staff job descriptions.

8.3. Create a Vision and an End Goal for the Committee

Harris began the conversation with the committee about creating a vision and an end goal. Several goals were discussed by the members such as second language skills by bilingual library

staff being compensated for this skill. Including multiple languages in library signage, print materials and in programing descriptions for non-English speaking or limited English speaking patrons. Gass suggested that RAILS, as a professional organization, set baseline equity, diversity, and inclusion objectives for libraries.

8.4. Discuss Ways to Motivate Directors to do EDI Work
The committee discussed several good examples on ways to motive library directors to pursue EDI work. One, is that library board members can have a strong influence on a library director and that it works best if the trustees are on board with EDI initiatives. Several members shared that their library's EDI committees started with mid-level employees and were not able to move forward with initiatives until the library director participated in the EDI committee meetings. A second example is the newly formed RAILS EDI Cohort that will educate library staff and directors on equity, diversity, and inclusion in the hopes of moving EDI initiatives forward at their libraries. Another way to motivate directors will be the future EDI toolkit that ILA is creating, along with Wassenaar's help. The Illinois State Library's Directors University that is attended by new Illinois public library directors included EDI training in last year's session and will be included in all future sessions. A new edition of the *Standards for Illinois Public Libraries,* which is published by ILA, will have a RAILS staff person sitting on the committee and can advocate to include EDI initiatives within the standards. The standards are followed closely by library boards and directors and are tied to funding through the annual Illinois Public Library Per Capita Grant. Ballengee shared that her library has a very small staff which makes it difficult to move EDI initiatives forward, and agreed with Gass that it would be helpful to have a local voice like RAILS make a statement about the importance of EDI work and to encourage library management to move forward with these initiatives.

9. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the Next RAILS Board EDI Committee Meeting
The next meeting's agenda will include sharing of library EDI initiatives, a BIPOC LWG report, and continued conversation of the goals for this committee and what RAILS can accomplish from the strategic plan. Also on the agenda will be the continued discussion on ways to motivate library directors to do EDI work and a discussion on what the word "diversity" means to this committee. RAILS staff will work on the suggestions brought up from today's meeting. The next committee meeting will be on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.