

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, February 24, 2023

MINUTES

1. Welcome and call to order
Alex Vancina, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, February 24, 2023 at the RAILS Burr Ridge service center.
2. Roll call of RAILS board members Fister called the roll of the Board Members:
Burr Ridge: Rosie Camargo (arrived at 1:20 p.m.), 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, Beth Tepen
Absent: none
3. Recognition of guests and announcements
Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Sharon Swanson, Anne Slaughter, Galin Iliev, Cyndi Robinson
East Peoria: Kendal Orrison
Zoom: Gwen Harrison, Ryan Hebel, Mary Witt, Leila Heath, Ryan Hebel, Emily Fister (designated minute taker)
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 January 20, 2023 regular meeting
 - 5.3 RAILS Board minutes of January 20, 2023 regular meeting-closed session
 - 5.4 RAILS Board minutes of January 24, 2023 special meeting
 - 5.5 RAILS Board minutes of January 24, 2023 special meeting-closed session
 - 5.6 RAILS Board minutes of February 7, 2023 special meeting
 - 5.7 RAILS Board minutes of February 7, 2023 special meeting-closed session
 - 5.8 Approval of Disbursements: January, 2023 – Sharon SwansonMilavec moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Harrell seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
6. RAILS Financial Report
Swanson reported that through January 31, 2023, the general fund cash and investment balance (\$23.8 million) would fund approximately 22.9 months of operations. Revenues through January of \$11.8 million were \$2.26 million above budget due to two Live & Learn payments. Investment income was \$365,236 above the budgeted amount due to the rise in interest rates. Expenditures through January of \$8.4 million were \$556,000 below budget

due to the two major categories. The first, Contractual Services expenditures are lower due to a lower negotiated contract with our delivery outsourcing contractor and a shift of awarding cataloging grant to members to later in the fiscal year. The second, Personnel, is currently under-budget, and this is primarily due to delayed hiring for our three new positions and the vacancy of the Associate Director position. Swanson reported on the theft of catalytic converter theft at East Peoria and Bolingbrook. Insurance claims are submitted, and RAILS is pursuing anti-theft devices and measures to deter theft in the future, including cages, shields, etching, and indoor parking of vehicles where possible.

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina announced that he would like to congratulate Juanita Harrell who has accepted a position as the Executive Director of La Grange Park Public Library District! He said the news unfortunately means that he has accepted her resignation from the RAILS Board. He thanked Juanita for her contributions to RAILS for the past year and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

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 Governor has announced that the Disaster Proclamation will expire on May 12, 2023. This means that an in-person quorum will be required for all RAILS board and committee meetings. This has not been a problem for RAILS board meetings, but it will be a huge shift for some RAILS board committees that have never met in person. RAILS staff will be vigilant in reminding attendees of this requirement. Harris announced that a series of in-person member networking events are being planned for this Spring. These events will be targeted in the areas of: Bourbonnais, Burr Ridge, Coal Valley, Northern Chicago Suburbs, Peoria, Quincy, and Rockford. She will also be setting up site visits to the RAILS Board members and to the RAILS Delivery hubs. She thanked Rene Leyva, for his suggestion that the policy committee work on a succession plan. She said work continues on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), and consultant Biz Lindsay-Ryan attend the April Board meeting to present on RAILS efforts as a board development topic.

Harris reported that after consulting with the Illinois State Library, we will bring a budget amendment to the FY23 budget at the March meeting, to reflect staff compensation

related to the tentative contract approval by the Board at the February 7th Special meeting.

7.3.2 RAILS CE Program: Gathering and Responding to Member Feedback

Filapek shared methods used by his team to measure the impact that RAILS continuing education offerings have on our membership. The Team uses four main sources to determine CE offerings: member feedback, external sources, trends, and RAILS staff & board suggestions. He reviewed the Continuing Education Impact Survey related to the improvement of skills, motivation to share or learn more on the subject, changes in processes at member libraries and strengthening internal or external connections.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report

Harrison reported that the school district library grant applications for FY 2023 have been reviewed and the recipients should receive their award letters soon. Public library grant applications and system area grant applications are forthcoming.

8. New business

8.1 Communicable Diseases Policy

Harris reported the Communicable Diseases Policy approved by the RAILS Board policy committee amends the previous COVID-19 policy to encompass a broader focus.

Leyva motioned to approve the Communicable Diseases Policy, and to request final approval from the Illinois State Library. Creason seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.2 Board election and nominating committee

Vancina reported that Alice Creason and Rene Leyva have agreed to serve on the nominating committee and Alice will again be the chair. He is still in process of confirming additional members of the committee and we will report more on their progress at the March meeting. Caldicott requested that the push be made for more representation from RAILS school libraries. Harris said there were no at-large seats open for this election, where the school seats could be expanded. The representation of schools on the RAILS Board will be an ongoing discussion.

8.3 Secretary of State Transition Report Library Enhancements Committee Findings

Harris highlighted the ways in which the Secretary of State's Transitions Report aligned with RAILS' strategic plan. The report states the Secretary of State's priority is to improve equity and access among Illinois libraries, highlighting underserved and unserved populations. The report also states desires to provide a statewide electronic resource package, and to support freedom of thought and diverse stories. The report acknowledges a shortage of qualified librarians and library media specialists in schools and the inequitable funding across Illinois libraries. The Library Enhancements Committee recommends strengthening collaborative relationships with partner organizations, using the Illinois State Library budget to provide statewide library resources, and advancing technology adoption and digital resources to automate internal procedures, expand public facing services, and to remove geographic barriers in accessing library resources.

9. Unfinished business

9.1 March or April Board meeting travel

Harris stated the results of the poll regarding travel for the March or April board meetings indicated a slightly higher availability to travel to Coal Valley for the April board meeting. Stagg suggested that travels include a visit to the Rock Island Watts-Midtown branch which is newly renovated and attached to the local YMCA.

10. Board development

10.1 Progress report on RAILS Statewide Access to Electronic Resources Proposal

Harris briefed the board on a proposal developed in July 2022 to address the lack of access to a statewide online resource platform. Online resources were defined as a critical need for school libraries. A statewide electronic resource platform would ensure that all libraries across Illinois have a minimum standard of electronic resources, which would allow for centralized training and marketing. A statewide program would allow some libraries to allocate money to other resources, like staffing. Illinois is one of only two U.S. states without this kind of program. RAILS is excited to see that the Transition Report that came from Secretary of State Giannoulis' office identified an interest in and an immediate need for an online resources program.

10.1.1 Update on ILA Public Policy Committee Legislative Priority

Robinson emphasized that statewide access to an electronic resources program is the ILA's Public Policy Committee's top legislative priority. ILA is currently waiting on the Secretary of State's budget address, which will be available sometime in March, before moving forward. ILA is hoping to see a Statewide Electronic Resources Program in place in the next Fiscal Year.

11. RAILS board member reports

Voitik reported that the Shorewood-Troy Library will be closed for remodeling for the weekend and will be partially open after that through April 20, with outside delivery. The remodel will include the fire doors, new carpet, paint and much-needed electrical changes. Spratford announced the submissions for ILA conference are now open and are due April 4. She and Tom are recruiting presenters for trustee sessions. She added said that even if someone has a small idea, submit it because sometimes the committee can combine those to create a great session. Milavec shared that the Downers Grove Public Library is doing a workroom renovation and the two largest spaces are getting cleaned out and re-organized. Stagg reported that Alpha Park Public Library will be renovating its circulation area and hope to have it completed before summer reading starts. Vancina reported the Helen Plum Public Library is relocating to its new location and the move will take about 4-6 weeks. He will remind everyone know of the grand opening next month. He said the New Lenox renovation of the first floor will be adding study space and expanding digital media lab. Camargo shared that South Holland Public Library will host its grand re-opening tonight along with a Wakanda night theme to celebrate Black History Month. She they are expecting over 100 people and many activities planned for all ages.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next RAILS board meeting
The next board meeting will be on Friday, March 24, 2023 at 1 pm in Burr Ridge, and the April meeting in Coal Valley. There will be a RAILS member update on February 28. We will have an update on the Nominating Committee and election process, the new RAILS website demonstration and the school library data project update at the March Board meeting.
13. Adjourn
The meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.