

RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE
April 13, 2023
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 pm. 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, Juanita Harrell, Sarah McHone-Chase, Amy Walsh
RAILS East Peoria: Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg
Absent: Alice Creason, Kara Thorstenson
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Guests in attendance at RAILS Burr Ridge: Karen Goyer (minute taker), Renya Krempf, Monica Harris (*ex-officio*)
Guests in attendance via Zoom: Dan Bostrom, Catherine Yanikoski, 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 March 9, 2023
Caldicott moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Harrell seconded and a roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh. Nays: none.
6. New Business
 - 6.1 Specialized Libraries
Catherine Yanikowski, Research Librarian from Engineering Systems, Inc., talked about her transition from a public to a specialized library and her experiences and challenges there. Some of the challenges are being a solo librarian, the need for a lending and borrowing consortium to work with, a substantial portion of the budget designated towards purchasing materials because there is no straightforward way to borrow from other libraries, and the frequent need to locate obscure or rare items.

Next, Dan Bostrom, RAILS Member Engagement Manager and the president of the Special Libraries Association (SLA), Illinois chapter provided an overview of the specialized libraries in Illinois. SLA has lost over 70% of its membership since 2010, particularly in corporate and medical libraries. The

losses resulted in budget limitations, financial losses, and difficulty recruiting new leaders, volunteers, and event attendees. Currently, there is no president in office. RAILS has also seen a decline in specialized library membership. Bostrom expects the withdrawal rate of approximately 15-20 specialized library members per year will continue. Corporate medical libraries are the most vulnerable. Bostrom noted the trend is specialized libraries supported by universities. Last month, Bostrom published an article about SLA in IL which can be found [here](#).

7. Unfinished Business

7.1. Legislative and Advocacy Update

Harris gave an update on the ILA Advocacy committee regarding conference programming at the AISLE and ILA conferences. ILA recently passed a statement in support of school libraries. She listed the Bills the organization is focusing on. HB2789, requiring public and school libraries to adopt policies against censorship and book banning, is now moving to the Senate Executive Committee. SB2419, License to Read Act, allows the State Library to negotiate reasonable terms with the publishers of e-books and audiobooks, award grants towards the acquisition of eBooks, and set up a fund in the treasury into which libraries could buy into. It is now moving to the House for a hearing on April 19. HB4016, the Secretary's Budget – does not include any specific library items but it does allocate a \$5 million sum to support a statewide database.

7.2. Library Issues Updates

Caldicott expressed appreciation to RAILS for joining AISLE in the AISLE retired school librarian project. She also shared her work towards a change in her library's policy towards material selection.

Stagg reminded members about advocating to find Board trustees. Witt announced that the nomination deadline had been extended to April 21.

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

The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on May 11, 2023, at 4 pm. The following schedule of topics was agreed on: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will be covered on May 11th, My Library Is... on June 8th, and the Unserved on July 13th, 2023.

9. Adjournment

Helenthal adjourned the meeting at 4:59 pm.