

**Virtual Meeting**  
**RAILS Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting**

May 9, 2023 | 1:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

1. Welcome and Call to Order  
Hollister, EDI chairperson, greeted members and called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm.
2. Roll Call of Members  
Palmisano called the roll of the RAILS Board EDI Committee. Present: Victoria Blackmer, Cristina Bueno, Nate Gass, Dianne Hollister, Michelle Mistalski, Andrea Robinson, Vanessa Villarreal, Anna Wassenaar (joined at 1:15)  
Absent: Megan Ballengee, Rosie Camargo, Amber Hayes, 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: Monica Harris, Stacy Palmisano (designated notetaker)  
  
Guests in attendance via Zoom: Melanie Baker, Sam Daly, Joe Filapek, Renya Krempl, Sarah McHone-Chase  
  
There were no announcements.
4. Public Comments  
There were no public comments.
5. Adoption of the Consent Agenda - Dianne Hollister (action requested)
  - 5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
  - 5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Minutes of February 14, 2023  
Blackmer moved to approve the consent agenda. Villarreal seconded and the motions was unanimously approved on a roll call vote. Ayes: Victoria Blackmer, Cristina Bueno, Nate Gass, Dianne Hollister, Michelle Mistalski, Andrea Robinson, Vanessa Villarreal. Nays: none
6. Reports
  - 6.1. RAILS Report  
In addition to the report, Harris highlighted that the RAILS Advocacy Committee on May 11 will have an agenda item on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Also at the Advocacy meeting guest speaker, Sophie Kenney from the BIPOC Library Workers Networking Group will give a report as well as Joe Filapek, RAILS Director of Consulting and Continuing Education, will also give a report on RAILS’ EDI efforts Lastly, Harris shared that at the last RAILS Board meeting on April 28, 2023, Filapek gave an update on the RAILS EDI programs, services and initiatives.
  - 6.2. BIPOC Library Workers Networking Group Report  
Mistalski reported that the newly formed mentorship program at the BIPOC Library Workers

Networking Group has been successful and will be an ongoing program. On April 20 two faculty members from Oakton Community College gave a presentation regarding transitioning to and working in academic libraries. Bilingual compensation is a topic of discussion within the group as well as a BIPOC/Queer presenter list.

7. Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Overview

McHone-Chase, a member of the IACRL Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI) attended the meeting and will be a regular member of this committee going forward. IACRL created their DEI committee three years ago and will partner with the RAILS EDI Committee to collaborate and share information. Harris talked about adding future members of other equity, diversity, and inclusion committees as ex-officio members. Wassenaar suggested adding a member from the Illinois Library Association's Diversity Committee, and Hollister suggested to add a member from the Illinois Reading Council (IRC).

8. Committee Members Sharing of EDI Initiatives and Success Stories

Dianne started the conversation with a review of Bloomington Public Library's (BPL) EDI initiatives. Staff training in equity, diversity, and inclusion by far is their largest effort. EDI awareness in book orders and book requests has resulted in 25% of titles reflecting diversity. Patrons of BPL have embraced the True Colors Book Club and the library has held programs at different locations within the town to give patrons greater access. On June 2, 2023, BPL will be a part of the *Pride in the Park* event along with the local chapter of PFLAG (Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and the Prairie Pride Coalition. Lastly, Hollister talked about the skyrocketing statistics of the bookmobile at BPL. Robinson added that Rush University's library offers a devoted page on diversity on the library's website. Included on the diversity page are TED talks, articles and books. Also, at Rush University there is a staff committee that focuses on staff disabilities that makes sure all staff members have what they need to perform their jobs. Gass included that Cook Memorial Public Library District (CMPLD) has an EDI Committee, which he has recently cycled off as a member. Unfortunately, the committee's momentum on EDI initiatives have stalled. He also reported that CMPLD has a new strategic plan with an EDI focus and the library had a focus group from members of their ESL (English as a Second Language) group that has seen successful results. Villarreal suggested that RAILS include programming on how libraries can move forward on EDI initiatives. Mistalski reported that Northbrook Public Library's (NPL) EDI Committee has created three working groups as a result from a recent EDI organizational assessment the library conducted. NPL's EDI committee staff will present cultural activities at their upcoming staff development day. The library will have a second EDI organizational assessment that will provide qualitative data while the first consultant provided quantitative data. Mistalski stated that the successful strategy to get staff participation within the EDI working groups is to include one person from each department in the library. NPL also holds "snack size" EDI trainings for staff throughout the year.

9. Unfinished Business

Discuss Ways to Motivate Library Directors to do EDI Work

Harris summarized RAILS' EDI efforts which includes ways to diversifying the RAILS Board in the upcoming election, the new RAILS website was designed with maximum readability to align with our accessibility goals, and the RAILS' job board now requiring all posts include salary in dollar amounts. Villarreal brought up the importance of libraries updating their collection policies to allow staff to buy self-published authors. Filapek mentioned that at Director's University 2.0 which was held in Springfield on April 11-13, 2023, included an EDI presentation. He also shared that directors at smaller libraries felt they didn't have enough staff to form an EDI committee. Villarreal discussed having 360-degree staff evaluations on the library director to be able to accurately review performance levels. Hollister shared Bloomington's evaluation practices.

10. New Business – Monica Harris

10.1. Disaster proclamation ends on May 11, 2023

Harris reminded the committee that the Disaster Proclamation ends on May 11, 2023. RAILS is subject to the Open Meetings Act, so committee members must attend meetings in person or via Zoom from a public location, with public audio available. They must notify RAILS in advance of their location so it can be listed on the agenda and notices can be posted.

Attendance from a private location via Zoom does not count towards a quorum and is not preferred. Harris added that RAILS offers travel reimbursement for mileage to attend a RAILS committee meeting. Villareal asked about carpooling and the fact that some members do not have support from their managers. Harris stated that the majority of the quorum must not discuss committee related issues outside of the meeting, which would include members carpooling together. She offered to have conversations with appropriate managers to explain the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

10.2. Member terms

Harris referred to the list of terms for committee members. She explained the committee was originally quite large and has decreased over time. As a result, terms are mismatched and would need to be adjusted. After discussion, it was determined that members with terms ending in 2023 will roll off but will be able to rejoin in the future. All committee member terms will now be for 3 years.

10.3. Representation of future committee members

RAILS, along with members of the committee will work on selecting new members to join the committee. If needed, the structure of the committee may be adjusted in the course of the year. Current members who are interested in helping to select new members should contact Palmisano.

10.4. Format of future meetings

Regarding the meeting format, the agreement was that the current advisory-focused format for the committee is working well and that the members were in favor of continuing this for the next fiscal year.

10.5. FY2024 meeting schedule

Harris suggested possible times for future meetings. After some discussion, Harris suggested waiting until new committee members join and having input from them, which was agreed upon. Harris concluded by thanking the current committee members for their contributions.

11. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the Next RAILS Board EDI Committee Meeting

Harris gave a recap of today's meeting to include adding ex-officio members, including an IACRL report to future agendas, all current members that have terms ending on June 30, 2023 will roll off the committee, there will be a selection process for adding new committee members, and the FY2024 meeting schedule will be determined once new members have joined the committee.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.