

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, April 28, 2023 | 1:00 PM

Coal Valley Service Center | 220 W. 23rd Avenue

Coal Valley, IL 61230

Minutes

1. Welcome and call to order

Alex Vancina, RAILS Board President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, April 28, 2023, at the RAILS Coal Valley service center. He read the following: In accordance with the Government Emergency Administrative Act PA100-0640, 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. After the public comment section of the agenda the zoom chat will be disabled.

2. Roll call of RAILS board members

RAILS Coal Valley: Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik

Zoom: Monica Caldicott, Rene Leyva

Absent: Jennifer McIntosh, Vanessa Villareal

3. Recognition of guests and announcements

Coal Valley: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Sharon Swanson, Laura Nemeth, Elena Mendoza, Ryan Hebel, Carolyn Coulter, Emily Fister (designated notetaker)

Zoom: Demond Warfield, Jeff McKamey, Kendal Orrison, Nicole Zimmermann, Ola Gronski, Robert Morgan, Mary Kate Murray, Ryan Hebel, Renya Krempf, Anne Slaughter, Dan Bostrom, Mark Hatch, Mary Witt, Nincy George, Stacy Palmisano, Karen Goyer, Deb Mitchener, Sam Daly, Kim Perry, Jody Rubel, Janette Derucki

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 March 24, 2023 regular meeting

5.3 Approval of Disbursements: March, 2023

Milavec moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Voitik seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported the March reports incorporate the budget revision for the delivery staff salary changes that the Board approved at the February 7 Special Board meeting. The March 31 general fund cash and investment balance (\$23.3 million) would fund approximately 22.4 months of budgeted operations. General fund revenues through March of nearly \$13.3 million were \$1.5 million above budget due to above budget APC grant revenues received to-date. Investment income was \$569,032 through March which was 876% above the year-to-date budgeted amount due to increased interest rates. General fund expenditures through March of \$10.36 million were \$813,000

below budget due to lower contractual services expenditures but will increase as grants are awarded to members later in the fiscal year.

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina had no report.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

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 Nominating Committee - Alice Creason

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 gave an update on the associate executive director search. All applications have been reviewed, and there are 36 highly qualified candidates. The next steps will be pre-screening by HR and interviews. She also gave an update on House Bill 2789, scheduled for a Senate hearing on May 3rd. Harris reported that she attended a City Club event and briefly met with Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, who reiterated his support for libraries. She announced that an ISLAC meeting in May would be focused on broadband in Illinois. Slaughter will also be participating in it to share her perspective and experience. Harris let the Board know that the emergency proclamation for vehicle purchase is now on a back burner because of the emergence of an Illinois dealer who has been issued the CMS contract. She reminded everyone the May 26 board meeting will be starting at 10 am due to the holiday weekend schedule.

7.3.2 Update on World Language Cataloging Services Program – Nincy George

George's job includes offering special cataloging services, providing a variety of cataloging training, repeating courses and special supplemental training in various formats: webinars, presentations, and asynchronous courses (on Moodle). She described World Language Cataloging Services Program. It is a statewide program funded by the State Library, with no cost for user libraries. It covers all languages considered part of a library's regular collection and allows for various print formats and physical AV materials. Libraries can submit physical items, photocopies, images, or PDF files of the items to be cataloged. The program has cataloged 364 items in 19 different languages. In April, she received over 185 new requests for the cataloging service. The program can create custom cataloging profiles, reflecting local cataloging practices for libraries and consortia. It helps libraries advance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion by serving patrons of multiple languages and cultural backgrounds. Spratford and Caldicott relayed compliments they gathered from users of the service.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

There was no report from the State Library.

8. New business

8.1 Draft FY2024 Operational Plan outline

Harris highlighted some items from the memo. She said that inflation is exerting pressure on salaries, and to remain competitive the executive team is considering a 4 to 4.5% salary increase. Health insurance costs also increased by 11% this year. There are expected increases in property and casualty insurance costs as well. RAILS is budgeting about \$720,000 for vehicle replacement as a capital expense. Other projected capital expenses are carpet replacement at the Coal Valley location, repair of the sprinkler system, patio, and patio door in Burr Ridge, plus additional IT infrastructure changes. RAILS will continue efforts towards EDI by offering additional training to library trustees, auditing Employee Handbook through the EDI lens, and evaluating Find More Illinois for additional add-on services, including an ILS geared towards non-automated and under-automated libraries. RAILS will look at additional opportunities for member engagement, for example, returning to regular in-person meetings at the Burr Ridge location. The Services Inequities study will continue, and results will be used to create metrics for member engagement strategies. The Policy Committee and executive team are working on a succession plan for RAILS and planning an in-person staff in-service day, the first one since 2019. Caldicott commended RAILS for developing partnerships and gave a shout-out to Leyva for suggesting a succession plan. She suggested that non-returnable scholarly articles be included in Find More Illinois.

8.2 Certification report

Bostrom thanked the RAILS Admin Team for their work on the certification project. He explained the withdrawn members list contains libraries that reached out to RAILS and stated they no longer meet the certification criteria.

The suspension list contains member libraries who did not respond to staff after multiple attempts at contact by phone and email and did not complete the certification process. Creason moved for the approval of the certification report including withdrawal and suspension of members requesting final authority of the State Library. Helenthal seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.3 New member

Bostrom presented the application from DeVry University, Naperville location. That location is acting as a lending library. It has a small collection of physical books, but it has about 250,000 eBook titles. The university was a member until 2016 and is now coming back. Spratford moved to approve full membership for DeVry University and request final approval from the Illinois State Library. Hollister seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.4 Draft Executive Director Goals

Harris stated that since she just became Director very recently, Director Goals setting will be approached differently than in the past. She described the document as suggestions for the board, who will ultimately decide on the goals for the Executive Director. Currently there are 13 highlighted goals. Spratford suggested that RAILS partner organizations should also consider having cooperative projects as one of their goals. Harris stated she is very pleased with deepening partnerships that have been developing. Milavec stated that 13 goals was an

ambitious list. Harris commented that having ambitious goals at the start helps to achieve more in the end. Hollister inquired whether Associate Executive Director, when hired, would have their own goals or would they be supporting Harris. Harris clarified that part of the role is to support the Executive Director in achieving their goals, but they will also have their own set of goals.

9. Unfinished business

9.1 Board election and nominating committee

Vancina reported that the nominating committee has filled the nominations for the upcoming board election. There are some contested elections. There are five seats up for election: three Trustee seats, which includes the seats current held by Becky Spratford, Beth Tepen, and Alex Vancina; the school seat held by Monica Caldicott and the academic seat held by Jennifer McIntosh. Since Juanita Harrell resigned last month, her Specialized library seat is open and whoever is elected to that seat will carry out her term through June 2025. All other terms up for election are from July 2023-June 2026. At this time, 12 nominations have been received: 3 for the school library seat, 3 for the special library seat, one for an academic library seat and 5 for the public library trustee seat. Flyers are going to all members as a reminder to vote in the upcoming election which will run from May 8 at 8 a.m. to May 24 at 5 p.m.

10. Board development

10.1 RAILS EDI Programs and Services Update Initiatives

Filapek noted that a full report on the EDI activities will be given when consultant Biz Lindsay Ryan can attend with the new board after July. Bostrom shared he is a member of the Climate Team that was created in August 2021 as an internal committee that would take an in-depth look at the potential problems and solutions regarding the RAILS climate and culture. The team started with assessing relationships between staff/members, staff/partners, staff/board and staff/staff, to make sure we are transparent and accountable in regard to equity, diversity and inclusion. The Climate team developed a connections program for new hires, and a staff engagement team that tries to make the staff more engaged with the RAILS culture, like a chili cook-off, team reading or movie zoom chat channels and many days centered around food. Filapek reported on the RAILS EDI learning cohort that has been working together for about a year. The make-up is 40 members of public, academic and school libraries. Each month they explore different EDI topics, view presentations (some facilitated by Biz), share resources, videos and articles, and have many discussions that have forged good relationships. Grant Halter will be working with the Cohort team to create an assessment that will gauge outcomes for the participants as well as to assess what areas of growth are still needed. RAILS has offered 19 EDI related CEs throughout the past year, many in conjunction with members and partners. Staff has taken part in 16 hours of EDI training in 2-4 sessions covering racism, gender identity, relationships, and structural inequalities. Harris reviewed the EDI board committee work including an increased focus on partnership by adding a liaison from the RAILS BIPOC networking group. This group now provides a quarterly report on their work to the EDI Committee. A request came from IACRL to join the committee and brought the idea that other groups may be interested in connecting. This would increase the focus of compiling, sharing and hopefully increasing the impact of ideas and efforts to our membership. Filapek added that a continuation of some of the work for FY24 will include review of the employee handbook and other policies

through an EDI lens, and the staff connections program and targeting training for specific jobs or functions such as managers in hiring, promotions, and disciplinary action. RAILS staff will continue to look for ways to prioritize EDI efforts. Leyva said the ILA Conference Committee is looking at EDI presentations for people who have experienced EDI issues instead of reading about them.

11. RAILS board member reports

Camargo reported that the ILA Reaching Forward conference is next Friday and it is a great learning opportunity for library staff. Some content focuses on EDI as well. Caldicott was extremely thankful for a My Library is... grant from RAILS to expand their Ukrainian language books for some of their new students. Spratford announced the La Grange Public Library initiated a new procedure regarding trustee oath taking. They revamped the oath to include good behavior and intellectual freedom and added the ethics statements from the United for Libraries. All trustees signed it along with the new manual. Vancina announced the Helen Plum Library grand opening went very well with over 5500 visitors last weekend. He said the New Lenox reopening of the first floor will be Saturday.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next RAILS board meeting

The next board meeting will be May 26, 2023 at 10 a.m. The Emergency Proclamation will have expired by then so please note that we will need at least 8 people in person, either at Burr Ridge or East Peoria. On the agenda will be the Executive Director Goals Approval, final draft of the budget and operational plan.

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.