

**REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING**

Friday, May 26, 2023 | 10:00 AM  
Burr Ridge Service Center | 125 Tower Drive  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

**draft minutes****1. Welcome and call to order**

Alex Vancina, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 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: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Julie Milavec, Jennifer McIntosh, Becky Spratford, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik

Coal Valley: Beth Tepen

East Peoria: Robin Helenthal, Thomas Stagg

Zoom: Dianne Hollister

Absent: Rene Leyva, Vanessa Villareal

**3. Recognition of guests and announcements**

Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Sharon Swanson, Galin Iliev, Ola Gronski, Leila Heath, Mark Hatch, Jody Rubel, Laura Nemeth, Emily Fister (designated minute taker)

Zoom: Anne Slaughter, Joe Filapek, Ryan Hebel, Mary Witt, Karen Egan

**4. Public comments and announcements**

There were no public comments.

**5. Consent agenda**

5.1 Adoption of the Agenda

5.2 RAILS Board minutes of April 28, 2023 regular meeting

5.3 Approval of Disbursements: April, 2023

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

**6. RAILS Financial Report**

Swanson reported the April 30 general fund cash and investment balance (\$22.26 million) would fund approximately 21.4 months of budgeted operations. General fund revenues through April of over \$13.5 million were over \$540,000 above budget due to Investment income but partially offset by unbudgeted L2 development and specialized cataloging grant revenues and lower reimbursement revenues from group purchases. General fund expenditures through April of \$11.61 million were nearly \$889,000 below budget due to lower Contractual Services expenditure for grant awards, personnel hiring delays, and lower fuel costs in vehicle expenditures. Hatch reported that RAILS is hoping to order vehicles in June or July of 2023. The replacement of vehicles will be built into future budget projections.

## 7. Reports

### 7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina had no report.

### 7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

There were no additions to the reports included in the agenda packet.

### 7.3 RAILS Reports

#### 7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Harris reported on her Meet and Greet event in Quincy, as well as individual visits with trustees. She will continue meeting with new board members. There are no new updates on legislation, but both HB2789 and SB2419 are expected to be signed by the governor soon. The secretary's budget is moving forward, and they are cautiously optimistic about the \$5 million allocation for the statewide database program included in it. RAILS' Anne Slaughter presented to ISLAC on broadband in Illinois and expects to be collaborating with the Secretary of State's office on that issue. The Illinois Digital Heritage Hub is moving under the umbrella of CARLI. The equalization grant for public libraries will be discussed in the future, as it has not been updated in 5 years. RAILS is working on organizing a joint staff meeting with IHLS in Springfield in the Fall. The RAILS board election closed with 321 votes, which is a record so far. Harris announced Mary Witt will be retiring on July 14th after 36 years of working for the systems. RAILS is working towards finding a replacement for her. Harris mentioned that the Libraries and Solar Eclipse in-person training session recently held at Burr Ridge was very well attended and there are two more planned in different locations.

#### 7.3.2 Update on RAILS discounts/group purchases and Consortia Manager– Leila Heath

Heath reported that RAILS saved members over \$1M in 2022 and expects to exceed \$3M in savings in 2024. The increase in savings was due in part to adding Jody Rubel as the library resource specialist position in 2022. The department uses Consortia Manager software to track vendor information, contracts, discounts, and data for 3600 libraries. She expressed her appreciation for the support provided by the Finance Department. Rubel gave a summary of new developments, including adding Hiveclass and Infobase and completing Ebsco renewals. Caldicott encouraged the department to work with Swank Digital Campus for the benefit of the school and academic libraries. Harris clarified that price negotiations for eBooks will be discussed with the Secretary of State. Spratford added that legal challenges to the newly signed legislation are possible.

### 7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

Egan stated they are closely tracking developments at the state Capitol. She reiterated that HB2789 passed and is expected to be signed by the governor soon. The next step in its implementation will be drafting the administrative rules after a public comments period and ISLAC review. The License to Read Act has also been sent to the governor for signature. When enacted, the Secretary of State will be able to negotiate pricing with book publishers on behalf of Illinois libraries. She added that the Secretary's budget is expected to pass by the end of the weekend. The \$5 million allocation for the statewide database program will address the needs of unserved populations and move Illinois toward universal library service. She added that FY 2024

grants are being finalized and 2024 public library grants have been announced. Additionally, \$117,700 of equalization grants was issued. Egan will research and get back to the board regarding the Cards for Kids program administrative rules.

## 8. New business

### 8.1 Fiscal Accountability Policy

Harris discussed the policy updates, which were reviewed by the legal department and then the policy committee, and recommended the board consider them for approval.

Milavec moved to approve the Fiscal Accountability policy updates and send to the State Library for final approval. Camargo seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

### 8.2 Social Media Policy

Harris presented the revised Social Media Policy, reviewed by the legal counsel, communications and marketing team, and the Policy Committee. Caldicott moved to approve the changes to the RAILS Social Media Policy and send to the State Library for final approval, Voitik seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Harris reminded the Board that the Policy Committee will be reviewing all policies and, in the future, will set up a calendar to review all RAILS policies on a regular basis.

McIntosh said she had learned a lot as the Policy Committee Chair and recommended joining the Committee to get to know the work of RAILS.

## 9. Unfinished business

### 9.1 Approval of APC grant application and FY2024 budget

Harris presented the APC grant application and budget for FY 2024 including the RAILS operational plan. There are needs in several categories: resource sharing (including Find More Illinois), replacement delivery vehicles, and the e-book program, eRead Illinois. The Explore More Illinois program will be rebranded in partnership with IHLS and CPL. Inclusion and accessibility remain priorities. RAILS plans to develop trustee-focused EDI training and EDI training options available to the entire RAILS membership. She reviewed the proposed salary raises of 4.5% or 4% and explained the request for the addition of an HR Assistant position and a temporary position for the data project. Harris answered related questions.

Milavec moved to approve the APC Grant Application and FY24 budget, and Camargo seconded. The motion was unanimously approved with a roll call vote.

### 9.2 Executive Director FY 2024 goals

Harris presented executive director goals, which did not change significantly since presented in the last month's meeting. There were no questions or suggestions. Spratford moved to approve the Executive Director goals for FY2024, Milavec seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

## 10. Board development

### 10.1 RAILS digital marketing and communications initiatives

Gronski presented about RAILS' digital marketing and communications initiatives in the last six months. Social media analytics show that reach is up 285% on Facebook and 1,019% on Instagram and engagement is up 176% on Facebook and 653% on Instagram. The RAILS Minute series

includes improvements to video and sound quality using DSLR cameras and wireless lavalier microphones as well as recording them in person. Professional headshots are now taken for every RAILS staff member to create a cohesive staff directory on the new website. She has attended member library visits with Dan Bostrom and Monica Harris building a portfolio of photos that produce the highest-performing posts across RAILS social media platforms and can be used as future marketing materials. Other improvements include updating delivery training videos to include best practices and a concerted effort to encourage higher voter participation in the 2023 board election. A Google map was created illustrating the location of each voter in the election, viewable [here](#). Future plans for RAILS digital marketing initiatives include a condensed board orientation video for the July board meeting, type-specific videos highlighting members who use RAILS resources, and a toolkit video for member libraries featuring patron testimonials to advocate for funding in libraries.

11. RAILS board member reports

Spratford thanked Monica Harris for meeting with La Grange Public Library new director Jen Hovanec and past RAILS board member Juanita Harrell now the La Grange Park Public Library director. The feedback from both directors was very positive and appreciative of Monica taking the time to meet with them. Milavec reported that the Downers Grove Library is wrapping up its Strategic Plan process and was surprised that they received over 2000 resident responses to their community questionnaire. Over 140 people participated in the focus groups, 26 board, staff, and community leaders in the strategic retreat. The plan will include some capital projects that rose to the top as priorities during the process. Camargo reported she is part of the BIPOC networking group and a subject that has risen is differential pay for those bilingual staff who are called upon to translate and interpret without additional compensation. She suggested RAILS could vet vendors to provide translations and interpreters for member libraries. Caldicott said that even if she does not get reelected for the school library seat, she is thrilled that RAILS has three candidates for the seat. She said it speaks volumes that RAILS is fulfilling the goals of the strategic plan by engaging more schools. McIntosh reported the Andy Warhol Portfolios: A Life in Pop will be on display at the College of DuPage from June 3 - September 10, 2023.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building for the next RAILS board meeting -June 16, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

13. Closed session

Vancina read the following: The Board will now move into closed session to discuss matters pertaining to closed session minutes as per 5 Illinois Compiled Statutes, chapter 120, paragraph 2, section 2(c)(21), which states:

*Exceptions. A public body may hold closed meetings to consider the following subjects:*  
(21) Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06.

Creason moved that Board enter into closed session, Milavec seconded, and the motion was approved on a roll call vote. Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer McIntosh, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Teppen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Nays: None.

Spratford moved that Board move out of closed session into open session. Creason seconded, and the motion was approved on a roll call vote. Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer McIntosh, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Nays: None.

14. Actions in follow-up to closed session

14.1 Six-month review of closed session minutes

Milavec moved that the following closed session minutes be released: 8/28/2020-Salary adjustments, Unionizing efforts; 1/15/2021-litigation; 10/22/2021-Unionizing efforts; 11/19/2021-Unionizing efforts; 1/28/2022-Unionizing efforts; 3/18/2022-Unionizing efforts; 5/27/2022-Unionizing efforts; 6/17/2022-ED compensation; 7/22/2022-Unionizing efforts; 8/26/2022-Unionizing efforts; 10/28/2022-Unionizing efforts; 11/18/2022-Unionizing efforts; 1/20/2023-Union negotiations; 1/24/2023-Interviews of Executive Director candidates; 2/7/2023-Union negotiations. Camargo seconded and the motion was unanimously approved on a roll call vote. Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Alice Creason, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer McIntosh, Julie Milavec, Becky Spratford, Thomas Stagg, Beth Tepen, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Nays: None.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.