

APPROVED 8/25/23

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, July 28, 2023 | 1:00 PM

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Alex Vancina, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28, 2023 at the RAILS Burr Ridge service center.

2. Roll Call of Members

Fister called the roll of the Board members.

Burr Ridge: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Jennifer Hovanec, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski

Absent: Dianne Hollister, Rene Leyva, Vanessa Villareal

3. Recognition of Guests

Guests in Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Ryan Hebel, Sharon Swanson, Ola Gronski, Laura Nemeth, Emily Fister-note taker

Guests in Zoom: Dan Bostrom, Leila Heath, Anne Slaughter,

4. Public comments and announcements

There were no public comments.

5. Oath of office and election of officers

5.1 Newly Elected Board Members - Oath of Office

Thomas Stagg asked the Newly Elected Board Members to stand and recite the Oath of Office. He thanked the new and returning board members for their willingness to serve on the board.

5.2 Election of Officers

Stagg presented the slate of officers as recommended by the RAILS nominating committee:

Alex Vancina, President; Gwen Gregory, Vice President; Julie Milavec, Secretary; Karen Voitik, Treasurer. He asked for other nominations from the floor. There were no other nominations.

Helenthal moved that the slate of officers recommended by the nominating committee be approved. Creason seconded and the slate was unanimously approved. The new officers were congratulated.

Alex Vancina resumed as Chair of the meeting.

6. Consent agenda

6.1 Adoption of the Agenda

6.2 RAILS Board Minutes of June 16, 2023 Regular Meeting

6.3 Approval of Disbursements: June, 2023

6.4 RAILS Board meeting schedule for FY 2024

Vancina stated that the consent agenda includes minutes from our June meeting. It is generally agreed by legal counsel that no one needs to abstain from approving minutes if your fellow board members who attended those meetings raise no objections to the minutes. He noted that the RAILS Board meeting schedule is also included in the consent agenda. Voitik moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Stagg seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Jennifer Hovanec, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski; Nays: None

7. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported that the financial statements are preliminary and unaudited reports and June 30 is the conclusion of the RAILS fiscal year. The June 30 general fund cash and investment balance unassigned General Fund (\$22.9 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 20.0 months of budgeted FY2024 operations. General Fund revenues through June of \$16,236,000 were \$1,074,894 above budget primarily due to higher than anticipated investment income and changes in the market value of investments (\$814,089). Interest rates are expected to be raised again by 25 points before the end of the calendar year. General Fund expenditures of \$14,269,262 through June were \$428,573 below budget primarily due to lower contractual services (\$259,840), personnel (\$219,199), vehicles (\$73,363), travel and continuing education (\$59,403), and other cost categories with the notable exceptions of capital outlays for leases (\$235,751) and library materials (\$24,146). RAILS is refunding RSA \$32,945, which was the difference between budgeted and actual personnel expenditures for their support staff during FY2023, due to the delay in filling the Operations Manager position. RAILS has \$4 million spread between Treasury note investments and 4 CDs which are maturing and will be reinvested. RAILS signed a new lease for Bolingbrook location; GASBE 87 requires reporting on general fund and government fund and required to capitalize leases as assets. Vehicle repairs are above budget because we were unable to replace vehicles this year; and we have budgeted for replacement of 12 vehicles for FY24.

8. Reports

8.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina had no report.

8.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

The committee reports were included in the packet. There were no additions or questions about the reports.

8.3 RAILS Reports

8.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Harris noted that the Consortia reports are included in the report and are submitted to the board on a quarterly basis. Slaughter and Harris traveled to meet with IHLS and CARLI to discuss possible solutions and funding sources to move forward with expanding broadband access and

digital equity in Illinois. RAILS staff attended the PrairieCat delegates assembly at the New Lenox Public Library. There are two new additions to the Find More Illinois (FMI) program—the Marseilles Public Library and the Schaumburg Township Public Library, and the number of items available through FMI is now at 2.3 million items. The Explore More Illinois program has experienced robust growth with 2,710 reservations made in June. Explore More Illinois is currently working with CARLI on a pilot program to include community college libraries. As of July 11, there were 905 renewed eRead subscriptions, including 585 school libraries, and all eRead libraries are moving to Boundless on September 26. RAILS has made talking points for the Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiencies available on the RAILS website for member use.

Harris announced Joe Filapek as the new Associate Executive Director of RAILS. Currently, the Director of Marketing and Communications position is open, following the retirement of Mary Witt in July. The Director of Continuing Education & Consulting position is vacant as well, due to Filapek's promotion.

8.4 Illinois State Library Report

Secretary Giannoulis sent award letters for FY2024 grant funding. RAILS will receive the System Area and Per Capita Grant for over \$11 million, the Support for Cataloging Services Grant for over \$45,000, and the Support to L2 Grant for over \$53,000. There is no longer a Live and Learn Fund; the System Area Per Capita Grant funds are expected to be issued much faster than previous years. Twenty RAILS member libraries were awarded a total of \$325,717 for Project Next Generation Grants. Four radio stations in Chicago, DeKalb, Macomb, and Rock Island received \$162,453 for Talking Books and Radio Information Services Grants to support content for people of all ages with a vision disability and who are eligible for Talking Books services. The stations may include content that is not often heard on local news broadcasts (e.g., obituaries, grocery ads, want ads, etc.). Many academic agencies within RAILS were awarded Adult Volunteer Literacy Grants, Penny Severns Family Literacy Grants, and Workplace Skills Enhancement Literacy Grants; however, these grants at academic institutions go to the Adult Education Department, not directly to the library. The FY2023 System Annual Report has been emailed to systems with reports due September 30. Harrison announced the passing of former Illinois State Library Consultant, Neil Kelley. Harris expressed sympathy over the loss of the State Library colleague.

9. New business

9.1 Board Committee Assignments

Vancina noted the draft list of committees and members as well as a tentative schedule for the committee meetings. There are a few openings for board members. If anyone is interested, they should contact Alex or Monica.

9.2 Election of at-large member to Executive Committee

Vancina reported that the bylaws state that the Executive Committee includes an at-large member, and he nominated Rene Leyva for that seat. There were no objections. Milavec moved

to elect Rene Leyva to the at-large seat of the Executive Committee. Stagg seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9.3 Disposal of surplus property

Slaughter presented the list of surplus property. As noted in the board memo, most of the equipment dates back 12 years to the formation of the systems. All of the licensing that goes along with this hardware is not transferable and cannot be sold for anything other than spare parts. The list contains several older videoconferencing items that will be replaced with the new Zoom Room equipment we recently purchased. Caldicott moved to approval the disposal of the surplus property, Helenthal seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9.4 New member application

Bostrom presented a new specialized library membership application for the Board's approval. Stony Island Arts Bank is a cultural center on the south side of Chicago with unique collections, including holdings from Johnson Publishing Company and music-related items. He confirmed that the library meets the stated criteria for membership, as per library law, and has permanent financial support. Camargo moved to approve full membership for the Stony Island Arts Bank request final approval from the Illinois State Library, Hovanec seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9.5 Statement supporting Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries

Harris presented the background of the statement of support from AISLE and explained that RAILS is instituting a new process for approving statements of support requested by partner organizations. The AISLE Library Paraprofessional Statement of Support was approved by the AISLE Executive Board on June 10, 2023. RAILS has been asked to sign on to the statement as a show of solidarity for the important role that library paraprofessionals play in an adequately staffed school library. The RAILS Board Advocacy Committee reviewed the statement on July 13 and unanimously voted to recommend that the RAILS Board approve the statement.

Caldicott reiterated the importance of adequate staffing for school libraries and gave an example of Township High School District 214, which went from winning a National School Library of the Year Award in 2019 to now employing only a single librarian in each school and eliminating 100% of library paraprofessional staff. This demonstrates that library staff reduction in schools is a growing problem and not only limited to small, underfunded districts. She encouraged the RAILS Board to support the statement in question.

Bostrom added that the Illinois State Board of Education recommends that there is one certified librarian per 600 high school students and one per 450 elementary school students. AISLE has been working to increase awareness of this issue. They have been sending statements in support of replacing retiring librarians and are now adding support letters for para-library staff. Caldicott added that it is helpful that statements of support be presented to the Board so the Board members can be advocates for these issues.

Milavec moved to accept the Statement of Support, Voitik seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 1:42 pm, Vancina announced a short break until 1:52 pm.

10. Unfinished business

The Board had no unfinished business to discuss.

11. Board Development

11.1 RAILS Financial report and budget

Swanson presented an overview of the financial reports presented to the Board and tips for reading and understanding them. She explained that RAILS accounting is done on a modified accrual basis, which combines cash basis accounting and accrual accounting. RAILS uses three types of funds: general fund, capital projects fund, and special revenue fund. Swanson gave a step-by-step explanation of various items contained in the monthly financial report presented to the Board. She stated that all RAILS Board officers are authorized signers for the RAILS accounts, together with RAILS' executive director and associate executive director. Expenditures over \$10K require a Board member's signature, usually the Treasurer's. The Board also reviews and approves monthly statements at the start of its meetings and reviews the investment portfolio twice a year. In addition, the Board periodically develops and reviews travel policy and reimbursement rates upon recommendation. The Annual financial audit and Single Audit are presented to the Board directly by auditors for review.

Swanson addressed concerns about the Silicon Valley Bank collapse and stated that Wintrust Bank was never related to that bank. Harris thanked Swanson and reiterated the importance of understanding the financial information by the members of the Board.

12. RAILS board member reports

Creason announced that Richton Park Public Library District had received two grants from the Public Library Association, one for digital literacy workshop incentives and, as one of only ten libraries in the country, one for the Teens Teach Tech pilot program.

13. Next RAILS board meeting

The next Board meeting will be held Friday, August 25, 2023 at Burr Ridge. The agenda will include a delivery update and a report on the Service Inequities Research Project.

14. Adjourn

Vancina adjourned the meeting at 2:13 p.m.