



DRAFT

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, August 25, 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, August 25, 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, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Vanessa Villareal, Karen Voitik, and Catherine Yanikoski

Absent: none

3. Recognition of Guests

Guests in Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Sharon Swanson, Galin Iliev, Emily Fister-note taker.

Guests in Zoom: Ryan Hebel, Mark Hatch, Janette Derucki, Karen Egan-Illinois State Library

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 July 28, 2023 regular meeting

5.3 RAILS Board minutes of July 28, 2023 special board orientation meeting

5.4 Approval of Disbursements: July, 2023

Hovanec moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Voitik seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Vanessa Villareal, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: None

6. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported that the financial statements are preliminary and unaudited reports and July 31 general fund cash and investment balance unassigned General Fund (\$21.8 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 19.1 months of budgeted FY2024 operations. General Fund revenues through July of \$2.1 million were approximately \$729,000 below budget due to not having yet received any APC grant payments. General Fund expenditures of just over \$2.5 million were \$210,000 below budget primarily due to lower

contractual services and not replacing vehicles. She noted that one of the fuel cards was “skimmed” from a pump’s card reader and incurred \$998.50 in fraudulent transactions during August. A police report was filed and we are working to file a dispute with our fuel card provider and expect to recover the funds. As a precaution, all drivers are being instructed to check the card reader on all pumps to attempt to ensure that it does not have a skimming device installed over the proper card reader. During July, RAILS incurred expenses for (budgeted to be purchased in FY2023) for the replacement of Polycom equipment and service center server replacements. On August 15th, RAILS received the full amount of the FY2024 grants for L2 (\$53,611) and World language cataloging (\$45,627).

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Vancina reported that the board will hold a closed session after the regular business has concluded.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

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

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 - Tom Stagg

7.2.6 Policy Committee - Gwen Gregory

7.2.7 Resource Sharing Committee - Becky Spratford

7.2.8 Universal Service Committee - Alice Creason

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Harris reported that she participated in Secretary Giannoulis’ press conference announcing library grants. She presented the giant check RAILS had received, symbolizing the disbursed grant funds. She thanked the Illinois State Library (ISL) and the Secretary for the invitation to talk about the impact of the grant funding for Library Systems on Illinois libraries and the great work libraries do. The event was an opportunity to share information with legislators, press, and others not familiar with the work of libraries. On October 2, Harris, Secretary Giannoulis, and two Illinois based authors, will participate in a Zoom panel discussion focused on book banning. Harris shared that the Directors University this year was a great success. Thirty new public library directors participated. RAILS is looking forward to a joint meeting with the leadership of the Illinois Heartland Library System, the first one in several years. It will take place on August 29 in Springfield. Harris highlighted Unite Against Book Bans in Illinois – a joint project of many library associations in the state. Modeled on a similar effort in New Jersey, it provides volunteers to support libraries that have been affected by book-banning attempts.

Currently, the project is enrolling volunteers and will start offering support to libraries soon.

7.3.2 RAILS Service of the Month - Update on RAILS Delivery

Hatch presented the facilities and delivery services at RAILS, introducing the locations and managers. The Delivery department operates a hybrid system, subcontracting some deliveries to Continental Transport Logistics (CTL). They track parameters for efficiency, completing 117,400 stops, covering 27,000 square miles, and processing 7.6 million items annually. Deliveries are optimized using GeoMarc logistics, Community Delivery Partnerships and Delivery on Demand. Libraries are notified of delivery windows and can contact the Help Desk for adjustments. Unified delivery labels and automation through iPads are being implemented. Quarterly item counts are done, and resources are available on the RAILS website. The CTL partnership has been in place since 2015. Current challenges are purchasing new vehicles and hiring staff. Hatch hopes to eliminate delivery counts and collaborate closer with the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) soon.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report- ISL Staff

Egan thanked Harris for agreeing to talk about the value of libraries during Secretary Giannoulis' press conference that morning. She announced that School District Library Grant application is open, and the deadline is on October 15th. Preparations for Family Reading Night in November are already underway at ISL. Event bookmarks are available for ordering. ISL is looking forward to the systems meeting next week. She gave a reminder that the system's annual reports are due at the end of September.

8. New business

8.1 Open Meetings Act and FOIA report for FY2023

Harris thanked Leyva for the suggestion of the report. The memo showed the activity on the RAILS sponsored FOIA and OMA hotline. Illinois public library directors and Freedom of Information Act/Open Meetings Act officers can use the hotline to receive free help from an Ancel Glink attorney. Leyva appreciated the report and the fact that the hotline is utilized by RAILS members.

8.2 RAILS Closure for Staff Institute Day, October 11, 2024

Milavec moved and Camargo seconded to approve the closing of RAILS facilities and delivery on Wednesday, October 11 for the purpose of holding a staff institute day. The motion was unanimously approved.

8.3 Board meeting schedule and locations

The September board meeting is scheduled will be held at the RAILS Coal Valley location. Fister reported that meeting in Coal Valley. Currently, there are six board members attending dinner the night before and an additional two traveling to attend the lunch

networking and meeting. Please let her know of your plans. We are looking at the Peoria Public Library for our March or April board meeting.

8.4 RAILS Six-month investment portfolio review

Swanson reported that the RAILS board approved an updated Fiscal Accountability Policy at the May 2023 board meeting. The policy states that the board will review the investment portfolio twice a year to assess its effectiveness in meeting RAILS's needs for: Safety, Liquidity, Rate of return, Diversification and General Performance. The majority of RAILS's funds are held in liquid accounts, a checking account, and a money market account. The bulk of funds have been kept liquid due to planned vehicle purchases and several upcoming facility maintenance items. RAILS's current investments consist of: One Treasury Note, Thirteen CD's, and a small number of US Treasury Bonds that were willed to the Alliance Library System by a former Alliance Library System staff member. All investments are fully backed or insured by the US government or FDIC insurance. RAILS has a total of \$3,932,216 in investments, or 16.7% of RAILS's total cash and investment balance. One Treasury Note matured at the end of July and four CD's matured early in August. To take advantage of this peak in interest rates, RAILS reinvested the funds from these maturities in nine two-year CD's with an average interest rate of 4.93%.

9. Unfinished business

9.1 Board Committee Assignments

Harris reported that committees for the board members are set. Each board member is on at least one committee. She thanked all for their willingness to serve.

10. Board Development

10.1 Service Inequities Research Project

Derucki presented the RAILS Service Inequities Study that began in 2022 and was conducted to understand perceptions of inequity and address them in a way that allows for better service to all RAILS members. The findings state that RAILS members have an overall positive view of RAILS as an organization; though, academic, school, and special library workers were less likely to agree that RAILS understands and supports the work of all library types. Services viewed as most valuable to RAILS members are Delivery and Continuing Education with overall knowledge about Deals and Discounts, Networking, and Consulting Services being the least recognized. The biggest forms of perceived service inequity were disparate services to non-public libraries, small libraries, and rural libraries. Members hope to see increased transparency around brokered services, increased RAILS presence in West and Central Illinois, and the expansion of services tailored to all library types. Members acknowledge that RAILS is making progress toward a lot of the requested improvements.

11. RAILS board member reports

Milavec reported that Downers Grove Public Library passed their Strategic Plan for 2023-2028, incorporating the Equity Strategic Plan that was developed last year.

12. Next RAILS board meeting Friday, September 22, 2023: Meeting recap and agenda building
The agenda for next month will include: Grant Halter with a RAILS data report and Greg McCormick will give an Overview of the Illinois State Library.

13. Closed session

Vancina stated the following: The Board will now move into closed session to discuss matters regarding employment, as per 5 Illinois Compiled Statutes, chapter 120, paragraph 2, section (c) 1, which states:

Exceptions. A public body may hold closed meetings to consider the following

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel to determine its validity.

Voitik moved for the Board to move into closed session. Creason seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Vanessa Villareal, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: None

14. Actions in follow-up to closed session

Helenthal moved for the Board to move back into open closed session. Hollister seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Vanessa Villareal, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: None

Stagg moved to increase the salary of Executive Director Monica Harris to \$182,875 to be applied retroactively to July 1, 2023. Leyva seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Monica Caldicott, Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Tom Stagg, Alex Vancina, Vanessa Villareal, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: None.

15. Adjourn

Vancina adjourned the meeting at 3:17 p.m.