



REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, September 22, 2023 | 1:00 PM

RAILS Coal Valley, 220 W 23rd Ave, Coal Valley, IL 61240

MINUTES

1. Welcome and call to order
Vancina called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.
2. Roll call of RAILS board members
Murray called the roll of board members.
Coal Valley: Rosie Camargo, Jean Carroll, Alice Creason, Gwen Gregory, Julie Milavec, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik
Burr Ridge: Catherine Yanikoski
East Peoria: Robin Helenthal, Dianne Hollister
Zoom: Rene Leyva (arrived at 1:03 pm, left at 1:15 pm, returned at 1:58 pm)
Absent: Monica Caldicott, Jennifer Hovanec, Thomas Stagg, Vanessa Villarreal
3. Recognition of guests and announcements
Guests in Coal Valley: Mark Hatch, Monica Harris, Ryan Hebel, Mary Kate Murray
Guests in Burr Ridge: Emily Fister, Brad Porter, Sharon Swanson
Guests in East Peoria: Kendal Orrison
Guests at the Illinois State Library: Mark Shaffer
Guests via Zoom: Dan Bostrom, Grant Halter, Leila Heath, Stacy Palmisano
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 August 25, 2023 Regular Meeting
 - 5.3. RAILS Board Minutes of August 25, 2023 Closed Session Meeting
 - 5.4. Approval of Disbursements: August, 2023 – Sharon Swanson
Creason moved and Milavec seconded the approval of the consent agenda as presented. The motion was approved by a roll call vote. Ayes: Camargo, Carroll, Creason, Gregory, Helenthal, Hollister, Milavec, Voitik, Vancina, Yanikoski. Nays: None
6. Annual Audit Report FY2023
Swanson reported that RAILS has completed the 12th annual financial audit which went smoothly and resulted in a clean opinion. Brad Porter, from Lauterbach & Amen presented the single audit, annual financial report, and management letter to the Board. He reviewed the management letter to the Board of Directors that summarizes the audit and stressed the “clean” or “unmodified” audit rating in the opinion section. He said the Management’s discussion and analysis provides a

summary of the fiscal year with comparative data that is often easier to understand than the financial statements. There was a net increase in the Fund Balance of \$1.9M largely due to the increases in interest income and APC grant funding increases. The IMRF Net pension asset was reduced to \$2.1M from over \$15M due to the volatile nature and a rough calendar year for the IMRF Plan Asset returns.

Porter said the finance team was helpful and well-prepared for the audit. There will be changes to the GASB standards for the next year and Lauterbach & Amen will continue to assist RAILS in implementing these standards and provide webinars and training as well.

Voitik moved and Carroll seconded the acceptance of the audit report for fiscal year 2023. The motion was approved by a roll call vote. Ayes: Camargo, Carroll, Creason, Gregory, Helenthal, Hollister, Milavec, Voitik, Vancina, Yanikoski. Nays: None

7. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported the August 31 general fund cash and investment balance of \$21.2 million would fund approximately 18.6 months of budgeted FY2024 operations. General fund revenues through August were over \$2.6 million - approximately \$1.7 million below budget due to not receiving any APC grant payments and were offset by higher investment income. General fund expenditures through August were \$3.5 million which is \$442,000 below budget due to lower expenditures in the following categories: Library Materials, Contractual Services, Personnel expenditures from vacant positions and Vehicle expenditures. Swanson said RAILS received communication from the company that provides our fuel cards that we should expect to see a credit on our account for the fraudulent fuel purchases that were flagged in our account and reported to the board in August.

8. Reports

8.1. Report from the RAILS President

No report at this time.

8.2. RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

8.2.1. Advocacy Committee - Robin Helenthal

8.2.2. Consortia Committee - Thomas Stagg

8.2.3. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee - Dianne Hollister

8.2.4. Executive Committee - Alex Vancina

8.2.5. Policy Committee - Gwen Gregory

8.2.6. Resource Sharing Committee - Becky Spratford

8.2.7. Universal Service Committee - Alice Creason

No comments or questions at this time.

8.3. RAILS Reports

8.3.1. RAILS Monthly Report

Harris addressed recent bomb threats received by 16 RAILS libraries. RAILS organized a meeting with the Library Directors of the affected libraries to discuss their experience and what help RAILS could offer. Based on the feedback, RAILS will work to provide access to mental health counseling to help library staff work through those experiences. An upcoming director networking meeting will be devoted to this topic. RAILS is also looking into offering a program by the FBI in Boston addressing similar issues. The FBI is investigating the incidents.

Harris emphasized the importance of prompt reporting of those incidents to the Bureau by libraries themselves or by local law enforcement.

She reminded the Board about the Public Library Internet Survey, sent out from the office of the Secretary of State recently to gauge Illinois libraries' access to and utilization of Internet technology. She stressed the importance of completing the survey, as the information gathered will affect the utilization of the new broadband access funds.

She also encouraged members to provide feedback on the amendments proposed by the Secretary of State to Public Act 103-0100. The comment period is open through October 25th.

Seventy-nine public libraries are co-sponsoring the Support Your Freedom to Read event scheduled for October 2nd. It will feature the Secretary of State and Monica Harris as panelists. Harris also shared news of the Illinois School Workers Symposium, a virtual joint event by AISLE, RAILS, and IHLS, which was attended by over 300 participants. She congratulated Dan Bostrom on the success of the event.

Harris summarized the legislative priorities of the Illinois Library Association (ILA), which include a proposal from RAILS regarding lowering the requirement for treasurer bonds. This could result in significant savings for libraries without affecting service. Lastly, she invited the Board members to attend the eRead 10th anniversary party during the upcoming ILA conference in Springfield.

8.3.2. RAILS Data Report

Halter gave an overview of the Data Analysis Department, which works to apply the data analysis process to various issues at RAILS, including obtaining data, processing and analyzing it, and sharing the findings with the staff to help RAILS be more effective and efficient. The Department also maintains member-facing information dashboards, including one sharing IPLAR data, and runs networking groups to help educate libraries and help improve their effectiveness.

Halter announced the Department is hoping to hire a Data Analysis Intern to help gather and process data and as an opportunity for library staff to experience working with data and library systems directly. He listed planned projects such as a post-Covid study to see how libraries recovered, working with the new Delivery data generated through iPads, updating the Resource Sharing map, and building a database to consolidate all the data sets RAILS generates with the help of new tools: Tableau and ArcGIS.

8.4. Illinois State Library Report

Schaffer reported that the state library received a bomb threat early in the day on September 22. The public comment period is open now through October 20, 2023, for Public Act 103-0100, the Ban Book Bans legislation. Any public comments must be sent to and addressed to the Secretary of State's general counsel, not the Illinois State Library. The Illinois State Library's grant offerings for the Annual Construction Grant Program and the Public Library Per Capita Grant will be announced soon. Applications for both grants are due after the first of the year when Public Act 103-0100 is enacted; so, libraries need to have related policies in place prior to submission of those applications. The School District Per Capita Grant

applications are due October 15, 2023. ISL has received 326 applications so far. Schaffer announced that during the ILA conference, Secretary Giannoulas will be speaking and will be holding a reception at the Illinois State Library on the evening of October 25.

9. New Business

9.1. Annual Report

Harris presented the RAILS FY2023 Annual Report, based on the RAILS strategic plan, that will be submitted to the Illinois State Library upon the board's approval. Yanikoski congratulated Harris on the amount that RAILS was able to accomplish in one year.

Milavec moved and Gregory seconded the approval of the FY2023 Annual Report for submission to the Illinois State Library. The motion was approved by a roll call vote.

Ayes: Camargo, Carroll, Creason, Gregory, Helenthal, Hollister, Milavec, Voitik, Vancina, Yanikoski. Nays: None

9.2. New Member

Bostrom presented RAILS membership applications for Taft School District 90 and Summit School District 104 for board approval to submit the applications to the Illinois State Library. Camargo moved and Creason seconded the approval of RAILS membership applications for Taft School District 90 and Summit School District 104.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ayes: Camargo, Carroll, Creason, Gregory, Helenthal, Hollister, Milavec, Voitik, Vancina, Yanikoski

Nays: None

10. Board development

10.1. Overview of the Illinois State Library

Greg McCormick, Director of the Illinois State Library, was unable to attend the meeting. The Illinois State Library board development session will be postponed to a future meeting.

11. RAILS board member reports

Gregory reported that the University of Northern Illinois Library is looking into how to host the Children's Literature Conference, last held in 2016. The NIU library is also hosting a minigolf program on the weekend of September 23.

Camargo stated that in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, South Holland Public Library will be hosting cultural programs every Thursday leading up to their Taste of Latin America program on October 12, which will have food from various Latin American countries. She also noted that Gail Borden Public Library has Alebrijes on display.

Hollister expressed concern over several state libraries relinquishing their ALA membership. Conversation followed about political pressure, book bans, freedom to read, and the financial impact on the American Library Association. Harris noted that while a State Library may withdraw membership from ALA, libraries within the state can retain their membership.

Milavec announced that ILA Legislative Meetups are returning, and they will be held this November. Information related to those meetups will be available soon.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building

Board Members are encouraged to attend the eRead Illinois Reception at ILA on October 24. The next RAILS Board meeting will be held at the RAILS Burr Ridge Service Center on October 27, 2023, at 1:00 pm. Topics on the agenda for the next meeting include Explore More Illinois and best practices for internet security.

13. Adjournment

Vancina adjourned the meeting at 2:17 pm.