

Minutes

RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting

January 9, 2025 | 4:00 p.m.

125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527 | 630.734.5000

1. Welcome and Call to Order
Carroll welcomed members and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call of Members
Goyer called the roll of the committee members:
Present:
RAILS Burr Ridge: Jean Carroll, Yolande Wilburn
Bloomington Public Library: Dianne Hollister (4:08 pm)
Engineering Systems, Inc.: Catherine Yanikoski
Lewis University: Alice Creason
Rockford University: Stephanie Nissen
Shorewood-Troy Public Library: Karen Voitik
Absent: Monica Caldicott, Amy Walsh
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Guests at RAILS Burr Ridge: Joe Filapek (ex-officio), Megan Gove, Karen Goyer (minute-taker), Monica Harris (ex-officio), Emily Porter (RAILS Board)
Guests via Zoom: Dan Bostrom (ex-officio), Mary Kate Murray
Harris announced that Caldicott stepped down as Chair due to scheduling conflicts. Jean Carroll has been named committee Chair. Harris thanked Caldicott for her work as committee Chair and welcomed Carroll to the role.
4. Public Comments
There were no public comments.
5. Adoption of the Consent Agenda
 - 5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
 - 5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Minutes of November 14, 2024
Wilburn moved for the approval of the consent agenda, Nissen seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. New Business

6.1. Materials Challenges and Regional Rapid Response Team

Megan Gove, Director of Talcott Free Library District, shared her experience and tips regarding contentious reactions to library programming. Gove recommended to carefully consider messaging in program advertisements and where the event is promoted. Preparation tips include moving Board meetings to a larger location to handle crowds, have talking points ready for the staff and board, and putting a media plan in place. The committee expressed a need for developing a more effective communication system to allow all library directors to be aware when a library is facing opposition, consider trustee training requirements and policies, and better advertising of the resources that are available to libraries in a time of crisis.

Filapek provided information on the Regional Rapid Response Team consisting of volunteers across the state who can quickly activate and assist any library in Illinois. More information and the volunteer form can be found on the ILA website.

7. Reports

7.1. Legislative and Advocacy Update

Harris reported on the ILA Intellectual Freedom, Public Policy, and Advocacy committee meetings. ILA will consider this committee's suggestion to create talking points for members to distribute to legislators attending the annual legislative meetups for future years. RAILS is part of a group working on a proposal to receive Digital Equity Act funding. COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) will host a Voices for Libraries advocacy program in Washington, D.C. March 4- 6, 2025. ILA is planning a legislative fly-in April 2-3, 2025. Depending on the status of the Illinois budget deficit, it may be difficult to pass state legislation that requires new money. The ILA Committee Interest Form is open for those interested in serving on ILA committees.

8. Unfinished Business

8.1. Library Issues Updates

The American Civil Liberties Union has weighed in on the meeting room policies of Northbrook and Highland Park public libraries related to the topic of the November RAILS Advocacy meeting.

9. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the Next RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting on March 13, 2025

The next Advocacy Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on March 13, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. The topics will be Speaking with Legislators, the ALA Annual Reports on Legislation and Intellectual Freedom Overview, and a report on the Voices for Libraries advocacy program.

10. Adjournment

Carroll adjourned the meeting at 5:07 p.m.