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January 24, 2025

RAILS Board Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee Report - Chair Monica Caldicott

The Advocacy Committee met on January 9. The next meeting is March 13, 2025.

Megan Gove, Director of Talcott Free Library District, shared her experience and tips related to contentious reactions to library programming. Suggestions to improve support for libraries included developing a more effective communications system to increase awareness among libraries, addressing trustee training requirements and policies, and advertising the resources available to libraries. Harris reported on the highlights of 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. The ILA Committee Interest Form is open for those interested in serving on ILA committees. The ACLU 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. The topics for the March meeting will be Speaking with Legislators and the ALA annual reports on Legislation and Intellectual Freedom.

Consortia Committee Report - Chair Alex Vancina

The next meeting is on January 27, 2025.

Executive Committee Report - Chair Rene Leyva

The Executive Committee met on December 6, December 17, December 19, and January 15. The next meeting is not yet scheduled.

The committee will recommend that Carolyn Sennett be appointed to the Public Library Trustee seat vacated by Vanessa Villarreal. If the recommendation is accepted, Carolyn will be present at the January board meeting and sworn in.

Policy Committee Report – Chair Gwen Gregory

The Policy Committee met on November 18, 2024, and December 16, 2024. The next meeting is on January 27, 2025.

At the November 18 meeting, the committee reviewed seven policies from the RAILS Employee Handbook. One policy was approved as presented, and six policies need further editing, along with additional questions for legal counsel. At the December 16 meeting, the committee approved five policies for the RAILS Employee Handbook. There was a robust conversation on the Educational Benefit Policy with many thoughtful suggestions given by the committee. Harris presented a draft of the Ethical Artificial Intelligence Policy. After several months of research by RAILS staff, Harris determined that the direction for this policy would be from an ethical perspective. Since this is a new policy, once the Policy Committee votes to approve the document, it will be presented to the full RAILS Board for review and approval.

Resource Sharing Committee Report - Chair Julie Milavec

The Resource Sharing Committee met on December 9. The next meeting is February 10.

Filapek reported that Monica Harris was awarded the Crystal Honor Award by the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE) for RAILS' strong advocacy for Illinois school libraries. He also thanked Janette Derucki for her work on the School Library Advocacy Through Education (SLATE) project. The allocation of federal funding was discussed at the November Illinois State Advisory Committee (ISLAC) meeting, and Harris noted that Delivery is one of the Illinois State Library's top priorities for funding. Miller reported that Find More Illinois (FMI) held two focus groups to learn more about the interest of academic libraries in the program. The groups saw the potential for FMI to be mutually beneficial for academic and other library types. Filapek stated that the Illinois State Library (ISL) is working with EBSCO on a statement of compliance with the Student Online Personal Protection Act; ISL is also collaborating with EBSCO to provide training for libraries. Libraries should continue to hold off on making any announcement to their community regarding the statewide database package until ISL makes an official announcement. Hatch presented an overview of RAILS Delivery services, highlighting logistical efficiencies like delivery labels and the use of GeoMARC to map routes. Hatch stressed the importance of keeping Delivery contact information up to date in L2. The committee discussed resource sharing participation across the state, including how RAILS can better train its members on the use of Interlibrary Loan.

Universal Service Committee Report - Chair Catherine Yanikoski

The Universal Service Committee met on December 13th, 2024. The next meeting is on March 21, 2025

The group received the Illinois State Library Advisory Committee update. Next, Ryan Franklin from the Illinois State Library gave a presentation about the progress of the statewide databases and online educational resources program. The members reviewed and approved revisions to the 2024 Universal Services plan. Committee members weighed in on priorities and potential actions to be taken based on the plan.