



Approved 2/28/2025

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REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, January 24, 2025 | 1:00 PM
RAILS Burr Ridge Service Center
125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Minutes

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Rene Leyva, RAILS Board President called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. on Friday, January 24, 2025, at the RAILS Burr Ridge Service Center.

2. Roll Call of Members

Fister called the roll of the Board members.

Burr Ridge: Monica Caldicott, Jean Carroll, Jenny Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Amanda Kowalcze, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Carolyn Sennett-after being sworn in

Zoom: Emily Porter, Catherine Yanikoski

Absent: none

3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements

Guests in Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Sharon Swanson, Kate Niehoff, Anne Slaughter, Leila Heath, Barb Miller, Ola Gronski, Ryan Hebel.

Guests on Zoom: Suzanna Jones, Mark Hatch, Jessica Silva, Sam Daly, Biz Lindsay-Ryan, Emily Bailey-designated note taker.

4. Public comments

There were no public comments.

5. Consent agenda

5.1 Adoption of the Agenda

5.2 RAILS Board Minutes of November 25, 2024 Regular Meeting

5.3 RAILS Board Minutes of November 22, 2024 Closed Session Meeting

5.4 Approval of Disbursements: November-December 2024– Sharon Swanson

Hovanec moved and Milavec seconded to approve the consent agenda. A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Jean Carroll, Jenny Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Dianne Hollister, Jennifer Hovanec, Amanda Kowalcze, Rene Leyva, Julie Milavec, Emily Porter, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, and Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: none.

6. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported the financial reports ending December 31, 2024, an unassigned general fund (\$30.0 million) cash and investment balances would fund an estimated 25.4 months of

budgeted FY2025 operations. General fund revenues through December of \$13,351,748 were \$694,755 below budget primarily due to lower than budgeted revenues from the EBSCO group purchase. General fund expenditures of \$7,770,036 through December were \$1,633,700 below budget primarily due to lower library materials (\$891,018), contractual services (\$293,581), vehicles (\$121,494), professional services (\$105,588), travel and continuing education (\$83,167), personnel (\$66,579), and lower expenditures in nearly all other cost categories. Swanson reported that in late November, RAILS was notified by Wintrust there was an attempted check fraud with a check issued to one of our vendors. The person was caught and a stop payment was issued on the check. Swanson explained the very thorough daily procedures in place at RAILS to check all payments presented to the bank. Swanson reported on the Calendar Year 2025 Rate and Premium Updates. The increases included the new employer contribution rates for unemployment insurance and IMRF as well as the increases for the health, dental and life insurance premiums for staff; workers' compensation insurance; and package policy coverage for auto, property, liability, accident, cyber, and crisis insurance. The increases were expected and included in the FY25 budget.

7. Reports

7.1 Report from the RAILS President

Leyva had no report.

7.1.1 Recommendation of Appointment to fill At-Large Seat Vacancy (action requested)

Leyva reported the RAILS Executive Committee met on December 6 to review the submissions of the six candidates to fill the vacancy of Vanessa Villarreal on the RAILS Board. Interviews with three of the six candidates were held on December 17 and December 19. The Executive Committee voted to recommend to the full board that Carolyn Sennett, Trustee of the Wilmette Public Library be appointed to fill the Public Library Trustee seat, term ending in June 2025. Each Board Member introduced themselves. Vancina moved and Hollister seconded to accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee and appoint Carolyn Sennett to the RAILS Board to fill the Public Library Trustee seat, term ending in June 2025.

7.1.2 Oath of Office

Sennett recited the oath of office and all attendees welcomed her to the RAILS Board.

7.2 RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

Caldicott apologized for having to step down as chair of the Advocacy Committee and both she and Harris thanked Carroll for taking on that role.

7.3 RAILS Reports

7.3.1 RAILS Monthly Report

Harris reported that in place of the RAILS Minute in December, RAILS produced a [video](#) recap of RAILS' work in 2024 for the membership. Several initiatives were highlighted, including the SLATE dashboard launch, support for broadband and digital equity efforts, updating our delivery fleet, legislative efforts for Illinois libraries including the Treasurer's bond bill and [PA 103-100](#), and efforts to educate libraries on digital accessibility. She

thanked the Communications Team for a great job of encapsulating 2024. Harris said the American Library Association (ALA) launched [Show Up for Our Libraries](#), a campaign to harness the collective power of libraries and is an advocacy tool to influence elected leaders on both the federal and state levels. She thanked the Board for their feedback and perspectives regarding the Leadership training for members. RAILS has contracted with consultant Becky Thalman to assist in creating this training. She said there is no real news regarding the federal funding of libraries. Governor Pritzker may shed some light on the funding during his State of the State address in February. Harris said the RAILS Libraries of Impact report now includes a media pack for each library type.

7.3.2 RAILS Find More Illinois Report

Miller reported on Find More Illinois, RAILS' interlibrary loan platform that provides access to all participating libraries' holdings in one seamless interface. Libraries of all types and sizes can join, regardless of the catalog software they use or their participation in a consortium. Thirty-two public libraries made over 100 requests through Find More Illinois last year, including two school libraries, and over 1,000 requests last year from three standalone libraries. Next year the team will focus on: Evaluating our existing fee for improvement to formula and general structure; Investigating strategies to encourage the participation of more academic libraries to achieve greater depth and breadth of the FMI collection; and continue to evaluate the current onboarding process.

7.4 Illinois State Library Report

Suzanna Jones reported that from October through December, the Statewide database package has had over 930 people registered and over 3800 sessions have been logged, mostly accessing ACT pretests and tutorials. In December the articles databases section had been accessed over 1.5 million times. More data will be monitored and generate a list of libraries who have zero usage and use that to reach out to help get setup with these resources. The Public Library APC grant applications are due Friday, January 31 and ISL has reached out to those who have not yet applied. Over 650 School Districts will be awarded school library grants. Public Library Construction Grant applications were received from 17 libraries for a total request of \$1.36 million. The State Library will continue to monitor the IMLS funding situation. The Illinois State Library will have a presence at the Chicago Auto show sponsoring author Dwayne Reed who will be signing books compliments of the Illinois State Library.

8. New Business

8.1 RAILS Executive Committee report-filling new vacancy

Leyva reported that RAILS has accepted the resignation of Anupam Goel due to a recent job change. He said the Executive Committee met and recommended adding the seat to the May 2025 election so that the RAILS membership elects the candidate for that position. Caldicott moved to accept the recommendation of the RAILS Executive Committee to add the Public Library Trustee seat due to the vacancy of Anupam Goel to the 2025 RAILS Board Election, Voitik seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8.2 LIMRiCC IGA Changes

Swanson reported that The Library Insurance Management and Risk Control Combination (LIMRiCC), is the insurance pool that RAILS participates in to provide staff health, dental, vision, and life insurance. They recently amended the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for participation in both the health and unemployment compensation claims processing programs that they administer. Swanson reviewed some minor administrative changes and some substantive changes including changes in late fees, membership, refunds and updating claims processing periods and meeting requirements. The IGA has not been amended since 2015 and it represents a large part of the RAILS insurance budget.

8.3 New Member Application

Silva presented the information for St. Anne's Parish School in Barrington, a K-8 school with 310 students. Silva said they are especially interested in RAILS Deals and Discounts and eread programs. Hollister moved to accept St. Anne's Parish School in Barrington to full membership to RAILS with final approval requested from the Illinois State Library. Gregory seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. Board Development

9.1 EDIA Review: Highlights and Achievements

RAILS Consultant, Biz Lindsay-Ryan presented an overview of the work RAILS was done since early 2000. Training for all staff included foundation frameworks such as EDI Definitions and Concepts and Identity & Culture & Bias. Applications and Skill Building Trainings included: Interpersonal Scenarios and Manager Capacity Training. The Climate team was formed in late September and included staff from all departments and acted as a think tank for the whole of RAILS. The EDI support from the RAILS Board included formation of the EDI committee, and changes to the Board application and terminology training. Lindsay-Ryan expressed her compliments to the RAILS team for the amount of work they have accomplished throughout the process. She said the process was multi-pronged and all staff were engaged in the work. There was discussion about the political challenges some entities are facing in relationship to EDIA. Lindsay-Ryan opined that no changes need to be made unless there are obvious funding or other related consequences. She commented that the people who needed the EDIA work to begin with are still here, but they feel less safe and more scared of the current climate.

10. Board Member Reports

Hovanec reported that the Villa Park Public Library was chosen as a partner with Argonne National Lab for a weather station to be placed on the library's roof for collection of weather data. Hollister stated Bloomington Public Library is a finalist for the McLean County Chamber grant for Non-profit Excellence which will be announced on February 8. Caldicott reported the school library hosted the annual history fair where juniors present research projects. US Representative Brad Schnieder was present and he requested that he converse with students

only for the event. Gregory reported that Northern University Libraries were awarded the Library Excellence in Access and Diversity.

Cutshall reported she represented the Homewood Public Library which is a unionized library. She noticed that the Youth Services Division of ILA was hosting a meeting at a venue where the workers were on strike. She said holding events at a place that requires attendees to cross a picket line undermines shared professional values of librarianship to support marginalized groups.

11. Meeting recap and agenda building

Leyva reported the next RAILS board meeting will be held on Friday, February 28, 2025. Included on the February agenda will be an Explore More Illinois Update with Jessica Barnes, and the Board development subject is to be determined.

12. Adjourn

Leyva adjourned the meeting at 2:29 p.m.