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March 21, 2025

TO: RAILS Board

FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation for changes to the Procedure for Filling RAILS Board Vacancies

The RAILS Board Executive Committee met on Monday, March 17, 2025 to discuss changes to the Procedures for Filling Board Vacancies.

The Committee voted to recommend to the full RAILS Board the following changes:

- Add section Vacancies with Six Months or less Remaining in the Board Member’s term
- Add Heading to the current procedures: Vacancies with at least six (6) months remaining in the board member’s term

The Committee also reviewed the history of RAILS Nominating and Election Periods.

The following have been added to the Election Guide as best practices:

- The Nominating Period for RAILS annual Board Elections should be approximately seventeen (17) days
- The Election Period for RAILS annual Board Elections should be approximately thirty-one (31) days
- The Nomination Period for all Elections will conclude on a Friday at 11:59 p.m.

The RAILS Executive Committee approved the draft procedures as presented and voted unanimously at their March 17 meeting to approve it for recommendation to the RAILS Board.

I look forward to further discussion at our March 28 meeting.

Procedures for Filling Board Vacancies Between Elections

When a RAILS Board of Directors seat becomes vacant between regular Board elections, the following process will be used to fill the vacancy:

Vacancies with Six Months or less Remaining in the Board Member's term

1. If a vacancy occurs with six (6) months or less remaining in the Board Member's term and/or the scheduled election is nearing, the seat will, due to time constraints and the desire for public engagement from the RAILS membership, be automatically placed on the ballot for the next scheduled election.
2. The Illinois State Library should be consulted when this option is available.

Vacancies with At Least Than Six Months Remaining in the Board Member's Term:

1. RAILS staff will advertise the vacancy to RAILS members and seek replacement candidates. Eligible candidates will be limited to those who fit the criteria of the seat vacated (i.e., public library trustee, school library seat, etc.)
2. Candidates will provide to RAILS staff a resume or summary of their experience relevant to the RAILS Board position, and a paragraph of 100 words or less stating why they are interested in serving on the RAILS Board.
3. The RAILS Executive Committee will meet to review the candidates' resumes and statements.
4. Interviews of candidates may be held, and additional criteria may be considered when appropriate
5. Criteria to be used in selecting an individual to fill a vacant Board seat include:
 - Current geographical representation on the RAILS Board
 - Current representation of different sizes of libraries on the RAILS Board
 - Experience of the candidate in libraries and related organizations
 - Unique skills and talents of candidates compared to skills and talents of current Board members.
6. The Executive Committee will recommend a candidate to the full Board for approval.