

Minutes

RAILS Board Consortia Committee Meeting

Monday, July 21, 2025 | 10:00 am
RAILS Burr Ridge and Videoconference Sites
125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527 | 630.734.5000

1. Welcome and Call to Order
Vancina called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.
2. Roll Call of Members
Burr Ridge: Elizabeth Clarage, Kate Hall, Matt Hammermeister, Michelle Krooswyk, Aaron Skog, Alex Vancina
Coal Valley: None
East Peoria: Kendal Orrison
Sterling Public Library: Jennifer Slaney
Absent: Jennie Mills
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Mary Kate Murray
Coal Valley: None
East Peoria: None
Sterling Public Library: None
Zoom: Janette Derucki, Mark Hatch, Ryan Hebel, Rebecca Malinowski
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 Consortia Committee Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2025
Hall moved for and Hammermeister seconded the approval of the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.
Ayes: Clarage, Hall, Hammermister, Krooswyk, Orrison, Skog, Slaney, Vancina
Nays: None
6. Reports
 - 6.1. Chair Report
 - 6.2. Consortia Reports – Alex Vancina (Discussion Only)

The consortial reports were included in the packet. Malinowski reported that CCS is currently interviewing for their new data analyst position.

6.3. RAILS Report

Harris reported that RAILS awarded Catalog Membership Grants to five libraries in 2025. Currently, the delivery data project status and RAILCAR updates are on hold while Grant Halter is out on leave. Harris announced that new board members will be sworn in on July 25, and committee assignments for RAILS board members will be determined at an upcoming meeting. The committee discussed the updated RAILS Resource Sharing map. Derucki noted that the RAILS data team is happy to share GIS data with member agencies building maps on GIS platforms.

6.4. Resource Sharing Committee Report

Harris stated that the transition away from sorting with CTL continues at the Bolingbrook service center. Bolingbrook now processes 6 million items a month instead of 2 million. The transition has resulted in some delays in Delivery. RAILS may work with a supply chain consultant in FY2026 to help address sorting issues. Committee members commented on the efficiency of RAILS Delivery despite the delays due to workflow and staffing changes.

7. Unfinished Business

7.1. Update on FY2026 budget and funding

Harris noted that RAILS submitted the FY2026 budget based on level funded at the recommendation of the Illinois State Library (ISL). The [IMLS Advocacy Pulse Page](#) is updated regularly on the RAILS website with news related to library funding. Harris reported that the U.S. Department of Commerce terminated funding for the Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant, for which RAILS, CARLI, and IHLS applied. Harris mentioned a return-to-work order for IMLS staff, a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals (Little v. Llano County) granting politicians the right to remove books from public libraries, delays in ALA's and the Attorneys' General lawsuits against the Trump Administration, and the Supreme Court's support of the Universal Service Fund. On July 4, the president signed a law cutting IMLS to 6 million dollars, which is expected to be used to close the agency at the beginning of 2026. Harris stated that former Communications Intern Gwen Gemmel contributed personal stories about IMLS funding impacts on Illinois libraries to the [My Library Is... blog](#).

7.2. Broadband and digital equity program updates

Harris announced that on May 15, RAILS was awarded \$850,000 from the Cook County Board of Commissioners toward establishing a Digital Navigator Network in suburban Cook County public libraries, and thanked Anne Slaughter for her hard work.

8. New Business

8.1. PrairieCat Strategic Plan Presentation

Carolyn Coulter was unable to attend this meeting, but the PrairieCat strategic planning process may be discussed at a future meeting.

8.2. Discussion of FY2026 Consortia Committee Priorities – Monica Harris (Discussion Only)

The committee brainstormed ideas for projects and priorities for FY2026, including discussions of discovery layers, sustainability models, strategic planning, holds methodology and patron prioritization, serving the unserved, and funding. Potential projects include creating a repository of informational documentation for LLSAP users (e.g., cataloging resources, registering patrons, non-resident cards, pirated materials, etc.), producing AI-related educational content for libraries regarding consortia, and continuing to analyze Delivery data. The committee wants to prioritize data-driven decision making and proactive (versus reactive) projects.

9. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building

The next RAILS Board Consortia Committee meeting is Monday, October 20, 2025, at 10:00 am. Agenda items will include continued discussion of federal funding and state legislation and an update from the ILA conference.

10. Adjournment

Vancina adjourned the meeting at 11:35 am.