
REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, August 22, 2025 | 1:00 PM
RAILS Burr Ridge
125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order -Gwen Gregory, President
Gwen Gregory, RAILS President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm on August 22, 2025, at the RAILS Burr Ridge Service Center.
2. Roll Call of Members
Palmisano called the roll of the Board members:
RAILS Burr Ridge: Monica Caldicott, Jean Carroll, Jennifer Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Ron Holohan, Amanda Kowalcze, Roberta Parks, Carolyn Sennett, Karen Voitik, Yolande Wilburn, Catherine Yanikoski.
Rockford University: Closed due to power outage
Zoom: Megan Gove, Emily Porter
Absent: Jennifer Hovanec, Alex Vancina
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Guests in Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Ola Gronski, Leila Heath, Galin Iliev, Carolyn Kinsella, Stacy Palmisano (designated note taker), Jessica Silva, Anne Slaughter, Brian Smith
Guests on Zoom: Sam Daly, Karen Egan
4. Public comments
There were no public comments.
5. Consent agenda
 - 5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
 - 5.2. RAILS Board Minutes of July 25, 2025, Regular Meeting
 - 5.3. RAILS Board Minutes of July 25, 2025, Special Meeting Board Orientation
 - 5.4. RAILS Board Minutes of July 25, 2025, Closed Session
 - 5.5. Approval of Disbursements: July 2025 - Sharon Swanson
Caldicott moved to approve the consent agenda. Voitik seconded, and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Jean Carroll, Jennifer Cutshall, Megan Gove, Gwen Gregory, Ron Holohan, Amanda Kowalcze, Roberta Parks, Emily Porter, Carolyn Sennett, Karen Voitik, Yolande Wilburn, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: none.

RAILS Financial Report - Sharon Swanson

Swanson gave a summary of the RAILS financial report. General fund revenues through July of \$1,715,917 were \$68,605 above budget, primarily due to more participation than anticipated in the EBSCO group purchase. Above-budget other revenues for July were from the sale of two previously replaced delivery fleet vehicles that were approved for disposal during FY2025. These revenues are partially offset by below-budget revenues for Find More Illinois membership fees that were billed early in August instead of mid-July. Buildings and grounds were above budget primarily due to the normal rent payment for our three leased facilities before the first of every month. Both July and August rent payments are recorded in July. Personnel expenditures were below budget due to normal hiring delays for several recently vacant positions and several intern positions budgeted for FY2026. Fuel prices remained at an average of \$3.01 per gallon during July, below the \$3.14 per gallon budgeted. Supplies, postage, and printing expenditures were below budget primarily due to timing differences for the laptop replacement project planned for FY2026. Lastly, Swanson reported that the Federal Office of Budget and Management has not released their requirements for Single Audits of Federal funding recipients, which could delay our Single Audit report. Since this is a required component of our Annual Report to the Illinois State Library, Swanson has notified them of this possibility.

6. Reports

6.1. Report from the RAILS President

Gregory welcomed Ron Holohan as a new member of the board.

6.2. RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

6.2.1. Advocacy Committee – Jean Carroll

6.2.2. Consortia Committee – Alex Vancina

6.2.3. Executive Committee - Gwen Gregory

6.2.4. Policy Committee – Catherine Yanikoski

6.2.5. Resource Sharing Committee – Jennifer Hovanec

6.2.6. Universal Service Committee – Catherine Yanikoski

Nothing additional was added to the committee report document found in the packet.

6.3. RAILS Reports

6.3.1. Monthly Report

Harris gave an update on Illinois House Bill 1910, which will take effect on January 1, 2026. This bill requires that libraries take reasonable steps to have staff trained and available to respond to an opioid overdose, including the administration of an opioid antagonist. RAILS has asked Ancel Glink to create a memo outlining frequently asked questions about this new law and will share the memo with the membership soon. Lawyer Julie Tappendorf will join the RAILS member update on

September 10 to answer any questions, and RAILS will host a webinar on November 13 related to this new law. Harris asked interested Board members to contact her for the vacant Ethics Officer position. After a discussion with the group, November appears to be the best month for an off-site Board meeting, potentially in Galesburg, IL. Also reviewed was House Bill 0042, which authorizes libraries to bill nonresident fees quarterly or biannually, and State Bill 1550, which allows funds to be made available by the state to improve or enhance the security of libraries. The last legislative update reported was House Bill 1062, signed on August 15, the Illinois Century Network Act. Harris thanked Kate Niehoff and her team for a successful Director's University event held in early August in Bloomington. The Illinois Library Association (ILA) has awarded the 2025 Intellectual Freedom Award to the Unite Against Book Bans Regional Response Team. The partners on this team include AISLE, CARLI, IHLS, ILA, and RAILS. Lastly, Harris announced that LaGrange Public Library joined Find More Illinois, making the total libraries in the program 71.

6.3.2. RAILS Communications – Dan Bostrom

The RAILS Communications Department, led by Dan Bostrom, talked to the board about upcoming conferences and their plans for ways to communicate face-to-face with RAILS members. The Board heard from Dan Bostrom, Ola Gronski, Jessica Silva, Brian Smith, and Nicole Zimmermann. The team will attend the Illinois Library Association's Annual Conference on October 14-16 and next year's Reaching Forward South and North Conferences. Also, the Association of Illinois Library Educators (AISLE) conference is coming up on October 5-7, where the *Can't Shelve This* podcast will record a live episode. Next year, the American Library Association conference will be in Chicago, and RAILS will have a conference booth.

6.4. Illinois State Library Report

Karen Egan joined the meeting to give the Illinois State Library report. The Illinois Public Library Annual Reports (IPLAR) are due September 1. Egan reported that the usage of the EBSCO database package is growing exponentially, specifically in schools. The database package also complies with the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA). The state library will soon meet with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) staff as part of the two-year audit requirement of the state library. Hopefully, the meeting will discuss how IMLS will move forward. Lastly, Egan reported that the Public Library Construction Grant and the School District Library Grants are being accepted now.

7. New business

7.1. New Member

Silva gave an overview of the LEARN John & Kathy Schreiber Campus, part of the LEARN Charter school network. The John & Kathy Schreiber Campus is in Lake County, Waukegan, IL. It serves grades K-8 and has up to 570 students, 90% of whom are Spanish-speaking.

Caldicott moved to accept LEARN John & Kathy Schreiber Campus to full membership in RAILS, with final approval requested from the Illinois State Library. Wilburn seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

7.2. Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act report for FY2025

Filapek reviewed the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) memo in the meeting packet. RAILS regularly receives commercial FOIA requests from vendor SmartProcure. Illinois public library directors and Freedom of Information Act/Open Meetings Act officers can use the RAILS FOIA/OMA Hotline to receive free help from an Ancel Glink attorney on basic questions. Filapek reported on the hotline statistics, highlighting that 137 calls were made in FY2025.

7.3. RAILS Six-month investment portfolio review

The RAILS Fiscal Accountability Policy requires the RAILS Board to review the investment portfolio twice a year. Swanson reported that RAILS re-invested four mature CDs in August to take advantage of higher interest rates than usual. To maximize interest income, the checking account is kept at a minimal balance sufficient to offset account service fees and meet current obligations, with the bulk maintained in the money market account, currently earning 4.590%. As of July 31, the face value of RAILS' CD and Treasury Bond investments is \$4,092,948, and the market value is \$3,908,524. Of RAILS' total cash and investment balance of \$25,058,062, the market value of these CDs is 15.6% of this total.

8. Board Development

8.1. Overview of School Libraries

Carolyn Kinsella, Executive Secretary of the Association of Illinois Library Educators (AISLE), joined the meeting to discuss AISLE with the Board. The organization's purpose is to support school librarians and their students. AISLE relies on partners such as RAILS to help support the organization. RAILS hosts the AISLE listserv, which has been very successful, and the RAILS' data team collects data on Illinois school libraries, giving concrete statistics on the state of school libraries. Kinsella discussed that the Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE) does not require schools to report that they have a certified school librarian on staff. Unfortunately, schools use that funding as discretionary. AISLE is advocating for a change in legislation to require a certified school

librarian. Also highlighted were the popular Readers' Choice Awards, in which AISLE member school librarians, educators, and teen students read and evaluate the nominated books. The books reviewed are from the Monarch, Bluestem, and Lincoln Awards, and the Rebecca Caudill Awards are coming soon. Lastly, Kinsella talked about the Illinois School Library Workers Symposium that will be held on September 17, 2025. The symposium is a full-day virtual library training provided by the following agencies: the Association for Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE), Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS), Illinois Library Association (ILA), and Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), and is provided at no cost to Illinois school districts.

9. RAILS Board Member Reports

Gregory was happy to share that the Northern Illinois University (NIU) library went live on Find More Illinois (FMI) this week. NIU will be a lender only and add approximately 800,000 items to the FMI collection.

Caldicot reported that she welcomed two new staff members to her library this school year, and since school started two weeks ago, she has been teaching 20-25 classes per week.

10. Meeting recap and agenda building: RAILS board meeting Friday, September 26, at 1:00 p.m.

The agenda for the September 26 RAILS Board meeting will include a delivery update, a review of the resource sharing map, the annual audit report, and the RAILS annual report.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 pm.