
REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD MEETING

Friday, September 26, 2025 | 1:00 PM

RAILS Burr Ridge

125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order -Gwen Gregory, Board President
Gwen Gregory, RAILS President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm on September 26, 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, Jennifer Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Ron Holohan, Jennifer Hovanec, Amanda Kowalcze, Carolyn Sennett, Karen Voitik, Yolande Wilburn, Catherine Yanikoski.
RAILS Coal Valley: Alex Vancina
RAILS East Peoria: Roberta Parks
Absent: Jeanne Carroll, Megan Gove, Emily Porter
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements
Guests in Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Matt Geerdes, Mark Hatch, Galin Iliev, Kate Niehoff, Stacy Palmisano (designated notetaker), Maggie Thomann, Anne Slaughter
Guests on Zoom: Sam Daly, Grant Halter, Ryan Hebel, Mandy Saia
4. Public comments
There were no public comments.
5. Consent agenda – Gwen Gregory
 - 5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
 - 5.2. RAILS Board Minutes of August 22, 2025 Regular Meeting
 - 5.3. Approval of Disbursements: August 2025
Wilburn moved to approve the consent agenda. Caldicott seconded, and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Jennifer Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Ron Holohan, Jennifer Hovanec, Amanda Kowalcze, Roberta Parks, Carolyn Sennett, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Yolande Wilburn, Catherine Yanikoski. Nays: none.

6. Annual Audit Report FY2025

Sharon Swanson introduced Matt Geerdes, Principal at Sikich, the accounting firm that performed the RAILS FY2025 annual audit. Geerdes reported that RAILS had a clean audit, which is the highest opinion on the financial statements. A single audit was also completed, and a high opinion was given. Geerdes noted that the single audit is incomplete due to a delay in the 2025 compliance requirements issued by the federal government. Once the compliance information is issued, the RAILS single audit will be finalized. Geerdes discussed the reporting practice changes that were reflected in the audit report.

Yanikoski moved to accept the RAILS FY2025 annual audit report. Kowalcze seconded, and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Jennifer Cutshall, Gwen Gregory, Ron Holohan, Jennifer Hovanec, Amanda Kowalcze, Carolyn Sennett, Alex Vancina, Karen Voitik, Yolande Wilburn, Catherine Yanikoski. Abstain: Roberta Parks. Nays: none.

7. RAILS Financial Report

Swanson reported that through August, general fund revenues were \$126,031 above budget, and expenditures were \$312,198 below budget. General fund revenues were above budget primarily due to greater participation than anticipated in the EBSCO group purchase. During August, nine of RAILS' seventeen CDs matured. RAILS reinvested the funds from four of these maturities into four new CDs, leaving the remaining funds in the money market account until the amount needed to replenish the capital projects fund is decided. General fund expenditures were below budget in August. The laptop replacement project is planned during FY2026. The grant applications for the World Languages Cataloging Services Program and L2 Development were approved by the Illinois State Library on September 11. The FY2026 Area and Per Capita (APC) grant application was also approved.

8. Reports

8.1. Report from the RAILS President

Gregory had no report.

8.2. RAILS Board Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

8.2.1. Advocacy Committee – Jean Carroll

8.2.2. Consortia Committee – Alex Vancina

8.2.3. Executive Committee - Gwen Gregory

8.2.4. Policy Committee – Catherine Yanikoski

8.2.5. Resource Sharing Committee – Jennifer Hovanec

8.2.6. Universal Service Committee – Catherine Yanikoski

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

8.3. RAILS Monthly Report

Harris thanked the Illinois State Library and the Secretary of State for approving the RAILS plan of service, the World Languages Cataloging Services Program, and the L2 Development grants. In federal news, Shira Perlmutter, Register of Copyrights, was removed from office but reinstated on September 10 after a federal appeals court ruling. A bipartisan group of U.S. senators and a House subcommittee recommended nearly full funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Department of Education. The 2018 Museum and Library Services Act (MLSA), the legislation through which most federal library support derives, is also up for reauthorization as of October 1. Harris shared that, according to ALA staff, Congress could fund the IMLS even if the MLSA authorization expires. In Illinois news, the Illinois Library Association's Public Policy Committee (PPC) shared its recommended four priorities with the ILA Executive Board: (1) Increase the Illinois library systems and school grants by 20%, (2) require public library trustee training, (3) fund open education resources, and (4) ensure equitable access to e-books. Also highlighted is the collaboration of RAILS and Dr. Colin Rhinesmith, Associate Professor and Director of the Digital Equity Action Research Lab at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The partnership will focus on digital inclusion. Harris mentioned the upcoming ILA Legislative Meetups and encouraged the Board to attend. Harris announced that vendor Baker and Taylor gave an additional \$50K content boost to add to the eRead Illinois collection.

8.3.1. RAILS LLSAP Support Grant

Slaughter discussed RAILS' support for the six independently operated and governed shared catalog consortia, known as Local Library System Automation Program (LLSAPs). Focusing on the grant process, Slaughter told the board that the LLSAP Support Grant distributes \$2.25M each year to support LLSAPs' efforts to enhance services, improve affordability, and boost the sustainability of their operations. Applications for FY2027 grants were due on September 15 and are currently in review. The awards are conditioned on the availability of RAILS funding.

8.3.2. RAILS Service of the Month: Delivery

Hatch gave an overview of the RAILS delivery department. The RAILS delivery model is a hybrid system of in-house and outsourced deliveries with a statewide focus. There are four in-house delivery hubs: Bolingbrook, Coal Valley, East Peoria, and Rockford. Continental Transport Solutions is the outsourced vendor, covering two RAILS delivery routes. Logistics specialists GeoMARC regularly consults RAILS to ensure efficient delivery routes. Hatch highlighted the delivery options available to libraries, the labeling system, and how delivery data is collected digitally through iPads. In FY2025, 8.2M items were delivered, 104K stops, and 990K miles were driven. Hatch reported that there are 40 vehicles in the RAILS fleet. Harris shared that Hatch is a leader in the industry and has presented at numerous events about physical delivery.

8.4. Illinois State Library Report

Mandy Saia from the Illinois State Library joined the meeting. Saia shared that Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulis is hosting “Driving Change” virtual town halls to address fairness in auto insurance rates. Upcoming virtual town halls will be on October 1 in Rockford and on October 15 in Springfield. The state library has awarded \$28.3M in grant awards, including system grants. Currently, the School District Library grants are being collected with a deadline of October 15, and the Project Next Generation grants will be awarded soon. Saia announced that there will be two information sessions for the FY2026 Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Aid Grant program on October 7 and 21. The sessions will discuss general guidelines and changes to this year’s application with the new Illinois Public Library Standards. A reading room on the first floor of the Illinois State Library was officially named the Jim Edgar Reading Room in dedication to the former Illinois Governor, who also served as Secretary of State.

9. New business

9.1. Annual Report

Harris highlighted several RAILS accomplishments from the previous fiscal year, which were listed within the narrative report. The narrative report is a component of the Annual Report. Some highlights were expanding the Bolingbrook facility to include in-house sorting, advocacy on IMLS, partnerships with the Illinois Heartland Library System and CARLI on broadband efforts, the creation of the Agencies of Impact report, and the premiere of the new podcast, Can’t Shelve This, which focuses on school libraries. The Illinois State Library requires the Annual Report as part of the Area and Per Capita Grant for RAILS to report on the activities from the previous year. The report details the RAILS’ accomplishments and is organized according to the strategic plan goals.

Wilburn moved to approve the narrative report as part of the RAILS FY2025 Annual Report to be submitted to the State Library. Voitik seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

10. Board Development

10.1. RAILS Resource Sharing Map

Halter provided background on the RAILS Resource Sharing Map, which was last updated in 2019, and demonstrated the new electronic map. The new map has search capabilities that can be exported to a PDF and shared. Halter is working closely with

staff at the Illinois State Library on public library boundaries to ensure accuracy. The map is a good source for seeing the unserved areas in Illinois.

11. RAILS Board Member Reports

Voitik shared that the Friends of the Shorewood Public Library raised \$3K at a recent book sale. The books not sold were given to an organization that will recycle them. Voitik was on the front page of Shorewood Magazine, representing the book sale.

Yanikoski asked the Board to contact her with success stories and challenges regarding the unserved populations bordering their library's boundaries. Information shared will be included in a session she is hosting at the upcoming Illinois Library Association Annual Conference.

Wilburn shared an update on the Evanston Public Library and their move toward independence from the city of Evanston. The library Board will move forward with a collaborative spirit with the city. The library's independence will be added to a future referendum. After investigating, the library is eligible for an 11.21% Personal Property Replacement Tax (PPRT) from the city.

Cutshall thanked RAILS staff member Jessica Silva for presenting at the North Riverside Public Library's in-service day.

Vancina attended the PUG Day (PrairieCat Users Group) event and thanked RAILS staff for their participation.

Holohan thanked Harris for visiting the Dunlap Public Library last month.

12. Meeting recap and agenda building. The RAILS board meeting is on Friday, October 24, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

The agenda will include RAILS Deals & Discounts as the Service of the month and Cybersecurity for Libraries as the Board development topic. The quarterly consortial reports will also be on the agenda.

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 pm.