Approved 8/28/2026

125 Tower Drive
Burr Ridge IL 60527
630.734.5000
Fax: 630.734.5050
railslibraries.org

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM
RAILS BOARD SPECIAL MEETING: ORIENTATION
July 24, 2026| 9:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.
RAILS Burr Ridge
125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527 | 630.734.5000

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Welcome and Order
   Gwen Gregory, RAILS President, called the meeting to order at 9:31 am on Friday, July 24, 2026, at the RAILS Burr Ridge Service Center.

2. Roll Call of Members
   Palmisano called the roll of the Board members.
   RAILS Burr Ridge: Jennie Cottrill, Victoria Ferguson, Megan Gove, Gwen Gregory, Victor Hinojosa, Rebecca Hunt, Joanna Marek, Roberta Parks, Emily Porter, Karen Voitik, Catherine Yanikoski.
   Absent: Jennifer Cutshall, Ron Holohan, Amanda Kowalcze, Carolyn Sennett

3. Guests and Public Comments
   Guests at Burr Ridge: Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom, Sam Daly, Liana Hirner, Galin Iliev, Kate Niehoff, Sharon Swanson, Stacy Palmisano (designated note taker),
   Anne Slaughter

4. Public Comments
   There were no public comments.

5. Welcome and Introductions
   Harris welcomed everyone to the RAILS Board orientation. Each board member introduced themselves and discussed their background and why they ran for a seat on the RAILS board. Harris presented an overview of RAILS, and each department director introduced themselves and outlined their department and the work they do at RAILS.

6. Introduction to Library Systems
   6.1. FY2027 Operational Plan
   Harris and Filapek reported on the RAILS operational plan and the fiscal year 2027 highlights. Topics discussed were the RAILS infrastructure, delivery, library programs, advocacy, grant support, and collaboration with statewide partners.

7. RAILS Board Meetings 101
   7.1. Where to Attend
   Harris explained that, as an Illinois regional library system with a large geographic area represented, RAILS Board members can attend board and committee meetings in person or virtually and still be counted toward a quorum. Board members can attend in person at a RAILS service center, either Burr Ridge or East Peoria. Another option is to attend virtually from a public building, such as a library. A quorum is essential to hold both board and committee meetings; if a quorum isn't reached, the meeting will be canceled.
   7.2. Board Ethics
   Harris reviewed the RAILS Bylaws. Highlights included the Board's core responsibilities, officer roles, expectations, the organization's commitment to the Board, and a discussion of the RAILS Board committees.
   7.3. Travel Reimbursement Form
   Palmisano reviewed the travel reimbursement form and encouraged board members to complete it soon after attending either board or committee meetings. Board members may also be reimbursed for other RAILS events.
   7.4. How to Participate and Contribute to Board Meetings
   Palmisano reviewed how a Board member can participate in a meeting by responding to a motion.
   7.5. Videoconference Locations and Sensitive Microphones
   Palmisano mentioned that the microphones used during meetings are sensitive and asked people to refrain from side conversations. The meetings are recorded and shared on the RAILS YouTube page.

8. Email Accounts for RAILS Board Members
   8.1. Why a Separate Email Account is Needed
   All RAILS Board members receive a RAILS email address and are encouraged to look at the emails on a regular basis. Due to RAILS being subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Board members should use their RAILS email address, not their work or personal addresses. If RAILS receives a FOIA request, RAILS IT staff will pull emails to meet the requirements.
   8.2. Adhering to the Open Meetings Act
   All RAILS board and committee meetings comply with the Open Meetings Act (OMA).
      8.2.1. Open Meetings Act Certification
      Each board member must complete OMA training and provide a completed certificate to RAILS.

9. Q&A/Open Discussion
   9.1. Buddy System
   In August, Harris will finalize the pairing of a new board member with a veteran board member. The buddy system was established to pair new board members with experienced peers, facilitating relationship-building and providing a direct contact for questions.

9.2. Other

Board members had an opportunity to ask any follow-up questions about the material covered in the orientation.

10. Adjourn

Gregory adjourned the meeting at 11:35 am.