

Illinois Library Association, Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 7/16/20 Minutes Taken By: Sam Adams-Lanham

Voting Members Present:

- Adams-Lanham, Sam - Barrington Area Library
- Albers, Marian V. - Mascoutah Public Library
- Danowski, Dennis - Macomb Public Library District
- Dombrowski, Monica - Sycamore Public Library
- Livergood, Ryan - Warren-Newport Public Library District
- Malinowski, Rebecca - Cooperative Computer Services (CCS)

- Matthews, Daniel (Chair) - Moraine Valley Community College
- Nance, Karolyn - Bartlett Public Library District
- Parker, Kathy - kathyparker consulting
- Phares, Dee Anna - Northern Illinois University Libraries
- Pointon, Scott - White Oak Library District
- Yanikoski, Catherine - Joliet Public Library

All voting members present

Ex Officio Members Present:

- Blaida, Derek - ILA legislative consultant
- Brennan, Deirdre - RAILS
- Clarage, Elizabeth (for Craig, Anne) - CARLI
- Jacobs, Lou Ann - AISLE
- McCormick, Greg - Illinois State Library
- Popit, Ellen - Illinois Heartland Library System
- Diane Foote – Executive Director of Illinois Library Association joined us early in our meeting;
- Molly Beestrum – ILA Past President & Galter Health Sciences Library, Northwestern University, was with us towards the end.

Not in attendance due to other ILA meetings

- De Fazio, Veronica (ILA President & Executive Board Liaison)- Plainfield Public Library District
- Hamilton, Jeanne (ILA VP/P-E) - Bloomington Public Library
- Szwerek, Magan (ILA Advocacy Committee) - Schaumburg Township District Library
- Todd, Alex (ILA Advocacy Committee) - Prospect Heights Public Library
- Wilson, Leigh Ann (ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee) - Carol Stream Public Library

Introduction of Guests: No guests at this time

Approval of Agenda

Motioned by Marian Albers, seconded by Kathy Parker, that agenda be approved; motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from June 2020 Meeting - [Link to Meeting Minutes with Comments Enabled](#)

Motioned by Kathy Parker, seconded by Dee Anna Phares, that June minutes be approved; motion carried.

Agenda

- **Welcome and introduction:** all members present introduced themselves and gave a brief background
- **Update from Diane:**
 - Explanation of ex officio role
 - Changes to ILA's executive board meeting schedule mean that the Public Policy Committee has an opportunity to submit items earlier than in previous years. Therefore, PPC's regular meetings will start in September rather than the historical October or November start.
 - As ILA's executive director, she is interested in hearing of issues affecting your library that are/may be true for other libraries across the state.

Illinois Library Association, Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

- ILA maintains a legislative “strike team,” composed of ILA’s executive director, immediate past president, current president, VP/president-elect and PPC chair. This enables a timely response to legislative issues that call for quick action.
- **Federal Legislative**
ILA’s federal legislative priorities flow from, but are not mandated by, ALA’s national efforts.
 - **COVID-19**
 - CARES Act [Phase 3 Summary](#); although IMLS received \$50 million, that money is shared across states, territories, and tribes.
 - [HEROES Act](#) has passed the House, waiting to be taken up in Senate.
 - The proposed [Library Stabilization Fund](#) is a bi-cameral, bi-partisan effort “to respond to and accelerate the recovery from the coronavirus.” Several legislators known to be supportive of libraries have already co-sponsored, including IL Representatives Jan Schakowsky and Brad Schneider (as of July 20, 2020). [Please check this list](#) and consider [contacting your representative](#) to encourage their support.
 - **Census**
Coronavirus and quarantining disrupted census efforts. Illinois is currently #7 in the nation for percentage of completions at 66%. The national average is 61%. Continue to urge participation! New deadline is Oct. 1.
- **Update from Derek**, re Illinois legislative activity.
 - Due to coronavirus, very little was accomplished in last legislative session. Typically 400-500 bills are passed; this year there were thirty.
 - “The legislative schedule is opaque and unclear.” ~DB
 - Current schedule leaves legislature adjourned until Nov 17, then a brief session, and dispersed again until January.
 - Current proposed budget is largest ever, at \$100 billion.
 - If graduated income tax passes in November, most Illinois residents will see a reduction in their taxes.
 - A concern was raised that bills may be proposed blocking libraries from collecting levies because buildings were closed. DB—maybe, but unlikely they will gain any traction; DF—refer to [ILA’s Bigger Than a Building](#) campaign to assist libraries in showing their value
- **Review PPC’s charge and role in the ILA strategic plan**
 - Committee members read our [Charge](#) and the [Strategic Plan](#), followed by a discussion of our role, or potential role, in each section.
 - **Goal: Legislative Advocacy**
 - Discussion: Advocacy is the committee most closely linked to ours. Would it be beneficial to occasionally hold combined meeting between Advocacy & PPC?
 - Question: are there also ways we can support advocacy as a concept vs. advocacy as a committee? Suggestions included staying attuned to issues more than once a month and increasing the visibility and reasoning behind PPC’s actions. Committee members sharing PPC information on the list-servs and in other relevant organizations is suggested. As a corollary to that, we can also listen to the concerns raised in those forums.

Illinois Library Association, Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

- Goal: Community Advocacy
Increase alignment with library trustees and literacy-supportive organizations, (Kiwanis, Rotary, etc)
- Goal: Diversity and Inclusion in the Profession
 - Discussion: Professional DEI instruction should be encouraged.
 - Question: how can we minimize interactions between patrons & police?
- Goal: Diversity and Inclusion in the Association
 - Discussion: Again, professional DEI instruction should be encouraged. Our committee is not diverse. ILA leadership is taking steps to garner more participation by BIPOC and LGBTQ+; inclusion should not be the work of one committee.
 - Question: as this is a natural transition time, would this be the moment to create a statewide survey, asking what we can do to serve you better?
- Goals: Member value and Leadership—consensus is these were addressed in previous comments.
- **Review of PPC's 2019-2020 Activities**
 - Patron privacy (non-legislative: visible hold request slips should not contain the entirety of a person's name)
 - [CARLI OER \(Open Education Resources\)](#) initiative
 - RAILS statewide database proposal: secretary of state to purchase databases that can be accessed by all state libraries; see pages 4 - 8 for more information.
 - **Non-Resident Consolidation:** Needs more attention—bill to allow district and municipal library boards to streamline the process of consolidating, including the incorporation of unserved areas
 - **(added to agenda) Unserved Students:** Needs more attention—allows library boards to choose to offer no-cost cards to out-of-district students
- **Brainstorm Goals and Activities for 2020-2021**
 - Introduce committee created legislative priorities
 - [Timeline for creation](#)
 - Discuss criteria and parameters for legislative priorities
 - <https://www.ila.org/advocacy/creating-or-changing-illinois-state-libr>

Adjournment—Motioned, seconded, and enforced by Zoom that we were wrapping up.

Proposal for Statewide Access to Core Database Suite for All Illinois Libraries November 2019

The Proposal

On behalf of all ILLINET libraries and the nearly 13 million residents of Illinois, the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) requests that the Illinois Library Association (ILA) and the Illinois State Library (ISL) support a \$2.5–\$5 million annual appropriation for a suite of databases to support all Illinois libraries of all types and sizes. This would be an addition to the ISL budget.

Our original intent was to request \$2.5 million. We are revising that figure to include a range based on research on the per capita spending for similar database packages in other states and the overwhelming response from Illinois libraries of all types to the statewide database survey described below. While \$2.5 million would be a good start in providing statewide database access to all Illinois libraries and residents, ramping up this figure over time would be the most effective way to meet Illinois' needs in the future. The additional funds would allow licensing of a wider variety of databases.

On November 4, 2019, ILA's Public Policy Committee voted to move this proposal forward, pending more detail. This document provides the requested detail. More information will be forthcoming after the close of a survey that RAILS is currently conducting of Illinois libraries regarding statewide database access.

A national survey reveals that Illinois is currently one of the only states in the country that does not offer statewide access to a core group of vital online information resources for residents. Illinois has long been considered a leader in library resource sharing, and the addition of statewide database access would enhance this reputation.

Under this proposal, the selected databases will be available without charge to the 12 million Illinois residents currently served by public libraries and to the over 1 million residents who currently do not receive public library service. The best practices established through years of successful experience by other states will help guide our efforts. Once the appropriation is approved, a committee, representative of Illinois library system members from all types and sizes of libraries, will work together to evaluate and select the databases. ISL will serve as the fiscal agent for the offer.

Based on research on the costs of comparable offers in other states, we project that over time the Illinois database suite will cost approximately \$5 million dollars annually.

State	Population	Cost	Per capita
Illinois (proposed)	12,700,000	\$5,080,000	\$0.40
Massachusetts	6,940,000	\$1,500,000	\$0.22
New Hampshire	1,000,000	\$400,000	\$0.40
New Jersey	10,000,000	\$1,300,000	\$0.13
Texas	29,000,000	\$9,500,000	\$0.33
Wisconsin	5,800,000	\$2,400,000	\$0.41

General Need for Core Database Package

The need for a statewide database package is clear. It is a myth that all of the information that Illinois residents need for school, work, business development, health purposes, lifelong learning, etc. is available for free on the internet. While more information than ever may be free via the internet, it is not regulated for quality or accuracy. By contrast, the authoritative information found in magazines; newspapers; business, scientific, and scholarly journals; and other online authoritative reference works, is carefully researched, written, and updated by experts. It is expensive to create and therefore not available for free.

The cost to obtain this authoritative information can also be significant for individuals, students, researchers, and businesses, both large and small. Those who need the information the most are often least likely to be able to afford it. To ease this burden, libraries try to offer these resources online on a community-by-community basis when possible. This has resulted in a patchwork approach to meeting a real need in our state. It has also resulted in tremendous inequities for Illinois residents.

In addition, libraries are operating under ever-dwindling financial resources. Some libraries are unable to afford online database access at all. Most school libraries fall into this category, even though students are high on the list of those needing access to the high-quality, easy-to-access information these databases provide. Many libraries that could once afford database access have been forced to reduce the number of products they offer and are no longer able to meet all the needs of their customers.

Over the past several decades, Illinois libraries have shared resources to make as effective and efficient use of limited funding as possible. Illinois library systems help with these efforts by offering access to online catalogs and to discounts for some other online resources. However, as many libraries are not able to afford even discounted prices, this does not help to equalize the playing field or to ensure that all Illinois residents have access to a core group of essential and authoritative resources that will help them in their daily lives.

Through the proposed appropriation, Illinois would achieve the advantages other states have already realized in providing a statewide, core digital collection of resources to residents. Individuals, students, researchers, businesses, and all libraries would greatly benefit from this collection.

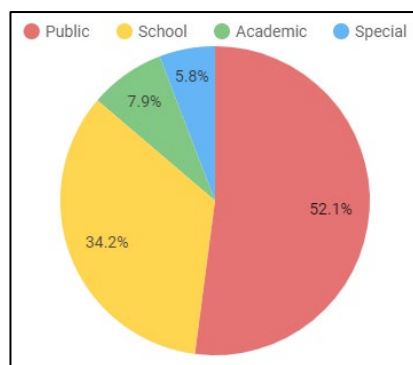
Specific Needs of Illinois Libraries

RAILS has strong anecdotal evidence about the need for Illinois libraries of all types and sizes to provide access to online databases. To gather more factual evidence, RAILS is currently conducting a survey of Illinois libraries. Member libraries of RAILS and Illinois Heartland Library System, as well as the Chicago Public Library, are invited to complete the survey.

The deadline for completion is November 14, 2019. We will provide a complete analysis of survey results after that date. The following is an analysis of the 240 survey results received by 8:30 a.m. on November 7.

Preliminary Statewide Database Survey Results

RAILS distributed its survey on statewide database access on November 1. We asked library respondents to indicate which database products they currently offer and how important each product was to their library. We also asked libraries to indicate other general databases that would be of significant interest to them if available without cost, and the total amount their library spends on databases annually.



The response to the survey was overwhelming and instantaneous the moment the survey was released. The figure to the left shows the percentage of responses from each type of library. We are particularly impressed with the response from school libraries thus far, as it is often difficult to get responses from this library type.

Survey results thus far demonstrate that libraries do not have a lot of money to spend on databases:

- 19% of respondents have \$0 budget to spend on databases.
- 25% have a budget below \$700.
- 75% have a budget below \$33,000.

In survey data thus far, the following databases are identified as being of the most critical importance to libraries:

- ProQuest: Ancestry.com (32% of respondents)
- Gale: Gale in Context: Opposing ViewPoints (26%)
- EBSCO: MasterFILE Complete (Includes Consumer Reports) (26%)
- Gale: Gale Virtual Reference Library (25%)
- World Book: World Book Student (23%)

Other database resources that were mentioned as being of critical importance thus far include:

- The New York Times
- ProQuest: Global Newsstream
- Gale: Research in Context
- Gale: World History in Context
- JSTOR
- Reference USA
- Novelist

As mentioned above, RAILS will provide a complete analysis of all survey results after the November 14 deadline for survey completion.

Summary

In summary, RAILS requests support for an annual appropriation to the Illinois State Library for a statewide suite of databases for the following reasons:

- The appropriation would ensure that all Illinois libraries and their customers have access to high-quality information resources, no matter how small or underfunded the library and no matter the type of library. It would also help ensure a minimum standard of resources for all Illinois libraries and residents.
- A statewide database package would provide better economies of scale. Due to the power in numbers, we would be able to negotiate a better deal for statewide access than an individual library would be able to negotiate on its own.
- Precious local library dollars could be spent on other critical programs and resources, including possible support for the minimum wage increase in Illinois, which is a current major concern for most Illinois libraries.
- The appropriation would eliminate the current unnecessary duplication of resources throughout the state, resulting in a more efficient use of tax dollars and other library funding. Currently, many libraries are purchasing the same databases, and the costs to provide this access are astronomical. Libraries that are currently able to provide some database access can use those dollars to support other important library programs and services.
- Time spent by individual libraries on evaluating databases and negotiating offers could be spent on other library programs and activities.
- A statewide database package is especially important for schools. School libraries are in trouble in Illinois and beyond. Many cannot afford to provide any database access to students. The appropriation would ensure that all Illinois students have access to the same authoritative information.
- By making an offer of this nature available to residents, Illinois would no longer lag behind most of the other states.

- The appropriation would also provide vital information resources to unserved residents in Illinois. Many of these residents have no other place to go for this information since they do not have access to a public library.
- This is an excellent leadership opportunity for the Illinois State Library to leverage economies of scale and increase the ability of all Illinois libraries to offer needed resources to their clientele. Providing statewide access to a vital collection of online databases would also return Illinois to its rightful place at the top of the library resource sharing world.