PrairieCat Engagement Committee
Minutes
February 20, 2025

The Committee will met at 10:00 am to 11:00 am via Zoom. Registration link: https://prairiecat-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrceGsqjMtG9PqAnYOA3sUB9l5GTuXmzyB

Charge: The Engagement Committee works to actively engage members at all levels, to create connections and advance the organization through activities like PrairieCat's annual conference PUG Day, peer networking opportunities, and more.

Meeting Frequency: Bi-monthly meetings in even-numbered months. August, October, February, April, June. 3rd Thursdays at 10 am via Zoom.

1. Welcome and introductions

    Present: Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat), Dana Fine (PR), Melissa Landis (PrairieCat), Magda Bonny (PrairieCat), Shelby O'Hara (PrairieCat), Kathy Peschang (RD), Amy Fry (SL), Karrah Kuykendall (RP), Brianna Rodgers (MX), Victoria Blackmer (CV)

    Absent: Katelynn Clark (FR), Austin Nord (WO), Chelsey Knippel (PrairieCat)

2. Website Forums

    Smith (PrairieCat) discussed the member forums, highlighting the need for more engagement and suggesting ways to increase participation. Kuykendall (RP) stated we should be highlighting the forums at Pug Day. Smith suggested updating the banner on the website to emphasize the forums and drafting an email for library staff to forward.

3. PrairieCat Passport Program

    Smith (PrairieCat) explained that the PrairieCat Passport Program was created to help encourage members attending the quarterly Delegates Assembly meetings to visit the hosting and neighboring libraries. We have had mixed success with limited participation of people stopping at other locations. We will continue the Passport Program for the April Delegates

Assembly meeting but will pause the program for the upcoming Fiscal Year. Please be thinking of ways to restructure the program in the future to encourage more participation.

4. Strategic Plan Update

Smith (PrairieCat) reviewed PrairieCat's progress with the strategic Plan. Explaining that we are currently working on updating the activity plan. Overall, the engagement portion of the strategic plan has had very positive feedback.

5. PUG Day 2025

5.1. PUG Logo

Smith (PrairieCat) shared the 2025 PUG Day logo, created by O'Hara (PrairieCat).

5.2. Scheduled Speakers

Smith (PrairieCat) stated that Becky Spratford, a speaker from last year's PUG Day, recommended Julie Jergens as a speaker. Julie specializes in collection development for youth and teens. Smith plans to finalize the agreement with Julie and apply for Library Reads, a CE support grant that would help cover her fees. Smith also reached out to NAMI National Alliance on mental health and confirmed a training date. She mentioned a list of organizations and vendors that have provided free sessions in the past. Kuykendall (RP) suggested adding a session on AI, proposing a contact from Blackhawk College, Atticus Garrison, who could provide a program on misinformation. Peschang (RD) discussed potential topics for the sessions, including the Nami session, a trauma-informed library work topic, and a suicide prevention training. The Committee also considered interactive sessions or table discussions, with O'Hara (PrairieCat) suggesting a hands-on approach. The Committee agreed to plan for 6-7 session for each round of breakouts. Fine (PR) stated that she is a co-chair for the OMNI organization and would be willing to help facilitate a session on this topic.

5.3. Grant Opportunities

Smith (PrairieCat) confirmed that PrairieCat would not qualify for the RAILS CE grant. She

committed to investigating other grant opportunities.

5.4. Program Proposal Form

Smith (PrairieCat) stated she will be updating the Program Proposal Form and hopefully send it out to the membership in March. That way, we should have proposals to review at our April Engagement Committee meeting.

5.5. Session and Schedule Discussion

Smith (PrairieCat) discussed the planning of PUG Day, focusing on the venue's layout and crowd management. She proposed strategic scheduling of the most popular sessions in the largest room and considered pushing lunch back to prevent overlap with breakout rooms. Smith also sought input on whether to include a keynote presentation and proposed 30- or 60-minute sessions. She emphasized the importance of starting on time and ending by 3:30 to accommodate attendees from further distances. The Committee decided against a keynote and opted for a general update session instead. They also discussed the possibility of having a quiet seating area for attendees who need a break. The Committee agreed to communicate further through the basecamp and to consider the inclusion of tables for library displays.

5.6. Timeline and Next Steps

Smith (PrairieCat) stated that a call out for program proposals will go out in March. The Committee will review these at the April meeting. Registration will open in June. We will continue to communicate through the Basecamp, so please be sure to share your thoughts and suggestions.

Next meeting - Thursday, April 17, 2025 10:00 am via Zoom