

## PrairieCat Delegates Assembly Minutes April 30, 2025

The Delegates Assembly met on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm in person at the Mendota Civic Center, 1901 Tom Merwin Dr., Mendota, IL. The meeting will also be available online via Zoom. Delegates Assembly participation is required of all Fully Participating and Basic Online libraries and the four Union List reps. As always, please remember that only officially designated Delegates or their Alternates can vote on behalf of their library. Substitutes will not be permitted to vote, and there are no proxy votes if a delegate is not present.

[Register to attend the meeting](https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-delegates-assembly-meeting-2025-04-30) (<https://support.prairiecat.info/events/prairiecat-delegates-assembly-meeting-2025-04-30>).

### 1. Call to order and welcome

**Present at Mendota:** Ann Whitaker-Reid, Marilyn Calbow, Resa Mai, Dana Fanslow, Angela Campbell, Kim Halsey, Bianca Sierra, Carmela Rodriguez, Beth Wood, Carolyn Miller, Kelly McCully, Pennie Miller, Jennifer Shugrue, Kim Brozovich, Julie Wayland, Stephanie Nissen, Lynn Sheedy, Lynette Heiden, Paige Frechmann, Laura Crisp, Barbara Posinger, Christina Snyder, Nancy McKay, Rylie Roubal, Penny Bryant, Shelley Augustine, Yana Serdyuk, Emily Kofoid, Kathy Peschang, Melissa Badger, Renee Kozeal, Heide Trettenero, Megan Gove, Mary Cheatwood, Jaclyn Trujillo, Bryon Lear, Laura Watson, Kimberly Martin, April Hoste, Jenna Diedrich, Michelle Krooswyk, Jolene Franciskovich, Mindy Long, Linda Schreiber, Robert Malerk, Deb Kolenko, Ashley Hopper, Michelle Bailey, Jill Simpson, Lisa Boles, Lauren Offerman, Emily Schaub, Karen Lonergan, Heather Black, Beth Ryan, Ashley Huffines, Marie Monaco, Sondra Terry, Jamie Lockwood, Laura Youngstrum, Tari Sangston, Sarah Flanagan, Janet Clark, Rene Leyva, Kristi Scherer, Michele Thurston, Jodie DePatis, Julie Voss, Maria Meachum, Izzy Foltz, Chelsey Knippel, Carolyn Coulter, Elizabeth Smith, Kimberly Udstrand, Shelby O'Hara, Roy Arey, Magda Bonny, Matt Maturo, Chalyn Fornero-Green, Deanna Howard, Karrah Kuykendall, Melissa Weidman, Claire Crawford, Kat Solheim, Amy Freeman

**Present via Zoom:** Valerie Woodley, Karen Sutura, Joanna Kluever, Emily Gundry, Amy Walsh, Lynne Noffke, Tori Drews, Allison Beasley, Sue Stevens, Carol McSweeney, Julie Harte, Connie Baele, Mary Wilkening, Elizabeth Green, Jennifer Finnerty, Laurel Reiss, Brandy Marsden, Amy Runkle, Cathy Palmer, Jennifer Barton, Melissa Landis, Sarah Ehlers, Victoria Blackmer, Mary Petro, Alexandra Annen

**Libraries represented:** See vote and quorum sheet.

Krooswyk (Chair-NL) started the meeting at 10:30 am. Krooswyk welcomed everyone.

2. Introduction and welcome new delegates or alternates

Rober Malerk introduced himself as the new alternate for LaSalle Public Library. Christina Snyder introduced herself as the new Director and delegate for Odell Public Library.

3. Introduction of guests

There were no guests.

4. Review of agenda for additions/changes

There were no revisions.

5. Consent agenda

5.1. Approve minutes for January 29, 2025, PrairieCat Delegates Assembly meeting

5.2. Central Site report including financial and statistical reports

5.3. Approve FY26 meeting dates

**Motion #1: Gove (TF) moved and Diedrich (GA) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**

**Ayes: 95**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

6. Administrative Council report

6.1. Finance Committee report – report from 3/20/2025

Ryan (JO) stated that the Finance Committee met on March 20, 2025. The Committee discussed the proposed fiscal year 26 budget, which includes salary increases and realignments. The Committee also discussed the mobile app and the possibility of moving to remote meetings in the future.

6.2. Resource Sharing Committee report – report from 1/30/2025 meeting and 4/11/2025 summit recap.

Ryan (JO) stated that the Resource Sharing Committee met following the January Delegates Assembly meeting. It was suggested that the Resource Sharing Committee move from a Board Committee to a Standing Committee, allowing the committee to meet remotely. This change was approved by the Administrative Council at their February meeting. The Committee also reviewed possible topics for the Resource Sharing Summit and agreed on the topic of marketing and accessibility.

Ryan reviewed the Resource Sharing Summit for the Delegates. The Summit was held on April 11, 2025, at the DeKalb Public Library. The day included four presenters, a marketing swap, lunch and Play-Doh. The event was a big success. Ryan reminded the group that the Resource Sharing Committee is always looking for topic suggestions for upcoming Summit events. Please reach out if you have any suggestions.

6.3. Quarterly staff report

Coulter (PrairieCat) explained this is a new report for the Delegates Assembly. Coulter, in conjunction with the PrairieCat department leaders, prepares this report quarterly for the RAILS Consortia Committee and believes this is a report that should be shared with this group going forward. Coulter summarized projects the PrairieCat staff have been working



220 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Coal Valley, IL 61240  
877-542-7257  
support.prairiecat.info

on this quarter: the strategic plan, an updated Financial Emergency Sustainability Plan, the forums on the PrairieCat website, the Resource Sharing Summit and PUG Day 2025 planning, eCommerce integration on Vega Discover.

7. PrairieCat membership update, training and outreach report

Smith (PrairieCat) reported that Mills & Petrie Memorial Library and Gymnasium is upgrading from Union List to Basic Online. They are scheduled to Go Live at the end of May. There are a few upcoming member events to note. In-person Member Updates will be held May 20-22. They will be held at different libraries across the membership and via Zoom. A New Director Welcome meeting will be held on June 25, 2025. These meetings are held quarterly. We are also holding monthly virtual IPLAR Q&A sessions. PUG Day 2025 will be an in-person event at the Bend XPO in East Moline, IL on September 26, 2025. PrairieCat is accepting and encouraging program proposal submissions from the membership. Please visit the PrairieCat website for more details on upcoming events. Smith reiterated that Member Forums are up and running on the PrairieCat website. You can subscribe to topics you are interested in, and you will receive email notifications when new activity is posted.

Smith gave the training and outreach report to remind the group of PrairieCat's online training platform, TalentLMS. There were 257 courses completed in the last 30 days on this platform. TalentLMS is home to PrairieCat's core training including the new Vega Discover courses which include the basic class, showcases class and user roles and homepage builder class. Membership is encouraged to submit a Helpdesk ticket to schedule on demand training with PrairieCat staff.

Smith reminded the group that this is the last meeting for the PrairieCat Passport Program. The libraries participating in the last leg of the program are Graves-Hume, Walnut, Peru and DeKalb. She encouraged the Delegates and Alternates to visit one or more of these libraries after the meeting.

7.1. ACTION: Approve FY26 pay scale

Coulter (PrairieCat) shared the FY26 PrairieCat pay scale, stating this pay scale was increased by 2.4% as per the recommendation of HR Source based on library and non-profit industries.

**Motion #2: Huffines (FP) moved and Fanslow (KR) seconded to approve the FY26 PrairieCat pay scale. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**

**Ayes: 96**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

7.2. ACTION: Review and approve PrairieCat Strategic Plan, FY25-FY27

Coulter (PrairieCat) explained the need to update the PrairieCat Strategic Plan. For the FY25-FY27 Strategic Plan, PrairieCat kept the current plan structure, reviewed it and updated it based on the member surveys, committee surveys, and in-person meetings with PrairieCat staff and committees. One specific change was splitting out the goals under User Experience. We separated User Experience into two categories, Patron User Experience and Member Library User Experience.

**Motion #3: Meachum (WL) moved and Posinger (SA) seconded to approve the PrairieCat Strategic Plan for FY25-FY27. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**

**Ayes: 96**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

7.3. ACTION: Approve changes to PrairieCat Bylaws regarding in-person Delegates Assembly attendance

Coulter (PrairieCat) discussed the proposed changes to the PrairieCat Bylaws regarding in-

person Delegates Assembly attendance. There have been recurring questions about why PrairieCat cannot hold meetings in a few predetermined locations similarly to how RAILS conducts in-person meetings. Given that PrairieCat has grown to such an extent, it seemed feasible we may be within the parameters specified in the law for allowing remote access for quorum. We have found that we are currently slightly in excess of the 4,500 square miles of jurisdiction required for exemption with public library service area square mileage, and over 6,000 square miles with school districts and academics added in. The Administrative Council recommends that we proceed with bylaws changes that will allow us to begin establishing a process for remote meetings for Delegates and the Finance Committee.

Miller (PP) asked if attending via Zoom and not at one of the predetermined meeting locations, does the attendee's vote still count. Coulter responded that yes, it would still count as long as we have in-person quorum among the official remote sites, similar to how we currently count the Zoom votes. Roubal (HK) asked if PrairieCat anticipates additional technology costs to make all of these different sites work for the meetings. Coulter stated that one of the only additional costs she anticipates would be paying for additional Zoom webinar licenses.

**Motion #4: Schaub (PU) moved and Ryan (JO) seconded to approve the changes to the PrairieCat Bylaws regarding in -person Delegates Assembly attendance. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**

**Ayes: 96**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

## 8. Demonstration and Discussion, Mobile app

Coulter (PrairieCat) explained over the past months, the UX Committee has done several demonstrations and reviewed the written responses from vendors. At their meeting on 3/6/2025, the UX committee voted to recommend that we proceed with the Innovative Interfaces proposal. The features as well as the costs for potential expansion to the entire

consortium were their deciding factors. There is a great deal of enthusiasm among the members for extending this project to all the circulating membership.

Given the other elements of the FY26 budget that have caused a larger than usual increase in membership fees, it is suggested that we consider leaving the mobile app as an opt-in, reimbursement platform in FY26 for the existing participants and any additional that wish to join. We will then re-evaluate expansion to the entire consortium in FY27.

Innovative costing includes a base fee, which includes 25 individual “templates”. These templates allow each library to brand the app with their own logo, colors, showcases, etc. If more templates are added, each costs an additional \$225 per year. In FY26, the cost reflected in the budget includes templates for each of the current 57 participants. Costing also includes a \$15,000 installation fee which we have budgeted from Reserves in the FY26 budget.

We have configured the FY26 budget to reflect taking the \$15,000 in installation fees from reserves.

Coulter presented a slide show which demonstrated the features of the Innovative mobile app including, the ability to see checkouts, renew materials and reading history. She clarified that reading history is now stored in Sierra and will not be lost when moving from one platform to another. She also mentioned that the app will have push notifications for overdue items and holds, and that self-check is integrated into the app without any extra cost. She encouraged the attendees to watch the demo video for a better understanding of the app's features.

Sheedy (OG) asked when libraries who do not currently have a mobile app, would be able to consider signing up for the mobile app. Coulter suggested considering it now. The more libraries that sign up for the mobile app, the lower the cost of the app for everyone. Long (BL) asked what the cost difference is between OCLC's Capira app and Innovative's app. Coulter stated that Capira's cost would remain the same at \$499.99 and Innovative's cost is \$528 based on participating libraries. Miller (PP) asked if there is a way to justify the cost of the mobile app to her trustees if her library signs up for the mobile app. Coulter replied, yes, there are reports available to show usage, number of logins, searching, etc.

8.1. ACTION: Review and approve Innovative mobile application contract

**Motion #5: Leyva (FR) moved and Meachum (WL) seconded to approve the Innovative**

**mobile application contract. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by roll call.**

**Ayes: 93**

**Nays: 1**

**Abstentions: 0**

**8.2. ACTION: Review and approve FY26 draft budget and fees**

Coulter (PrairieCat) discussed the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. She highlighted the significant costs associated with salary benchmarking, which aimed to bring staff pay in line with industry standards, and the introduction of a 3% salary increase, a 1% merit increase. Reserves costs were calculated at 2% of total expenditures. It also shows a Reserves expenditure for replacement laptops and associated hardware and software and the \$15,000 mobile app installation cost. Coulter also mentioned the impact of hosting an in-person PUG Day event and the reduction of out-of-state travel expenses. She clarified that the IMRF rate had decreased from 11.9% to 11.29%.

Sheedy (OG) asked if PrairieCat is confident in the RAILS contribution to the budget.

Coulter explained that our LLSAP money comes from the state, not the federal government. The federal government, through IMLS, pays for RAILS delivery. The state has said that if their federal funding for delivery is cut, they will make it whole and they are not going to impact the systems this year. Coulter stated that RAILS has robust savings and will likely cover them through the next four years. However, this is why PrairieCat has updated its Emergency Financial Sustainability Plan.

Noffke (LI) asked for an explanation of how the library fees are calculated. Coulter explained the fee structure which includes a per-library cost, a matrix fee based on circulation statistics, and a reserves fee.

**Motion #6: McCully (BD) moved and Nisson (RU) seconded to approve the draft FY26 draft budget and fees. There was no discussion on the motion. Motion carries by vocal affirmation.**





220 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Coal Valley, IL 61240  
877-542-7257  
[support.prairiecat.info](mailto:support.prairiecat.info)

**Ayes: 96**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

9. Presentation: Rock Island Community Cart project

Karra Kuykendall the Adult Services Director from Rock Island Public Library gave a presentation the library's Comfort Carts.

10. Public comments via previously submitted email (see above), in person or online

There were no public comments.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.

12. Next regularly scheduled meeting, July 30, 2025