



**PrairieCat Administrative Council  
Minutes  
March 4, 2022**

The Council met on Friday, March 4, 10 am – 12 pm

The council met in person at the Clarence Mitchell Library at Highland Community College, 2998 W Pearl City Rd, Freeport, IL. The Council will also meet virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic in accordance with rules and procedures contained in section 7(e) of the OMA as (1) there is a state-issued disaster declaration related to public health concerns in place over all or part of the jurisdiction of the public body; (2) the head of the public body determines that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the disaster

Register for the Zoom meeting at:

<https://railslibraries.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0rdOqqzMiE9Oc4Vqq8kpOLxKferwrYBsH>

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Members of the public will be able to chat or speak during the virtual Zoom meeting during the public comment and in person. Public comments may be submitted via email to [Carolyn.Coulter@railslibraries.info](mailto:Carolyn.Coulter@railslibraries.info) at least two hours before the meeting.

I. Call to order, Welcome and Introductions

Present at Highland Community College: Carolyn Coulter (PrairieCat), Chelsey DeSplinter (PrairieCat), Laura Watson (HC), Penny Bryant (PT), Ashley Huffines (FP), Beth Ryan (JO), Emily Faulkner (DK)

Present via Zoom: Victoria Blackmer (CV), Patricia Smith (Chair-RO), Charm Ruhnke (PU), Laura Long (EM), Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat), Emily Porter (BY)

Absent: Michelle Krooswyk (NL)

Smith (Chair-RO) called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

II. Introduction of Visitors and Public Comments

There were no visitors or public comments.

III. Review Agenda for Additions/Changes

There were no revisions.

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve minutes for February 4, 2022, PrairieCat Administrative Council meeting
- b. Approve financial report for January 2022
- c. Approve check register
- a. Statistical reports

**MOTION #1**

**Blackmer (CV) moved and Ruhnke (PU) seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. There was no discussion on the motion.**

**\*Motion carried by roll call.**

**Ayes: 9**

**Nayes: 0**  
**Abstentions: 0**  
**Discussion:**

V. Membership Update

a. Membership Level eligibility report

Coulter (PrairieCat) shared the annual eligibility report. Those highlighted in green are eligible for Union List or above. The yellow highlights qualify for Basic Online membership or above. Those in blue text are in a membership level above what they qualify for. There are quite a few members who could downgrade from Basic Online to Union List. There are also a few who could downgrade from Fully Participating to Basic Online. Coulter suggested re-examining the requirement levels to see if they need to be adjusted.

b. Compliance Report

Smith (PrairieCat) showed the compliance report for Spring. The areas we are looking at are to see if members are maintaining their OCLC membership, they are lending and borrowing materials, adding items, and have at least one staff member who is item entry certified. Smith noted the members who are out of compliance. The majority are Union List schools. You will notice Smith's notes to the sides. The light orange highlighted members have legitimate reasons for not being compliant. The yellow highlights are recommended to receive a compliance letter followed by a site visit or, at least, a phone call. Smith explained staffing shortages/turnover is a common problem among many of these noncompliant libraries.

Porter (BY) said she has had some meetings with the library at the school in Byron and they have hired a Director of Education Resources who will oversee all the school libraries. Hopefully there will be more momentum with Byron Schools. Porter also mentioned she had talked to a board member of Winnebago Library, Gary Brown, and they would be interested in seeing a proposal and seeing the benefits of being a PrairieCat member. Coulter (PrairieCat) stated she quoted Winnebago Library in 2018, and she will reach out to them again.

c. Annual PrairieCat report for members

Smith (PrairieCat) reviewed the Annual report for FY21. This is a snapshot of what PrairieCat has done and has provided to the membership during the year. This will be posted and sent out later today or Monday. We will not be doing a Return On Investment for individual libraries this year. With the use of TalentLMS, there would only be an additional couple of stats for each library. Also, Jason Jensen (PrairieCat) created a new Return On Investment report which assigns value to items circulated, etcetera. To avoid confusion, we are simply referring to this as the Annual Report.

d. Discussion, potential Durand CUSD Union List membership

Coulter (PrairieCat) informed the Council that Durand Schools reached out to PrairieCat and are interested in rejoining. They were Union List members and left in 2015-2016. The librarian would like to join as a Union List member again. They only have 529 students. However, they have a small village library that they partner with that potentially boosts their patronage to over 1600, which puts them above the UL level. This is a reciprocal borrowing agreement between the school and the village library; the village library is not a RAILS member. Would there be any concerns with quoting them as UL? Coulter will also quote a Basic Online membership, just to show what more she can get with an upgraded membership level. Ruhnke (PU) is ok with quoting them as Union List. The

Council agrees to quote Durand Schools for a Union List membership.

- e. Approve for Delegates Assembly, Mt. Carroll IGA for upgrade from UL to BO

**MOTION #2**

**Faulkner (DK) moved and Watson (HC) seconded to approve Mt. Carroll IGA for upgrade from Union List to Basic Online for Delegates Assembly. There was no discussion on the motion.**

**Motion carried by roll call.**

**Ayes: 10**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

**Discussion:**

Coulter (PrairieCat) stated she sent an email about an RFI from RAILS. There is a desire to do some analysis for the need of a statewide ILS. We need a nonpartisan, third party to analyze the idea of a statewide ILS. The LLSAP Sustainability Working Group (LSWG) has reached out to Carson Block, Marshall Breeding, and one more person for this evaluation. During the last LSWG meeting, Heartland commented that if anyone would like to join Share, send in your numbers and they will quote you to join. RSA and PrairieCat did not respond. Coulter wants the Council to be aware that this offer was presented. PrairieCat is on the cusp of signing another five-year contract with Innovative in July, if we wanted to consider something like this, it would take more than a couple of years to figure out the benefits of a move like this and whether it is even a possibility. Watson (HC) said this does not seem like an offer worth considering. It seems like they need us more than we need them. Coulter gave her opinion saying the statewide ILS analysis needs to be done. Separately, the offer to join Share is not going to be beneficial to PrairieCat. Council agrees we are not interested in giving Heartland numbers for Share.

Coulter also stated she received a FOIA request. Seneca Public Library has requested all the checks from PrairieCat from 2006. PrairieCat did not become an entity until 2010. Our accountant, Sharon Swanson, looked back and there are only 26 checks written to Seneca Public Library in that time. Coulter is waiting for a response from the lawyer about what needs to be sent, actual copies of the checks, in which the account information would have to be redacted from the checks, a time-consuming feat, or if we can give a check listing with information, which will take no time at all. Coulter said PrairieCat will proceed once we hear back from the lawyer.

Coulter mentioned an email from Innoavtive. Our eCommerce system leverages PayPal PayFlow. PayPal PayFlow is being upgraded for security reasons to PayPal PayFlow with online checkout screens. We can do this, however, our members with self-checks who use eCommerce would have to upgrade to a Comprise system in order for it to work. This could be an issue for some libraries. PrairieCat will be sending out more information when we know more.

VI. Administrative Issues

- a. Appoint nominating committee for FY23 Administrative Council elections  
Coulter (PrairieCat) relayed information about the upcoming Administrative Council Elections. In Fiscal Year 23 Faulkner's (DK) term is up, but she is eligible to run again, Porter's (BY) term is up, and she is not eligible to run again. Smith (RO) and Watson's (HC) terms are also up, but both are eligible to run again.

Coulter said we need to appoint a nominating committee to help gather candidates to run in the FY23 election. Usually, this committee is made up of two to three people who will not be running in the election. Blackmer (CV) and Ryan (JO) volunteered for the committee.

b. Discussion, long term disability insurance FY23

Coulter (PrairieCat) stated that IMRF does provide long-term disability benefits for members who have been in their system over 12 months. Right now, we provide short- and long-term disability through Guardian. In Fiscal Year 23, we would like to drop long-term disability with Guardian since it is covered by IMRF. We would keep short-term disability. If we did this, we would be saving \$2559. Short-term costs us \$3800, but has covered our employees in the past and remains beneficial to the staff. The difference between IMRF's long-term disability and Guardian's is the elimination period. Guardian has a 90-day elimination period, which is usually covered by short-term disability prior to claiming long-term. IMRF has a 30-day elimination period. Coulter continued that we have one employee who would not be covered under IMRF until January 2023. Is the Council ok with changing this in July even if one employee will not be covered until January? Faulkner (DK) said, yes, as a new employee, there is usually a waiting period for benefits. The Council agreed to drop Guardian long-term disability for FY23.

c. Discussion, Bolingbrook car (sell or retain)

Coulter (PrairieCat) said PrairieCat has two vehicles. The van that is based in Coal Valley and a Ford Taurus in Bolingbrook. The Taurus is rarely used. As most of you know, used car prices are very high. It is a 2015 Taurus with 51,600 miles. According to Blue Book, its trade in value is \$9-\$10,000, but the selling price is \$10,200-\$12,200. Ryan (JO) stated that it is prime time to sell a car. Coulter said it would be cheaper to pay the staff out of Bolingbrook mileage if they did have to travel. Faulkner (DK) agreed and said if the Bolingbrook employees needed to, they could also rent a car. Coulter asked for a motion to sell the Ford Taurus.

**MOTION #3**

**Porter (BY) moved and Blackmer (CV) seconded to approve selling the Ford Taurus in Bolingbrook. There was no discussion on the motion.**

**Motion carried by roll call.**

**Ayes: 10**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstentions: 0**

**Discussion: Ruhnke (PU) asked if it would be cheaper to move the car to Coal Valley? Coulter responded that it is not needed because we have the van in Coal Valley that can haul more people and all our meeting supplies.**

Coulter mentioned RAILS removed masks mandates for their buildings, but they have not decided on in-person meetings. We hope to be able to meet in their buildings soon. With lower COVID cases, it is possible they could reconsider their vaccine mandates. If they do, Coulter will bring it back to this governing body to discuss. Faulkner (DK) asked about the emergency declaration in regard to in-person quorum? Coulter replied that it expires on Saturday so we will probably have to start meeting in person. However, the courts said that if a governing body deems it unsafe, the meeting is allowed to meet virtually and not be in violation of OMA.

Smith (PrairieCat) asked how the Council feels about scheduling in person member updates this Spring, with gas prices and other concerns, does this still sound appealing? Long (EM) asked if we could do 3 in person plus a virtual? Smith replied, yes, we could offer in-person and virtual options.

VII. Ad Hoc Committee Updates

a. Resource Sharing Committee – No report

b. Finance Committee – report from 2/17/2022

Blackmer (CV) said the Finance Committee met on February 17<sup>th</sup> to review the innovative contract. The Committee agreed with Administrative Council’s review of the contract. Coulter (PrairieCat) stated the Committee also took another look at the draft budget. They will be meeting in March to approve the FY23 budget for this governing body.

Long (EM) brought up some concerns she heard from members who are unhappy with the way the committees are operating. Since the committees have moved to an elected membership, they feel unwelcome and uninvited to join the committee meetings as a nonmember of the committees. Often, they are unaware of when the committees are even meeting. Coulter responded that we can definitely make sure the meeting agendas and packets reach a broader audience. She suggests utilizing Listservs. Smith (PrairieCat) stated we have heard similar complaints in the past about the Tech Services and Circulation Committees after they were restructured. They were restructured to empower those committees to make decisions and policy changes. Coulter also suggested sharing the meeting dates on social media as well as adding them to the PrairieCat Newsletter. Faulkner (DK) asked if the complaint was about not knowing about the meetings or showing up to a meeting and feeling awkward. Long responded that the comments were about both, but she believes changing the way we send out meeting information would help.

VIII. Review of Meeting – what worked and what didn’t  
The meeting went well.

IX. Public Comments  
Ryan (JO) said she talked with the director at River East and they would be interested in a quote from PrairieCat. Carolyn (PrairieCat) will reach out to River East Public Library.

X. Adjournment  
The meeting adjourned at 11:16 am.

XI. Next Meeting – Friday, April 1, 2022, at Robert W. Rowe Public Library, Sheridan, IL and online via Zoom