

State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB)

Conference Call Minutes

January 11, 2017

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: David Carmicheal, Nancy Avolese, Martina Soden, Sally Flaherty, John Paul Deley, Stacey Peeples, Heidi Mays, Heidi Abbey Moyer, Ben Goldman, Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh, Ed Galloway, Marilyn Parrish

Absent: Jim Beidler, Jack McCarthy ,

Staff Attending: Cindy Bendroth, Josh Stahlman.

The meeting began at 1:32 p.m. David Carmicheal (DWC) welcomed the members of the Board and took roll call. Members gave a brief introduction of themselves.

DWC conducted a brief orientation for new board members and emphasized that he would prefer the SHRAB coalesce on one or two feasible objectives and work to accomplish those goals, as opposed to pursuing several initiatives that may divide focus. He also mentioned that part of the SHRAB's duty is to help review NHPRC grants.

Josh Stahlman (JS) updated the SHRAB on the NHPRC State Board Programming Grants (SBPG), first providing background for new members. He informed the board that the SHRAB's typically funded initiatives speak to the NHPRC's targeted activities of: broadening preservation; developing and promoting best practices; promoting the institutional advancement of organizations in underserved communities; and assisting locally based repositories with training and tools to improve their stewardship abilities.

JS provided summaries and statistics on some of SHRAB's successful and forthcoming programming, including:

- The annual **Archives and Records Management Seminar (ARM)**, which is typically funded by NHPRC/SBPG, but was not this year on account of a new mixed-audience (live/streaming webinar) format, at which State Archives and other state employees presented and incurred no fees:
 - o New Policies Regarding Retention of Permanent and Long-term Electronic Records. A session that garnered 41 onsite registrants, 102 webinar registrants, and 175 views to date on YouTube, for a total audience of 318.
 - o Archival Basics for Historical Repositories and Local Governments. A session that saw 22 onsite registrants, 66 webinar registrants, and 164 Youtube views, for a total audience of 252.
- The **annual archives month poster**, 2015-2017 comprises an informational series. 1,500 of 2016's poster, Research Your Family's History, were ordered and distributed to historical records repositories; libraries; MARAC PA Caucus and others. DWC commented that several

institutions outside of Pennsylvania have requested to rebrand and use these posters for themselves.

- **Archives Without Tears (AWOT)**, which JS elaborated as having begun in 2009 to satisfy the need for affordable and accessible basic archival training. Day One of the two-day program is based on the AASLH Basics of Archives and Day Two includes disaster planning/response/essential records/records management. The SBPG funds overnight lodging, facility-use fee and supplies.

To date, AWOT has provided training to 583 registrants/379 unique organizations and received a 2011 PA Museums Institutional Award of Merit. Planning for Spring 2017 is underway with Columbia County (northeast) and Old Economy (western) as possible locations.

- **Disaster Response Team Training**, JS stated will be in complement to the Alliance for Response and Cultural Resilience Networks that CCAHA has been working to promote. The State Archives is looking to establish a team across the state, including PHMC and State Library staff, records Coordinators, existing Cultural Resilience Team members, and possibly representatives from repositories statewide, who after CCAHA training this May could be dispatched to a scenario and be able to confidently conduct an assessment, make recommendations for further action and do preliminary hands-on triage. A CAAHA training will also occur in the eastern region of the state and CCAHA was hoping to conduct a third training in the western portion of the state.
- The **2017 – 2019 SBPG** was recently approved. This will be a \$34,265 two-year project with \$14,796 of NHPRC funds. This will include many of the standard initiatives, but also will see the development of online performance matrix leaflets and corresponding webinars on the topics of caring for electronic records; essential records and disaster preparedness; and records management for local governments.

The online leaflets will allow repositories to self-assess and rank themselves as well as provide basic steps to reach the next level of best practices. Subsequent webinars will further expand upon the basic steps.

SHRAB input will be sought in recommendations for content-matter experts to develop the leaflets and deliver the webinars, as well as to review that content, likely in November or December of 2017, before being distributed for testing.

- In looking to the **2017 ARM Seminar**, DWC would like to include Satellite Locations—simply a conference room with laptop/screen projector/audio where people could convene to watch the webinar with a group of peers. DWC suggested that perhaps this could be sponsored/moderated by SHRAB members/institutions. JS stated that we considered this in 2016 with Heinz/John Paul Deley (JPD) but did not receive any registrations from the greater-Pittsburgh area. DWC suggested that hosting organizations would need to advertise locally to draw an audience.

Stacey Peebles (SP) volunteered that the PA Hospital has an auditorium where a satellite session could be hosted.

Marilyn Parrish (MP), Heidi Abbey Moyer (HAM), Martina Soden (MS), also offered to host at their facilities. JPD and Ed Galloway (EG) from Pittsburgh said they could find a place in Pittsburgh. NA mentioned the Kane Historic Preservation Society in northwestern PA.

The Board discussed the letter to the Commission drafted by JPD.

JPD mentioned that the SBPG illustrates the limited budget on which archival programs operate across the state and that the SHRAB should seek to reinstate the funding that was historically available through PHMC, which had been identified as approximately 4.8% of the total PHMC grant program in the past. JPD further elaborated that the letter should have the Board's consensus and be delivered from the Board.

Ed Galloway (EG) said he supports the letter 100%

JPD asked if it would be possible to develop an official SHRAB letterhead.

Nancy Avolese (NA) inquired why the funding ended. The cut was the result of the budget shortfalls in 2009, and a smaller amount has recently been reinstated, focused on museums.

JPD commented that the PHMC commissioners do not include an archivist and that the Board needs to raise awareness. He elaborated that the 4.8% request is merely asking to reinstate funding that had existed for many years.

SHRAB members were cautioned that because the current iteration of the grants fund museums' daily operations, there will likely be pushback to sharing the pot of money and that the first step is to ask and see what the reaction is.

Heidi Mays (HM) offered that she fully supports the letter.

MP suggested that the language in the letter should reflect that we support museums and all cultural heritage organizations.

Rachel Grove Rorbaugh (RGR) concurred.

JPD agreed to incorporate that language and asked for examples of past successes.

JS mentioned that examples of successful archival grants from the prior program were distributed in a previous email, and that HAM had indicated interest in compiling other successful examples.

DWC asked that JS provide JPD with the existing list and check with HAM to see if she found any examples.

JPD asked that all revisions and additions be submitted to him no later than January 25th.

It was suggested that if the letter is not successful initially, the SHRAB might seek to expand the pot of available money instead of drawing from the existing money.

JPD stated that making clear that this money may be used as matching towards larger federally funded projects would strengthen the appeal and asked the Board to send all ideas to him by the 25th. He asked if anyone objected to including their name on the letter. There were no objections.

DWC reminded the Board that PHMC staff were not a party to the letter.

It was noted that the State Historic Preservation Board sends a member to Commission meetings—and is often given a seat at the table—and that it may be beneficial to have SHRAB do the same.

JPD declined himself from representing SHRAB at Commission meetings due to a conflict of interest.

MP commented that this was a great idea.

RGR said she would be willing to attend meetings in the Harrisburg area.

JPD suggested that it would be ideal to seek archival representation on the Commission when current appointments expire.

DWC mentioned that appointments are generally from the governor, and that they would need input from PHMC.

DWC directed the Board to the SHRAB Challenges document compiled by JPD.

JPD stated that the document was drafted with strong parallels to major PA Archival institutions' mission statements.

DWC expressed that the Board seems to have a huge interest in DPLA; that he is in discussions with the State Librarian regarding a possible summit for making statewide records available online; and is seeking Board involvement.

JPD verbalized his support, as did MS, Ben Goldman (BG), RGR, MP, Sally Flaherty (SF), and SP.

SP mentioned that they have been approached by several groups looking to digitize their records and is concerned with the scattered results. She wondered if there is a cohesive approach, and if DPLA is that solution.

DWC stated that there needs to be a statewide access point for digital documents and questioned if DPLA is it and if the PowerLibrary and State Library have a role to play.

Ed Galloway (EG) suggested that DPLA is the hub.

JPD suggested that DPLA allows an aggregate of metadata, so people know what is where.

SP voiced concern for the ability of smaller repositories to participate.

EG commented that there is a high bar for participation in DPLA and that in order to participate a repository needs the proper infrastructure in place.

RGR expressed that even with professional staff it can be difficult.

JPD mentioned the granularity that Jack McCarthy was able to achieve with PASCL, said he should be congratulated for his efforts.

BG noted that the idea of a central portal has been expressed since the beginning. He suggested it will need to be taken up outside of PA Digital and just serve as a hub for PA. BG stated that PA Digital is currently looking to expand, but is not yet able to host digital material.

DWC asked if it is too late for a central repository; how do we aggregate and provide access? He suggested SHRAB must have a roll because of its unique perspective.

MS indicated that in addition to PowerLibrary, PA Docs is open to historical records repositories for a small annual fee, which she believed to be about \$200. DWC suggested this might be a good use of grant funds and that it is something to be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

DWC redirected the Board to the SHRAB challenges document, specifically, the History Code section. He informed the Board that legislation has been reintroduced regarding replevin law, stating that Pennsylvania currently has no law, but if passed, Pennsylvania would have one of the strongest in the country. When the bill was last proposed it passed the senate unanimously, and the governor stated he would sign it, however it was not brought to a vote in the full Senate before the session ended. DWC said that we would share the bill number once it is assigned and that it is critical for people to contact their legislators as many records are currently lost each year on account of there being no law. He also urged the Board to participate, and send notices to relevant groups and individuals.

JPD inquired who the bill's sponsors are, to which DWC replied that it has not yet been introduced and we will provide that information when it becomes available.

JPD mentioned that long-term planning and public awareness are critical, and wondered if there could be an opportunity to educate the committee staff, particularly on the vulnerability of information loss in a digital world.

DWC and HM deliberated on who the previous sponsors were and arrived at Scarnati (Senate) and Metcalfe (House).

DWC expanded on the progress matrix discussed earlier as part of the SBPG update. JS to provide the Board with the list of proposed topics so the Board can recommend content-matter experts who might be interested in developing the leaflets and delivering the corresponding webinars. He also mentioned that after their implementation, we will seek SHRAB's input on their effectiveness and discuss the possibility of developing more to cover additional topics.

DWC reiterated that the goal is to help Pennsylvania repositories clearly understand where they rank and what steps they need to take to improve.

JPD noted that NAGARA has a local government pamphlet series that may be a good template to consider.

DWC suggested that we might ask NAGARA if we can use the template and customize to fit our needs.

DWC asked if there were other items on the list of challenges that the Board wished to discuss.

JPD mentioned teaching with original records and asked, if once things are aggregated in DPLA if it would be useful for teaching with primary sources, and at different levels, ie: fourth grade, eleventh grade, college.

SF informed the board that there are teachers who would be willing to review and that once the material is there, they can do professional development to show the broader audience how to use.

RGR asked if we could get feedback ahead of time to know what subject areas to target.

JPD mentioned that the PA Historical Association did a session on developing an online college course based on primary sources in Pennsylvania.

DWC cited the recent discussion of fake news and asked how we analyze information sources. Archivists and historians have been doing it all along, but how is this applied to modern sources and the average student?

JPD suggested that trustworthiness is a skillset and that students need to question and understand context.

SF suggested that she may be able to organize a workshop at no cost, to help teachers bring info to the class room, they just need the content. She stated that teachers are begging for professional development, and that contracts are in place statewide.

RGR noted that MARAC held a workshop regarding archivists teaching with original sources, which includes many of the same principles, and further that SAA has a committee and book on the topic.

DWC asked that RGR send the info to JS and CB so that it can be distributed to the Board with the minutes.

SF mentioned Civil Rights documents as a possibility.

DWC asked JS to send a doodle poll for potential dates prior to May 11 on which we could host a full-day meeting in Harrisburg.

DWC thanked the Board and adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.