

State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB)

Conference Call held in State Museum Solarium

Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2017

9:30 a.m. – 10:43 a.m.

Board Members Present (via telephone): David Carmicheal, Nancy Avolese, Ben Goldman, Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh, Jack McCarthy, Martina Soden, Heidi Abbey Moyer, Heidi Mays, John Paul Deley, Jim Beidler

Staff Attending: Cindy Bendroth, Josh Stahlman, Tyler Stump.

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. David Carmicheal (DWC) welcomed the members of the Board and took roll call.

DWC began the meeting by asking if SHRAB Board members had any additions or amendments to the minutes from the previous SHRAB meeting on March 24, 2017.

Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh (RGR) had one change on page 5: Change from “Online California” to “Online Archive of California.”

DWC then moved to approve the minutes. Jack McCarthy (JM) so moved and John Paul Deley (JPD) seconded. All SHRAB members voted in favor of approving the minutes.

DWC then gave an update on the State Archives.

-PHMC has a new executive director, Andrea Lowery, to replace Jim Vaughn after he retired earlier this year.

-The new State Archives building is currently in the design and development stage, which is expected to last until March of 2018. The capital budget passed last fall gave the State Archives the last of the money to pay for the new building. DWC said he is currently anticipating construction of the new building to end in 2021. JM asked about the sprinkler systems in the new archives building. DWC said that the current plans call for a wet pipe system everywhere except for in the high security vault which will have a FM200 non-water fire suppression system. There might be a dry-pipe system in one other area due to temperature constraints but most of the new building will all use a wet-pipe system.

-Josh Stahlman (JJS) discussed the salvage training that the State Archives held last May. Two sessions were attended by 40 employees from the State Library, State Archives, State Historical Preservation Office, and some state government agency record coordinators. Samantha Forsko from CCHA led the training which included both a classroom portion and a hands-on session where teams removed and triaged wet records. The training was well-received and the trainees can now be called on to provide assistance during disasters throughout Pennsylvania.

-JJS also mentioned the passing of Jerry Ellis, who was an archivist at the State Archives for over a decade. He had worked closely with the SHRAB and its initiatives in the past, particularly the Archives and Records Management Grants; the Itinerant Archivist program; several training workshops--Jerry was instrumental in the development and successful implementation of AWOT; disaster planning and response; and working with local governments, historical records repositories and state agencies. He is remembered for his magnanimous personality.

DWC then discussed the status of NHPRC grants. PHMC has confirmed that our NHPRC grant will not be affected by current budget debates in the Federal Government. So, PHMC is moving forward with the project.

JJS said that the third and final "Aunt Edna" poster was completed and just under 1500 copies were distributed last October. This last poster was about preserving your digital records. The poster, along with the other two in the series, were very popular and the State Archives received multiple requests for additional posters, as well as permission to adapt and reuse by other organizations. Additionally, the material from all three posters has been turned into a booklet that will be distributed at the State Archives booth at the PA Farm Show in January 2018.

JJS reported that the Archives and Records Management Seminar was held last October and had 182 total registrants. Many registrants watched online and reported watching the seminar with co-workers so there were likely over 200 total live viewers of the seminar. JJS also said that video links to the seminar sessions were posted on YouTube this past week and thanked SHRAB members Martina Soden, Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh, and Sally Flaherty for presenting at the seminar.

JJS also reported that the State Archives held its annual Archives Without Tears (AWOT) program last summer in Williamsport and Ambridge. These AWOT meetings had a combined 94 registrants and was better attended than it had been in recent years demonstrating that there is still a strong need for basic archival training in small institutions throughout Pennsylvania. Planning for the 2018 AWOT program will begin in January 2018 and SHRAB member suggestions are welcome regarding potential locations and host sites.

JJS discussed recent work on the Maturity Model, a self-assessment tool that will be promoted and explained via several webinars in the future. Currently, maturity model topics include "records management for local government," "disaster training," and "electronic records best practices." JJS asked for suggestions for archivists or other individuals who would be willing to work on maturity models or present in the webinars. DWC said that the idea behind the models is to build steps for institutions so they can self-assess and determine how to improve their work. This idea came from a Maturity model used in Georgia called the Georgia Healthy Collections Initiative Survey JM suggested looking at the AASLH program to see if they were using a similar model program.

DWC discussed the status of "Historical and Archival Records Care" grants (HARC). The State Archives had hoped to release the call for grant applications in January but will not be able to because of budget and funding issues. It is unlikely that the state government may take money away from this program, but it is a possibility so the State Archives is waiting to make sure that the HARC funds remain. In

addition, the HARC grant program is being administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) grant management software and the process is more involved than anticipated. DWC said that he expects the call for applications/proposals to go out in March of 2018 and asked for feedback on guidelines on digitization and scanning for potential grant-receiving repositories to follow.

-JPD asked for a HARC grant timeline. When will the grant deadlines close? If SHRAB wants the HARC grants to become an annual thing, we will need this information so that SHRAB can operate on the same timeline next year. DWC said a timeline would be sent out to SHRAB members. (Action Item?)

-JM asked about the grant categories, who are we expecting to apply for grants?

-JJS said that the HARC grants will be awarded to projects related to archival preservation, digitization for historical repositories, and some archival work with local governments.

-DWC said that HARC grant money coming from Keystone funds *must* be spent on "collections care," and money from the Preservation fund can be spend on pretty much anything.

-JPD asked when SHRAB should start looking for more money to keep HARC going in the future? DWC said that we currently have enough to keep the grant project going for two years. After one year SHRAB should note how grant money is spent from between the Keystone and Preservation funds and then reassess. JPD said we should be looking to see how grant money is spent and see where the breakdowns are.

-Jim Beidler (JB) asked about Senate Bill 775 and if it was relevant to the HARC program. DWC said that this was a State Historic Preservation Office issue and is not connected to HARC.

JPD asked about replevin legislation and its status in the State Legislature. DWC said that the bill has passed the House and Senate, but the effective date in the bill text needed to be updated and so the bill had to be introduced. The bill is currently now stuck in committee and there does not seem to be any movement for the time being because of internal political issues in the House. DWC did not say if he expects the bill to pass soon.

JPD asked if there was a model that the State Archives could share concerning its work with collecting materials from state mental institutions. Tyler Stump (TS) reported that the State Archives had recently visited many state hospitals and centers and could share its work with SHRAB and other intellectual disability advocacy organizations. Cindy Bendroth (CB) said that Temple University did make a Basecamp site to share material and ideas amongst institutions with related materials, but that no one has added to that yet. DWC also said that there are issues with state government attorneys holding up the access of records to any organizations that are not the State Archives. This has been a central issue with Temple's attempts to collect Pennhurst Center records.

DWC announced that JM, Ed Galloway, and Stacey Peoples were all reappointed for another term with the Board.

JJS said that the next SHRAB meeting would be in-person and would hopefully be scheduled next spring. JPD requested that the meeting be held in or around the Mid Atlantic Regional Archives Conference that will be held in Hershey, PA April 2018. This way the SHRAB meeting could hopefully be attended by archivists from other Pennsylvania institutions who were in town for the MARAC conference and we could get some useful feedback from them. All agreed that this was a good idea and CB said that she would try to find a suitable time and location.

DWC then asked each SHRAB member for an update or news.

Nancy Avolese reported that Lower Swatara Township has started an historic preservation society and is hoping to create a digital library of historical resources for residents.

Ben Goldman reported four current projects at Penn State:

- They're working on their control file and establishing physical and intellectual control over all their collections.
- Penn State is in the middle of a large reappraisal project and is consolidating their off-site storage locations.
- CLIR grant to work on mining records is continuing and making progress.
- Penn State is looking to hire a new project manager and processing archivist.

RGR reported that Elizabethtown is opening two new exhibits soon that are connected to the 100th anniversary of World War I. One is a traveling exhibit on WWI in America, and the other is called "Voices of Conscience" and is about peace activists and contentious objectors who were active during WWI. It will open April 19, 2018.

JM reported that he had finished working on the Historical Society of Pennsylvania small repositories project and is now back to being an independent archival consultant. He is not working with the Mann Center for Performing Arts in Philadelphia and helping them start an archival program.

Martina Soden reported that the Scranton Public Library had acquired the records of the Genealogical Research Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania after it closed last month. All the records are in the process to being transferred and processed and will double the library's local history holdings. Scranton's main library is also currently closed for renovations. She also reported that the library received a grant to digitize a large collection of Women's' Club records.

Heidi Abbey Moyer reported that she is working closely with the Middletown and Highspire historical societies to create mission statements and many other important archival works. She also noted that the former Center for Pennsylvania Culture Studies, which was previously run by Dr. Bronner, is now the Pennsylvania Center for Folklore. There is also a new website for the Center at <https://sites.psu.edu/pafolklore/>. Additionally, Dr. Anthony Buccitelli, Assistant Professor of American Studies and Communications in Penn State Harrisburg's School of Humanities, is the new Director of the

Pennsylvania Center for Folklore. The Pennsylvania Center for Folklore will be hosting the "Pennsylvania Folklore Symposium," (<http://sites.psu.edu/pafolklore/symposium/>), May 17-19, 2018, at Penn State Harrisburg.

HAM also reported that she is actively working with MARAC to revamp their technical leaflet series and is hoping to turn it into a larger, peer-reviewed, publication. She also said that she had been approached with a donor with a collection of Harrisburg area desegregation oral histories and was looking for a home for them. DWC and JJS noted that the State Archives is currently not accepting any new manuscript materials because of the impending move to a new building but promised to help find a suitable repository in the area. She also mentioned that Dr. Simon Bronner retired from Penn State Harrisburg last summer. He is now the Distinguished Professor Emeritus of American Studies.

Heidi Mays reported that State Archives staff DWC and JJS recently displayed the "Great Law" in the State Legislature and it was very popular. DWC said that the State Archives is looking for ways to promote archival collections with legislators like this again in the future. HM also reported that the House of Representatives Archives is moving its collections out of the Forum Building as they will no longer have access to that space in one year.

JPD reported that the Heinz Center has several new exhibits: one on Prohibition and another on the U.S. space program called "Destination Moon." The Heinz Center has also hired a new director of its Jewish Archives and received a \$60,000 grant to digitize many of their collections in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh. They are hoping to have 3,400 images digitized from over 30 collections. JDP also reported that Heinz Center is currently processing materials from the Meadowcroft Village and will soon host three major genealogical conferences.

JB reported that his book: *The Family Tree Historical Newspapers Guide* will be published in 2018. He also announced that Raymond Schott retired last week from the PA State Library after volunteering in the genealogical section for many decades. He is 93 years old.

DWC then asked if anyone had any other news or other things to discuss. JPD asked if there was any news on the State Archives and State Library hosting a conference focused on pan-institutional efforts in Pennsylvania to standardize digital records. DWC said that he is waiting on the State Library as they are currently updating their Power Library and are not able to discuss using any particular digital systems at the moment. DWC also reported that the State Archives has currently digitized about one third of their microfilm.

DWC adjourned the meeting at 10:43.