

**Agenda**  
**State Historic Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) Meeting**  
**May 6, 2019**  
**2:30 – 3:30**  
**Teleconference-Skype**  
**MINUTES**

Participants: Ed Galloway; Heidi Abbey Moyer; Marilyn Parish; Jack McCarthy; Ben Goldman; Jim Beidler; John Paul Deley; Martina Soden;

Not participating: Heidi Mays; Sally Flaherty; Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh; Nancy Avolese

David Carmicheal (DWC) began the meeting at 2:34 with old business. First an update on the new State Archives building: We just received the nearly completed set of construction documents from our architects. There were only a few very minor changes needed, and we expect we will have the final set May 9th. Likely 2 weeks later, we should have an approved set of construction documents. We are hoping for ground breaking in September, with completion in early 2022.

Ed Galloway (EG) asked what the location of the building is DWC said downtown Harrisburg between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, and Harris and Hamilton Streets. A block north of the new federal courthouse. Its not entirely bordering streets on all sides—it's an "L" shaped property. The address will be 1681 North 6<sup>th</sup> St.

DWC then gave a recap on the State Archives booth at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Our booth had 8 computers where visitors could conduct free genealogy searches on Ancestry.com, We estimate there were at least as many visitors as last year, approximately 10,000 people. We made a lot of contact with people who unfamiliar with archives and think it was a big success.

DWC also talked about the State Archives' Charter Day celebration last March. About 1,000 people came to the State Museum to see the 1681 Penn Charter, there was a steady flow all day. We also had the charter on display the next two days and had many state legislators over for personal viewings and photo-ops. We also had several documents related to Pennsylvania's ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment on display. We received positive feedback from the public and legislators.

DWC gave a quick update on upcoming speaking engagements the State Archives has scheduled: May 21<sup>st</sup>, we'll be speaking in Pittsburgh about Records Management to the State Association of Boroughs. We will be giving a similar talk in Glen Mills on May 30. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, we will be in Erie speaking to the State Association of Prothonotaries and are planning an additional webinar for the State Association of Township Supervisors about the new municipal PDF/A policy (which has not been scheduled yet).

DWC also discussed the State Archives “Scholar in Residence” program, which will be starting this summer. This the second year that we’re having two scholars working at the State Archives for several weeks. Both scholars selected this year are working on projects related to public policy in Pennsylvania. [Note added subsequent to meeting: Scholar 1 is studying the Pennhurst State Hospital Accounts to shed light on the lives of patients who were largely forgotten by society; Scholar 2 is studying the history of gas drilling in the Allegheny National Forest.]

After DWC finished with old business from the State Archives, he took official roll call and determined that there was a quorum of members present. DWC asked if there were any issues with the minutes from the previous SHRAB meeting last December?

Jack McCarthy (JM) had one correction: at the top of page 6, PACSCL (Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries) is spelled wrong. DWC noted it and it will be fixed. Then he asked if there were any other comments. With none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Martina Soden (MS) made the motion and JM seconded. All voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

Josh Stahlman (JS) spoke about updates with the State Board Programming Grant. We have received funding for 2019 – 2021 (\$19,567 NHPRC, total \$47,214) for the AWOT workshops, ARM Conference, and bookmarks and CMS videos. He said that the 2017-2019 grant cycle is nearly finished.

JS continued to talk about the upcoming AWOT workshops and seminars. AWOT workshops will be held in Towanda (Bradford County) on June 12-13, and Hershey (Dauphin County) on June 26-27.

The ARM Seminar will be in Harrisburg (and also webcast live) on Wednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Topics will include PDF/A implementation (we already have speakers lined up from Adams, Franklin, and Berks Counties), planning for an archives/office move (we have one speaker from the Philadelphia City Archives lined up), and outreach/collaboration. SHRAB members are encouraged to share any potential speakers or other ideas about the ARM seminar.

John Paul Deley (JPD) said he would share information about a speaker who is knowledgeable about moving an archives.

Cindy Bendroth (CB) then spoke about the Historic Archives and Records Care (HARC) grants: On May 1<sup>st</sup> the second round opened. New guidelines and a “best examples from last year” are posted online. The best practices samples of well-written applications are anonymized portions of good applications from last year. Application deadline is 11:59 pm Aug 1. The State Archives will be doing live webinars on May 10 and June 4 for application guidance.

CB mentioned that funding from HARC grants approved last year are making their way to recipients. Progress is slow because the program is new and should be faster next year. DWC said that the archives staff have done everything they needed to do and the current hold up is with attorneys reviewing the contracts.

CB moved to talk about grant review panels. Last year there were 60 applications that were split into two grant review panels. This year, we would like to have a single panel. We’re

thinking we could have Archives staff do a first-sort and then 4 SHRAB members make the final decisions from a smaller pool of the best applications.

DWC clarified why we are considering just one panel this time. Last year, panels scoring was noticeably different in each review panel; one panel judged more strictly than the other and that caused disparity between the two. The more lenient panel resulted in artificially higher scores. With single panel, we make sure all applications will receive same weight. The problem is this results in one panel having a burdensome number to review.

EG asked what if our own institutions submit applications? Will we have to recuse ourselves from reviewing? DWC said if a SHRAB board member submits an application they should not serve on any review panels. JPD said he recused himself last year because he helped with several applications. DWC said if we only have one panel this year and a board member's institution submits an application, that Board member could not serve on the panel.

JM reminded everyone how grant applications were reviewed in the past: applications divided in to local government and private repositories groups. This could be a way of lessening the burden since there are two separate panels. This makes for a natural division. CB said we did that to some extent this year, but the number of applications in each category were not even so the local government panel had to review some private organization applications.

DWC said keep in mind that we do not have two pots of money. At some point the panels have to match their rankings to make a final overall list. Last year it did not seem fair to match lenient panel to stricter panel.

CB said the State Archives would like to have its staff review all applications first to "separate wheat from chaff." Then after the staff have found the best 20 or 30 applications, they send them to the SHRAB reviewers to make the final decisions. If the panel wants to look at any of the applications that the staff did not pass along, they could do that as well. At this point we don't know how many applications we will receive. We do have \$250 for 4 panelists to come to Harrisburg for a day to review applications.

JPD said this money could cover cost of travel to meet face to face.

Jim Beidler (JM) asked if last year we took the top choices from panel A and top choices from panel B? He said he thinks one panel will be too overwhelming and that we're trying to fix something that isn't broken.

DWC said what concerned him last time was the applications in one panel never scored over a 90 and the other had many that scored 95 and above. It would be wrong to say that the 5<sup>th</sup> choice in the one panel was the same grade as the 5<sup>th</sup> choice in the other. He repeated we first need to find out how many applications we get. If we get 200 applications that is still too many for two panels. He asked everyone if they would trust the State Archives staff to narrow down the applications to a manageable number? The reviewers could still see any other applications they want to, but we want to focus our time on the applications that are most likely to be approved. JM, Marilyn Parrish, and MS both said they thought this would be a good solution.

Does the Board trust staff to narrow down the applications? Board could see any/all apps they want to. We just don't want to put the full burden on the Board. JM asked if the staff could pick the 20 or 30 best.

CB said the staff can consider criteria such as geographical distribution of applications too.

Heidi Abbey Moyer (HAM) said she liked this method but wanted to know what the grading criteria will be? Along with geography, what about amount requested? Things that might disqualify an application? DWC said this was an important point and the State Archives will write up a list of criteria and send it out to all members for review. As the staff are reviewing, they can keep a list of why each was kept or rejected so SHRAB reviewers can see this. HAM said this was a good idea and she does something similar with job applications. Everyone agreed this was a good idea.

CB said applications are due August 1. State Archives staff will spend that month reviewing. After that we'll need a panel of four SHRAB members to review. Please email her if interested in assisting. She thought the panel would have about a month to review and make final decisions.

HAM volunteered to review. Her time on SHRAB is coming to an end and she would like to be more involved. Since she lives in Harrisburg, she does not need travel money and asked that it be used to help other members who are farther away.

DWC asked CB if we we could pay travel from the State Archives conference account and pay the \$250 as a stipend. [Subsequent to the meeting it was determined that the Conference account could be used to pay for travel expenses.]

DWC asked everyone if there were any more issues or thoughts?

JPD asked if DWC could talk about when SHRAB will approach the PHMC for funding the grant program an additional two years. At what point do we need to go back to Commission with evidence that this program is successful? DWC is confident we will not miss a year. The Commission offered additional money this year. Barring unforeseen circumstances, we have money to use. JPS raised the concern that it will be some time until the first-year recipients have demonstrable results. DWC said he and Andrea Lowery will be going to visit recipients once they've started using their grant money. Unless there is an issue with our Keystone funding in the future, we should be funded for several years to come.

JB asked if there were still conference grants available for use in Pennsylvania? He used this in 2008 but didn't know if it had survived the recession. CB and DWC were unsure but didn't think so. They will check and get back to JB.

DWC asked if there was any new business? There was none. He asked for a motion to adjourn.

EG made a motion to adjourn.

JM seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 3:07.

