

**National Historical Publications and Records Commission**  
**Executive Summary Minutes**  
**of May 18, 2012**

The meeting was called to order by David S. Ferriero, chairman, at 9:05 am in the Archivist's Board Room of the National Archives in Washington, DC.

*Commission Members present:*

David S. Ferriero, Chairperson  
Timothy Ericson  
F. Gerald Handfield  
Karen L. Jefferson  
Stanley N. Katz  
Erin Mahan  
Stephen P. Randolph  
Julie Saville  
Raymond Smock  
Rodger Stroup  
Diane Vogt-O'Connor

*NHPRC staff present:*

Kathleen Williams, Executive Director  
Lucy Barber  
Jeff de la Concepcion  
Timothy D.W. Connelly  
Keith Donohue  
Christine Dunham  
Alexander Lorch  
Nancy Melley  
Annette Paul  
Daniel A. Stokes

*National Archives Staff*

David McMillen

*Guests and Attendees*

Bruce Ragsdale, Federal Judicial Center  
Charlene Bickford, First Federal Congress Project and Association for Documentary Editing  
Lee White, National Coalition for History  
David Coleman, Presidential Recordings Project

**I: Welcome, Announcements, Agenda**

Mr. Ferriero opened the meeting and greeted the Members, staff, and guests. He welcomed Diane Vogt-O'Connor, representing the Library of Congress; Stephen Randolph, representing the State Department; and Karen Jefferson, Presidential appointee, to the Commission, who then took the oath of office.

**II: Minutes of the Last Meeting**

*Mr. Ferriero called for adoption of the agenda and approval of the minutes of the November 2011 meeting, and both motions were passed by unanimous consent.*

### **III. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Williams referred the Commissioners to her written report, emphasizing that part of her most recent efforts has been to strengthen connections with the National Archives. Mr. Ferriero said that he admired the richness of the grants program but acknowledged that to this point, the National Archives has not made very good use of the program. He feels that the NHPRC plays an important “research and development” role with the agency as a whole, citing the example of MPLP (More Product, Less Process) initiative in dealing with backlogs and remarking that the initial research was funded through the NHPRC. Citing initiatives in digitization, encoded archival description, and other efforts supported by the NHPRC, Ms. Williams affirmed the need to continue to demonstrate how the NHPRC can not only assist the work of the National Archives but help position it as a leader for the archives field as a whole.

### **IV. Executive Committee Report**

Chair Tim Ericson reported on the Executive Committee meeting which took place the previous day. Over the past few months, the beta website for Founders Online has been widely tested and the team at the University of Virginia is working on incorporating feedback into the design and functionality of the site. He announced that the Founders Online project will hold an event to announce the public release of the site on June 26 or 27 in Washington DC, depending on the Senate's schedule. He reported that negotiations with the Benjamin Franklin Papers are proceeding and this edition is expected to be included in the final version.

The Report to the President was then discussed at length. Mr. Ericson applauded the strategy to focus on users of historical records and said that it behooves us to identify multiple audiences for the report. Mr. Ferriero agreed that it was an opportune moment to update Roy Rosenzweig's study on users, and that the Center for History and New Media at George Mason or the Pew Foundation might be logical candidates. After it is finished, the report could trigger a national conference to discuss the issue and create energy around the solutions.

Diane Vogt-O'Connor suggested that we might look at less obvious foundations to support some of what we do. For example the Ford Foundation is focused on two key issues relating to archives democracy and educational opportunity and scholarship (<http://www.fordfoundation.org/#>), while the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation scholarly communications and information technology programs ([http://www.mellon.org/grant\\_programs/programs/scit](http://www.mellon.org/grant_programs/programs/scit)) are perfect for archives. Additionally Mellon is the biggest funder of archival preservation, particularly fellowships with deep pockets. The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation has two major programs focused on Digital Information Technology we might be able to plug into one on Scholarly Communications and another on Universal Access to Knowledge (<http://www.sloan.org/major-program-areas/>).

Dr. Katz had suggested that we make a new attempt to demonstrate what user are looking for and how they use documents and scholarship with particular attention paid to the use of historical documents in teaching. He felt, however, that the fourth section of the report—the recommendations—needs to be further developed.

Mr. Stroup discussed the need to focus on “trustworthiness” of historical documents in the digital age and pointed to *Presence of the Past* by Rosenzweig and Thelen as a useful background document. He also suggested

that we find ways to encourage smaller repositories and organizations to be more user-friendly in making their facilities and collections available to the public.

While Mr. Handfield agreed with the need for assessing users, he felt that formal assessment would take years. He argued for developing a survey that would demonstrate the value of historical documents to different audiences (such as law firms and businesses). Diane Vogt-O'Connor said that we should conduct an environmental scan of key audiences that use or care about historical records from teachers and lawyers to genealogists, local historians, re-enactors, interpreters, and collectors of various types of documents (e.g., photographs, autographs, etc) to identify potential supporters and sponsors of what we do. Archivists need to better connect with these groups both locally and nationally so we can sway legislatures, journalists, and funders of all stripes.

Dr. Randolph said that we all understand the general change in the nature of users and collections, but that we should also focus on the need for declassification and processing backlogs. He later added that one staff member at the State Department's Office of the Historian is dedicated to working with teachers and school administrators in getting historical documents into the curriculum.

Dr. Smock found that while scholarship was implied in the outline, it was not emphasized enough, and the outline does not deal as much as it should with the massive amounts of paper records that will never be digitized. He pointed out that scholars add value and provide context to historical records, and that we should be "smart" about what we put online.

When asked about the timeline for the report, Ms. Williams replied that the goal for publication is December 2012, after the Presidential election. She also reported that she would have the chance to talk with several major archives and historical editing groups at their annual meetings over the summer. Dr. Saville advised that we include a comparison with other countries, and Dr. Katz and others supported the idea, perhaps through a focused international conference.

Dr. Mahan asked that the Commission be included in the Report to the President wiki, and the staff has agreed to do so and to keep the Commissioners informed as the report progresses. As the discussion was winding up, Mr. Handfield asked whether we are concerned about the decrease in allocations of federal funding to these efforts. Dr. Smock agreed that we should state as explicitly as we can that there is cost involved in all forms of preservation and digitization, and the federal government should play a role in this national goal. His comments were endorsed by several others, and several members advised that the staff keep the report process open and transparent.

After that discussion, Mr. Ericson returned to the Executive Committee report, informing the other members that the Founding Fathers Advisory Committee had met in February and that minutes of that meeting were included in the Commissioners notebooks, along with the Executive Committee's discussion of the Audit Access Plan.

There was a motion to change the application review process which had previously not required peer reviews of "Access to Historical Documents" applications requesting less than \$75,000. A motion to require all applications in this grants program to receive peer review was passed unanimously.

*[The Commission then considered Grant Opportunity Announcements: Documenting Democracy grants, State and National Archival Projects, and Innovation in Archives and Documentary Editing. After a brief discussion of the last of these, all three announcements were approved.]*

A brief discussion on the budget allocation followed, and Mr. Ferriero stated that he did not believe Congress would pass a budget for the National Archives before January, 2013. He also explained that at that time, a sequestration is likely, reducing all National Archives accounts by nine percent. The Commission later agreed

by unanimous vote to have a “hybrid” meeting in November, deferring consideration of FY 2013 applications until such time as a budget was passed. The November meeting would be to discuss budget scenarios and strategies, and those members in the area would be welcome to attend in person while those out-of-town would join via web or teleconference.

*The Commission then approved by unanimous consent the following resolutions:*

**EDWARD BRYNN** joined the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in May 2011 and has served with distinction for the past year as the representative of the Department of State. Ambassador Brynn entered the Foreign Service in 1972, serving in Sri Lanka and six African nations, ultimately serving as Ambassador to Burkina Faso (1990-93) and Ghana (1995-1998). From 1999 to 2005, he was Associate Provost for International Programs at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and remained as a member of the History Department until 2009. In April 2009, Ambassador Brynn was appointed The Historian of the Department of State and served until March 2012.

Although his tenure with the Commission was brief, he was well respected for his broad knowledge of history and his curiosity about the archival field. Ambassador Brynn will be very much missed, and the Commission thanks Edward for his dedicated service and contributions to its programs with our sincere respect and affection.

*The Chairman suspended the meeting at 10:55am, and the Commission reconvened at 11:10 for Proposal Review.*

## **V: Proposal Review**

During consideration of proposals, the following individual recused herself from voting on the noted application:

### ***Publishing Historical Records***

*PM50079 University of Virginia -- Erin Mahan*

**The following projects were recommended for funding.**

### **ARCHIVES LEADERSHIP**

Luther College

Decorah, IA

\$234,823

To fund a three year project to design and hold an Archives Leadership Institute, to bring 25 archivists for a week-long intensive training on campus that will include presentations by experts in advocacy, project management, digital challenges, and human resources.

### **PUBLISHING HISTORICAL RECORDS –New Republic through the Modern Era**

University of Tennessee

Knoxville, TN

\$52,710

To support a project to edit the *Correspondence of James K. Polk*.

William Marshall Rice University  
Houston, TX \$56,452  
To support a project to edit a selective book edition of the *Papers of Jefferson Davis*.

George C. Marshall Foundation  
Lexington, VA \$33,000  
To support a project to edit volumes 6 and 7 of the *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*.

SUNY College at Old Westbury  
Old Westbury, NY \$57,806  
To support a project to edit the *Clarence Mitchell, Jr., Papers*.

Regents of the University of California  
Los Angeles, CA \$59,670  
To support a project to prepare a selective book edition of *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*.

Indiana University-Purdue University  
Indianapolis, IN \$57,844  
To support a project to edit the *Frederick Douglass Papers*.

New York University  
New York, NY \$84,585  
To support a project to edit the *Selected Papers of Margaret Sanger*.

University of Nebraska  
Lincoln, NE \$64,607  
To support a project to prepare “Walt Whitman and Post-Reconstruction America” as part of the online *Walt Whitman Archive*.

University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, VA \$97,500  
To support preparation of a digital edition of the Presidential Recordings of John Kennedy and Richard Nixon.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation  
Springfield, IL \$107,585  
To support a project to edit and publish an electronic edition of the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*.

Ulysses S. Grant Association  
Starkville, MS \$48,320  
To support a project to prepare a comprehensive book edition of the *Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*.

Stanford University  
Stanford, CA \$89,807  
To support a project to edit the *Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers*.

George Washington University  
Washington, DC \$187,500  
To support a project to edit the *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*.

University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, TN \$90,106  
To support a project to edit the *Papers of Andrew Jackson*.

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey  
Brunswick, NJ \$100,356  
To support a project to edit the *Papers of Thomas A. Edison*.

Duke University  
Durham, NC \$56,483  
To support a project to edit the *Selected Papers of Jane Addams*.

## **DOCUMENTING DEMOCRACY: ACCESS TO HISTORICAL RECORDS**

Appalachian State University  
Boone, NC \$112,693  
To support a two-year project to process and provide online access to primary research materials within the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection.

University of Southern California  
Los Angeles, CA \$133,577  
To support a two-year project to process 216 collections that concern the LGBT civil rights and social equity movement documenting the experiences of artists, activists, and organizations between the 1940s and 1990s.

Pennsylvania Heritage Society  
Harrisburg, PA \$59,843  
To support, on behalf of the Pennsylvania State Archives, an 18-month project to provide detailed processing for five groups of large-format documents and special media that make up a portion of the records of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, 1937-1990.

University of Wisconsin  
Madison, WI \$68,553  
To support, on behalf of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, a 15-month project to process the manuscripts and audio and video recordings of documentary filmmaker Emile de Antonio.

Virginia Historical Society  
Richmond, VA \$96,602  
To support a two-year project to process 14 Virginia-based businesses that have operated during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in coal mining, law, pharmaceuticals, hosiery and shoe sales, real estate, metals production, energy and natural gas production, paper, and the lumber trade.

South Dakota Department of Tourism  
Pierre, SD \$57,120  
To support, on behalf of the South Dakota State Historical Society, a two-year project to process half of the backlog of unprocessed records held by the State Archives.

Georgia Historical Society  
Savannah, GA \$68,488  
To support a two-year project to create 1,594 Encoded Archival Description finding aids for an online database available through the Digital Library of Georgia.

Mint Museum of Art, Inc.  
Charlotte, NC \$45,369  
To support a project to establish an archives for the museum.

Berklee College of Music  
Boston, MA \$125,182  
To support a project to establish an archives for the college.

Fund for Innovative TV  
Chicago, IL \$87,270  
To support, on behalf of the Media Burn Independent Video Archive, an 18-month project to digitize 450 videotapes and upload them to mediaburn.org.

Regents of the University of California  
Berkeley, CA \$164,281  
To support a two-year project to process the Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown papers, documenting his tenure as the state's governor from 1959 to 1967.

Regents of the University of California  
Berkeley, CA \$100,630  
To support, on behalf of the Environmental Design Archives, a project to process and make available the records of Ernest Kump and Warren Callister.

University of Miami  
Coral Gables, FL \$153,809  
To support a two-year project to process the records of the Pan American World Airways collection, 1927-1991.

Center for the Study of Political Graphics  
Los Angeles, CA \$132,918  
To support a two-year project to process its entire holdings of social movement posters and provide online access to approximately 5,500 detailed catalog records with images.

*[The Commission went into Executive Session at 12:15 PM and adjourned at 12:30 PM]*