

National Historical Publications and Records Commission
Executive Summary Minutes
of May 30, 2013

The meeting was called to order by David S. Ferriero, chairman, at 11:00 am in the Archivist's Board Room of the National Archives in Washington, DC.

Commission Members present:

David S. Ferriero, Chairperson
Erin Mahan
George Miles
Stephen P. Randolph
Nicole Sayer
Raymond Smock
Rodger Stroup

Via Teleconference

James Ceaser
Peter Gottlieb
F. Gerald Handfield
Karen L. Jefferson
Will Thomas

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
Daniel A. Stokes
Pam Smith (intern)

National Archives Staff

Jessie Kratz, National Archives Historian

Guests and Attendees

Charlene Bickford, First Federal Congress Project
David Haury, Council of State Archivists
Bruce Ragsdale, Federal Judicial Center
Lee White, National Coalition for History

I: Welcome, Announcements, Agenda

Mr. Ferriero opened the meeting and greeted the Members, staff, and guests. He welcomed new Commissioners Peter Gottlieb, George Miles, Nicole Sayer, and Will Thomas.

II: Minutes of the Last Meeting

Mr. Ferriero called for adoption of the agenda and approval of the minutes of the November 2012 meeting, and both motions were passed by unanimous consent.

III. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Williams briefed the Commission on the new paperless meeting process and welcomed those Members who were joining the meeting via teleconference due to travel budgetary restrictions. She referred the Commissioners to her written report, emphasizing that part of her most recent efforts has been to strengthen connections with the National Archives. She announced that the launch of Founders Online is scheduled for June 13, and went on to update the Commission on the introductory materials on the Strategic Plan and the Report to the President. In both documents, the NHPRC will be tying in its goals to those in the National Archives Strategic Plan and in the White House initiatives on open data policies and managing information in the government. Mr. Ferriero agreed that this is the most effective way of educating OMB and Congress as to the value of the NHPRC's work.

IV. Executive Committee Report

Chair Ray Smock reported on the Executive Committee meeting which took place the previous day. He began by commenting on the staff's special report on the Marcus Garvey papers and that project's ongoing administrative and managerial problems and their lack of productivity and in meeting goals. A long discussion followed on the nature of these problems, and during the course of the conversation, Mr. Handfield wondered whether the Commission needed to vote on a policy on the amount of time allowable for such projects and the desire to require electronic publishing. Others argued that the real issue was not the longevity of documentary editing efforts but project management and oversight. Dr. Thomas suggested that the Commission take up the resolution of the issue during the grant review and recommendation portion of the meeting, which was agreed to.

[During the grant review period, the Commission voted to reject the staff recommendation and to provide no funds for the project. The members encouraged the staff to send a letter to the project communicating the problems we see with the project's management, publishing schedule and electronic rights, advisory board composition, and succession planning, including partnerships with the host institution or other organizations.]

Dr. Smock then moved on to discuss the Grant Opportunity Announcements, calling attention to the proposed changes highlighted in each one.

[The Commission then considered Grant Opportunity Announcements: Documenting Democracy grants, Innovation in Archives and Documentary Editing and Publishing Historical Records. All three announcements were approved by unanimous consent.]

Following those resolutions, Dr. Smock introduced the topic of Strategic Planning, noting that his only concern was to make sure that preservation and publication are included in the plan's language and to ensure that providing scholarship and 'value-added' context are included.

Attention then turned to a letter written by the Society of American Archivists, the Council of State Archivists, and the National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators expressing their concerns over the \$3 million funding level in the Administration's FY 2014 budget proposal. In the letter, the organizations called on NHPRC to sharpen the grants program to have a more results-oriented

focus on ensuring the highest impact for Federal dollars, underscore the importance of NHPRC to historical records in states, regions, and communities, and demonstrate the National Archives leadership role. Grants should be able to demonstrate tangible results with significant and broad impacts.

Mr. Handfield explained that this statement grew out of a working group on advocacy and was intended to convey the need for priorities when funding levels dip to the appropriations of the 1970s. They were encouraging the agency to support projects that would benefit larger audiences, rather than limited ones, and that this is a *national* issue. Mr. Ferriero expressed no objections to the general tone of the letter but shared the fact that OMB has asked agencies to prepare budgets for FY 2015 with no new initiatives and to provide details of line item cuts of both 5 percent and 10 percent.

Ms. Williams said that this reality shows the challenges ahead and the need to align NHPRC more closely with the National Archives. Mr. Randolph pointed out that at such levels, grants need to be highly leveraged and he argued for a focus on education and innovation projects.

A general discussion followed on the possible intents of the joint statement. Dr. Smock suggested that there is no specific reference in the statement about the split between records and publishing projects and argued that is a topic for another discussion. Dr. Miles agreed that one of the benefits of the NHPRC is that it promotes understanding and added value, both key parts to the notion of what constitutes broad impact.

The Commission then discussed what metrics are available on the outcomes of funded projects, with Ms. Williams summarizing the current processes in place that ensure each grant funded project has specific metrics and outcomes in place. She further explained that each project, without exception, is evaluated at closing on the completion of these agreed-upon targets. Mr. Handfield said we need to report such data to broader audiences.

At the conclusion of the session, the Commission voted unanimously to accept this resolution:

[DIANE VOGT-O'CONNOR joined the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in January 2012 and has served with distinction as the representative of the Librarian of Congress. Prior to joining the Library of Congress in 2006, Ms. Vogt-O'Connor served as a senior manager for conservation activities at the National Archives and Records Administration, and at the National Park Service and the Smithsonian Institution. She has been widely published, and her works on digital preservation, particularly of photographic collections, have set standards for the field. Her service on the Commission was marked by her conscientious attention to detail on grants and public policy, reflecting a lifetime commitment to preservation and access. The Commission thanks Diane for her dedicated service and contributions to its programs with our sincere respect and affection.]

The Chairman suspended the meeting at 12:35pm, and the Commission reconvened at 1:15pm for Proposal Review.

V: Proposal Review

During consideration of proposals, the following individuals recused themselves from voting on the noted applications:

Innovation

DI500070 University of Virginia – Erin Mahan, Will Thomas, James Ceaser

Publishing Historical Records

PM50104 Yale University – George Miles

PM50105 University of Nebraska, Lincoln – Will Thomas
PM 50116 University of Virginia -- Erin Mahan, Will Thomas, James Ceaser

The following projects were recommended for funding.

INSTITUTE FOR DOCUMENTARY EDITING

Association for Documentary Editing
Lansing, MI \$234,823*

To support a three-year project to continue the Institute for Editing Historical Documents and the development of new advanced seminars for documentary editors and those in related fields.

**During deliberations, the Commission advised that the project should look to providing online training and develop a plan for long-term sustainability.*

INNOVATION

Simmons College
Boston, MA \$102,602

To support a three-year project to develop training for municipal and county clerks in preserving the archival records under their care. This project will develop both in-person and on-line training for clerks and test it in Massachusetts with the cooperation of the Massachusetts State Archives and Board of Library Commissioners, and the Massachusetts Town and City Clerks Associations.

Stanford University
Stanford, CA \$136,410

To support a two-year project to develop automated tools to help archivists process and appraise emails donated to special collections. Stanford also will develop related tools to enable researchers to discover information in email collections and for repositories to deliver that information.

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA \$144,000

To support a digital-only documentary edition of the George Washington Financial Papers, focusing on his voluminous financial records, applying the tools and methods as well to the financial ledgers of Gouverneur Morris.

Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA \$128,956

To support a two-year project to create new tools for annotating digital images so that users can discover and research them more effectively.

PUBLISHING HISTORICAL RECORDS –New Republic through the Modern Era

George C. Marshall Foundation
Lexington, VA \$33,000

To support a project to edit the final volume of the *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*.

Ulysses S. Grant Association
Starkville, MS \$48,320

To support a project to prepare a book edition of the *Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*.

University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN \$52,710

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

University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN \$90,106

To support a project to edit the *Papers of Andrew Jackson*.

William Marshall Rice University
Houston, TX \$56,452

To support a project to edit a selective book edition of the *Papers of Jefferson Davis*.

Stanford University
Stanford, CA \$89,807

To support a project to edit the *Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers*.

SUNY College at Old Westbury
Old Westbury, NY \$57,806

To support a project to edit the *Clarence Mitchell, Jr., Papers*.

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*.

University of Maryland
College Park, MD \$131,884*

To support a project to edit the *Freedman and Southern Society* papers.

**During deliberations, the Commission advised staff to provide a letter expressing concerns about the project's staffing issues and editorial policies.*

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*.

George Washington University
Washington, DC \$187,500

To support a project to edit the *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*.

Indiana University-Purdue University
Indianapolis, IN \$57,844

To support a project to edit the *Frederick Douglass Papers*.

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Brunswick, NJ \$100,356

To support a project to edit the *Papers of Thomas A. Edison*.

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA \$97,500

To support a project the Presidential Recordings project.

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

DOCUMENTING DEMOCRACY: ACCESS TO HISTORICAL RECORDS

Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities
Boston, MA \$50,000
To support a one-year project to convert 16 analog finding aids to make them accessible online and to process ten collections, also making those finding aids available online. All 26 collections are family manuscript collections related to Historic New England sites.

University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC \$98,822
To support a two-year project to process and describe 500 linear feet in three manuscript collections from textile mill owner Elliott White Springs, civil rights activist John Hurst Adams, and civil rights attorney John Roy Harper.

Library of Virginia
Richmond, VA \$81,340
To support a collaborative two-year project with the Montgomery County Circuit Court Clerk's office to arrange and describe the county's chancery records, 1777-1912.

University of Southern California
Los Angeles, CA \$85,896
To support a project to undertake series-level processing of 550 cubic feet of drawings, business records, and photographs documenting the career of the modernist architect Edward H. Fickett (1916-1999).

University of Georgia
Athens, GA \$58,777
To support a project at the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies to process the Democratic Party of Georgia Records and the Georgia Republican Party Records. The collections total 200 cubic feet.

University of Guam
Mangilao, Guam \$142,078
To support a two-year project to process and make accessible the Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center Manuscripts Collection, including basic processing of 60 collections and enhanced description of finding aids for 150 collections. These collections comprise the premier holdings of materials related to the United States territory of Guam, the Marianas Islands, and the Pacific region of Micronesia.

Emory University
Atlanta, GA \$127,400
To support a two-year project to process and describe 276.75 linear feet comprised of nine collections from African American woman artists, composers, writers, and educators, and digitize 24 linear feet of related audiovisual material.

South Carolina Historical Society
Charleston, SC \$77,000*

To support a two-year project to inventory, preserve, and make available its visual materials collection (200 linear feet), an estimated 30,000 items including photographs, postcards, sketches, glass negatives, and other visual materials from the 18th century to 1999.

**This project was recommended at \$39,000 and was later amended to \$77,000.*

College of Charleston
Charleston, SC \$87,600

To support an 18-month project to provide detailed arrangement and online descriptive access for the Burnet R. Maybank Senatorial Papers (330 linear feet) and the L. Mendel Rivers Congressional Papers (70 linear feet). Additionally, staff will digitize and post in the Lowcountry Digital Library a sample of up to 150 documents from these collections.

Pacifica Foundation/Radio Archives
North Hollywood, CA \$128,241

To support a two year project to preserve and make accessible a collection of approximately 1,644 historical radio programs (2,013 reel-to-reel audio recordings) documenting American Women Making History and Culture from 1963-1982.

[The Commission went into Executive Session at 3:00 PM and adjourned at 3:20 PM]