

National Historical Publications and Records Commission
Executive Summary Minutes
May 5, 2020

The meeting was called to order by the chairman, Davis S. Ferriero, at 9:20 am via web conference.

Commission Members Present:

David S. Ferriero, chair

Glen Asner

Robyn Enginbous, representing Senator Dan Sullivan

W. Eric Emerson

Rebecca Hankins

Adam Howard

Christine Lamberson, representing John Cooke

Dennis Meissner

George Miles

Kaye Lanning Minchew

Naomi Nelson

Nicole Saylor

Michael Stevens

Will Thomas

NHPRC staff present:

Christopher Eck, Executive Director

Lucy Barber, Deputy Executive Director

Jeff de la Concepcion

Keith Donohue

Darrell Meadows

Nancy Melley

Daniel Stokes

I. Welcome Announcements

Mr. Ferriero welcomed the Commission to its first ever meeting held by videoconference. He introduced two new Members: Christine Lamberson, Deputy Chief Historian for the Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense., representing the Judiciary branch, and Glen Asner, Deputy Chief Historian for the Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The National Archives is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, working diligently on core functions, such as the daily Federal Register, requests from Congress, and service to Veterans. Staff has been working remotely since March 17. The agency is turning its attention to reopening its various facilities and taking advantage of the best practices for telework and emergency services. Mr. Ferriero reported that it will be some time before the building in downtown Washington, DC will be open to staff and the public. All public programming at the National Archives, Library of Congress, and Smithsonian has been cancelled through the end of June, and the Archives is planning on hosting a “virtual” Fourth of July.

Mr. Ferriero noted that the FY 2020 budget for the Commission was approved in late December, with an increase of \$500,000 to \$6.5 million, and expressed thanks to those organizations who worked with Appropriations on its behalf. Ms. Hankins asked how the federal budget process for FY 2021 is being affected, and Mr. Ferriero reported we are watching closely, but that there is yet no indication of proposed changes at the federal level.

II. Minutes of the November 2019 meeting and Agenda

Mr. Ferriero called for approval of the Minutes and Adoption of the Agenda, which was approved by unanimous consent.

III. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Eck thanked the Commission for its patience as the staff has responded to the challenges of holding a videoconference meeting. He noted that the \$500,000 increase in FY 2020 funds will aid in their deliberations and funding recommendations. Only one organization withdrew its application based on the national health emergency. For the May meeting, NHPRC received 51 requests totaling \$6.3 million and that staff recommended 28 proposals for \$2.975 million.

Using the Strategic Plan as a guideline, Mr. Eck touched upon some highlights to meet its goals. He reported on the successful award, of \$1 million each, by the Mellon Foundation to three digital edition publishing collaboratives. He also noted that the Early Legal Records emphasis in the Access to Historical Records resulted in 7 percent of new applications around that topic.

Mr. Eck reported on staff efforts to inform the public about online resources, and Mr. Donohue outlined our efforts to create a list of statewide online archives and digital editions supported by the NHPRC. Mr. Eck also mentioned communications efforts through social media, Wikipedia entries using NHPRC-supported resources, and media reports on the work of our grantees.

Mr. Stokes provided an update on the two cooperative agreements designed to get a better sense of the needs of archives for small and underserved communities. Shift Design has sent a survey on hidden collections to 70 smaller organizations. Lyrasis, whose goal is to examine ways to help smaller institutions with sustainability, has conducted a broader survey with 180 initial respondents, and additional 50 in a second round. They were planning to have face-to-face meetings, but those were cancelled. Both are planning virtual meetings and hope to finish their work this summer. Finally, Mr. Eck reported that despite low travel funds and because of the COVID-19 crisis, we still have participated in meetings with professional organizations by teleconference.

The Commission then discussed the Financial Summary and the three-year table on funding by category. Mr. Meadows reported on highlights of the Publishing program, and Ms. Melley reported on highlights of completed Records projects.

IV. Executive Committee's Report

Ms. Nelson, chair of the Executive Committee, reported on their meeting of May 4. After discussion of the National Archives and NHPRC response to the COVID crisis, the Committee moved on to the topic of the Strategic Plan, which is now entering its fourth year. The Committee agreed that an assessment of the progress to date is in order. Such analysis would also require reaching out to partner organizations, an environmental scan of the needs of stakeholders, and a compilation of lessons learned. The goal would be to bring to the full Commission recommendations at the May 2021 meeting. Mr. Eck and Ms. Nelson agreed to develop a charter and seek volunteers for a subcommittee to begin the process. Mr. Ferriero averred that the plan has a lot of life in it, and such revisions would not be a heavy lift.

The Committee then discussed the matter of those Members whose terms will be expiring soon, and Mr. Ferriero will be speaking with individual members about their service on the Executive Committee.

Ms. Melley outlined the changes in the two new Grant Announcements, emphasizing the desire to streamline the application process by eliminating the requirement that applicants prepare a Project Summary, as well as changes to the total amount of possible funding requests in both programs.

A motion was raised to approve the guidelines for Access to Historical Records: Archival Projects and Public Engagement, and the Commission adopted it by unanimous consent.

Ms. Nelson next addressed Committee deliberations on a proposal from the Society of American Archivists to enter into a cooperative agreement in support of their to develop the next level of professional development coursework for archives managers. This funding will ensure that the SAA

Management Track now in its earliest, experimental stages continues in a sustainable fashion and can be developed quickly into the robust program that professional archivists need.

The Executive Committee felt the proposal was a modest, one-time request and inquired how the NHPRC would be recognized as a partner. Ms. Nelson observed that it would be an experiment that aligns with the goals of the Strategic Plan and that it related to the Archives Leadership Initiative. Mr. Asner asked how much the SAA is putting into the budget for the cooperative, and Mr. Eck replied that he will find out the budget. Ms. Hankins remarked that other organizations are also working on such efforts and that \$25,000 was a small investment. Mr. Eck said that the NHPRC is limited to such a ceiling on Cooperative Agreements.

Mr. Meissner recused himself from voting on the proposal, but he offered insight on SAA's efforts as a kind of "start-up" project to test the concept of a third track in archival certifications education programming.

A motion was made to approve the Cooperative Agreement and was passed unanimously.

The Executive Committee then briefly discussed the Publishing report by Mr. Meadows, and he explained that it was driven by earlier efforts to look at a new (or revised) NHPRC publishing program to support next-generation historical documentary editions. The report is divided into two major sections: a conceptual framework for a partnership with the Mellon Foundation to fund a regrant program targeting underserved scholarly communities, such as African American, Latinx American, and/or Native American history, and offered several possible scenarios for balancing the funding needs of both new editions while also providing ongoing support to the still-incomplete legacy editions.

Mr. Thomas said that the Executive Committee discussed broadening the scope of those underserved communities to include Asian Americans. He based his decision on work he has done with colleagues at the University of Nebraska on Digital Ethnic Studies. Mr. Meadows agreed and asked for Mr. Thomas's and others' help in identifying key individuals in the respective historical and area studies organizations, perhaps with the idea of forming a small advisory group.

Mr. Stevens thought the report was a thorough look at the NHPRC's Publishing program and wondered what the next steps might be. He would be interested in looking at the funding of legacy projects expressed in constant dollars to get a better sense of costs. He shared the report with others, and they expressed concern about an effective fifty percent cut to legacy projects. He recommended that Mr. Meadows consult with the Association for Documentary Editing to get their take on any recommendations. The issue of topics in the Mellon proposal came up--including women's history and LGBTQ+ history. He asked whether Mellon might consider funding the legacy projects or

whether other foundations might be approached on certain thematic areas where NHPRC can serve as a funnel.

Mr. Meadows advised that the Commission keep in mind that the dollars also include co-funding with the NEH for the co-funded projects, and that we should work with NEH to strike the right balance between the two federal funders. The goal is not to penalize or slow down legacy projects. It was important to share with the Commission to decide how to move forward.

Ms. Hankins agreed that expanding the proposal to Asian Americans is wonderful, but while it is important to include women's history and LGBTQ+ in our regular programming, any special initiative should be narrowly focused on the four groups: African American, Asian American, Latinx Americans, and Native Americans. Women's history and LGBTQ+ should be included as topics in those groups. Ms. Nelson asked for an update and further discussion at the next meeting.

V. Proposal Review

The following individuals recused themselves from voting on the noted applications:

Eric Emerson -- PE103003, University of South Carolina

Michael Stevens -- PE103003, University of South Carolina

During proposal consideration, Mr. Stevens raised a question about the Civil War and Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi project, as to whether such a grant might encourage other projects of the same type from other states. He voted not to recommend funding for PE-103050.

During grant consideration, Ms. Nelson raised a question about the project at Willamette University to process the papers of Senator Mark O. Hatfield. The Commission discussed the proposal and asked to see the project's plan to ensure meaningful discovery and access to the constituents' correspondence records.

The Commission recommended to defer the application, RH-103030, to the November meeting and ask Willamette University to outline their plans for indexing the records and otherwise making them more readily accessible.

The following proposals were recommended for funding:

PUBLISHING HISTORICAL RECORDS

For projects to publish documentary editions of historical records.

Cumberland University
Lebanon, TN

\$145,000 to edit the *Papers of Martin Van Buren*, eighth president of the United States. Project staff will complete initial transcription for an additional 1,000 documents, and perform first-pass transcription and metadata verification on 750 documents for publication on the project website. (PE-103000-20)

University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN

\$160,000 to edit the *Papers of Andrew Jackson*, the seventh president of the United States. Project staff will publish Volume 11 (1833) to its Rotunda edition and to the University of Tennessee's Newfound Press website; complete all editorial work and submit the manuscript for Volume 12 (1834) to UT Press for typesetting; and advance editorial work on Volume 13 (1835). (PE-103001-20)

University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC

\$110,000 to edit and publish the *Pinckney Statesmen of South Carolina* digital edition. The completed four-volume "born-digital" edition will include an estimated 3,000 fully transcribed and annotated documents (selected from a universe of 10,000 documents) related to the brothers Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Thomas Pinckney, and their cousin, Charles Pinckney, for the period 1769-1828. (PE-103003-20)

Indiana University
Indianapolis, IN

\$120,000 to edit the *Frederick Douglass Papers*, a national leader of the abolitionist movement. Project staff will complete the *Journalism and Other Writings* series, Volume 1, and continue annotation work for Volume 2 of that series. In the *Correspondence* series, the project will publish Volume 3, complete the manuscript for Volume 4, and continue editorial work on Volume 5. Working with its partners, the project is also expected to complete Phase Two of its three-phase implementation plan to migrate its digital edition to a new technical platform. (PE-103005-20)

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA

\$160,000 to edit the *Papers of George Washington*, first president of the United States. Project staff will publish Volume 28 of the *Revolutionary War Series*; advance editorial work on an additional six print volumes (29-34) of that series; and add to its University of Virginia Press / Rotunda Imprint digital edition Volume 27 of the *Revolutionary War Series*, Volumes 20 and 21 of the *Presidential Series*, and 40 newly-found documents. (PE-103010-20)

Ramapo College of New Jersey

Mahwah, NJ

\$125,000 to edit and publish the *Jane Addams Papers*, American settlement activist, reformer, social worker, sociologist, public administrator and author. Project staff will advance work on the digital edition, digitizing, transcribing and proofreading documents for the years 1923-1926. Project staff will also complete all remaining annotation work for Volume 4 (1901-1913) of the print edition.

(PE-103015-20)

University of Maryland

College Park, MD

\$160,000 to support the Freedmen and Southern Society Project on the history of emancipation.

Project staff will advance final pre-publication work for Volume 7 (*Law and Justice*), complete editorial work for four additional chapters of Volume 8 (*Family and Kinship*), and add a selection of annotated documents to its website. (PE-103018-20)

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

New Brunswick, NJ

\$160,000 to support the *Thomas A. Edison Papers*, noted American inventor and entrepreneur. Project staff will add 50% of 119,000 document images scanned from Parts 4-5 of the microfilm edition covering the years 1899-1919 to its Image Edition, and advance editorial work on Volume 10 (Jan. 1890 – Jun. 1892) and Volume 11 (Jul. 1892 – Dec. 1898) of the book edition. Project staff will continue to work on the selective online Image Edition. (PE-103019-20)

Princeton University

Princeton, NJ

\$126,545 to support the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, third president of the United States. Project staff will add volume 44 to the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition* and to Founders Online, publish volume 45, complete and submit the manuscript for volume 46, and advance editorial work on three additional volumes (47-49), add additional materials to its freely-accessible online edition of Jefferson's Meteorological Records, and begin drafting guidelines for a federated Early American Weather Records resource. (PE-103021-20)

University of Iowa

Iowa City, IA

\$110,000 to support “Fame and Infamy: Walt Whitman’s Correspondence, 1888-1892,” bringing together for the first time all incoming and outgoing correspondence from the poet’s final years. Editors will revise and maintain the complete catalog of Whitman’s correspondence, and transcribe, annotate, and publish an additional 450 letters from this period to the *Walt Whitman Archive*. (PE-103024-20)

Villanova University

Villanova, PA

\$100,000 to support *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, a collection of “Information Wanted” advertisements taken out by former slaves in African American newspapers from the early years after emancipation in 1865 through the early 20th century to assist with their ongoing search for lost family members. Project staff will identify, image, transcribe, and publish an additional 1,600 advertisements to a freely accessible website. (PE-103032-20)

Stanford University

Stanford, CA

\$160,000 to support the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers*, a national leader in civil rights. Project staff will advance editorial work on Volume 8 (Sept. 1962 – Dec. 1963), bringing all annotation work to near completion, and continue research in the digital collections of the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library for Volume 9 (1964). (PE-103044-20)

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation

Springfield, IL

\$90,625 to support the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*, sixteenth president of the United States. Project staff will continue to image and catalog newly identified documents as they become available; complete editorial work for and publish all remaining documents to the *Congressional Digital Edition/Archive*, and complete all editorial work for and publish 292 documents to the *Campaign Digital Edition*. (PE-103047-20)

University of Southern Mississippi

Hattiesburg, MS

\$100,000 to support the *Civil War & Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi Digital Documentary Edition* project. This new edition project will ultimately contain nearly 20,000 documents sent and received by the Mississippi governors from late 1859 to early 1882. The edition documents the lives of men, women, and children, free and enslaved from the eve of secession, through the years of Civil War and Reconstruction, to the early years of Jim Crow segregation. Project staff will create and verify metadata for 3,280 documents and produce verified transcriptions for 2,460 of these same documents. (PE-103050-20)

ACCESS TO HISTORICAL RECORDS: ARCHIVAL PROJECTS

For projects that ensure online public discovery and use of historical records collections.

Illinois Secretary of State - Illinois State Archives

Springfield, IL

\$60,178 to support a project to preserve, digitize, and provide online access via the Illinois Digital Archives to 21,000 photographs from the Doc Helm Collection. Between 1943 and 1992, Eddie Winfred “Doc” Helm served as the official State of Illinois photographer, and the collection provides a one-of-a-kind visual historical record of politics, government, entertainment and society in a Midwestern state capital during the mid-20th century. (RH-103006-20)

The Graystone Society, Inc.

Coatesville, PA

\$15,514 to support a project to digitize the Lukens Steel Company employee publications, 1934-1995, and make them available through the Society's National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum (NISHM), which focuses on broadening the understanding of the iron and steel history. (RH-103012-20)

GLBT Historical Society

San Francisco, CA

\$75,000 to support Sing Out: Processing and Digitizing LGBTQ+ Music and Theater Collections, a project to process 10 archival collections, totaling 124.25 linear feet, which include correspondence, ephemera, costumes, audiovisual material, and photographs, spanning over 70 years documenting the contributions of LGBTQ+ people to history, art, and culture. (RH-103013-20)

New York City Department of Records and Information Services

New York, NY

\$89,240 to support a project to digitize New York colonial and early statehood administrative and legal records dating from 1645 through the first decades of the 1800s. The records pertain to Dutch and English colonial settlements in New York City, western Long Island, and the lower Hudson Valley. They comprise 189 ledgers and total approximately 72 cubic feet. Approximately 50,000 digital images will be created. (RH-103037-20)

Connecticut State Library

Hartford, CT

\$100,000 to support a project to arrange and describe the early legal records of the New Haven County Court, 1700-1855, and the New Haven County Superior Court, 1711-1855, totaling 222 cubic feet. Project staff will digitize the records of an estimated 500 cases, or about 3,000 images, and ingest them into the Connecticut Digital Archive. A database containing information about lawsuits pertaining to African American and Native American individuals will be created and made available online. (RH-103040-20)

Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY

\$91,363 to digitize half a million pages of radio news show scripts from the Lowell Thomas Papers and make the digital images and associated metadata available online via the collection's finding aid. Thomas (1892-1981) was a pioneering journalist who became one of the foremost radio broadcasters during the golden age of radio. In 1976 Thomas retired from his radio news program, which had been on the air for 46 continuous years. (RH-103041-20)

The American Jewish Historical Society
New York, NY

\$89,295 to process an accretion of 100 linear feet from the American Jewish Congress. In addition, it will digitize 750 photographs and 200 hours of audio-visual materials and revise and improve the existing finding aid. These materials document meetings, conferences and other events such as 1933 mass rallies protesting Nazi persecution of German Jews and the 1963 March on Washington, as well as speeches by Daniel Moynihan and Bella Abzug among others. (RH-103046-20)

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, VA

\$74,538 to process the M. Rupert Cutler Papers at Virginia Tech, a total 172 cubic feet, that document Cutler's environmental, political, and business activities prior to and following his service in the Carter Administration as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Conservation, Research, and Education. The collection also documents Cutler's personal experiences, service on the Roanoke City Council, and contributions to environmental organizations nationally and in Virginia. (RH-103048-20)

University of Massachusetts Lowell
Lowell, MA

\$67,032 to support a project to process and digitize nine archival collections from five Southeast Asian-serving community organizations. The collections total approximately 53 linear feet and 496 audiovisual recordings and will be added to the Southeast Asian Digital Archive. (RH-103055-20)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

For projects that encourage public engagement with historical records.

Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY

\$135,040 to support a collaborative drawing together resources from Columbia's Center on History and Education, the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Brooklyn College, and the New York Municipal Archives to create the New York Civil Rights Curriculum, a digital teaching resource that includes digital surrogates of primary sources, teaching ideas, a chronology of key events, and videos which focuses on the history of racial segregation and desegregation and on the struggle for disability rights in New York City. (DP-103014-20)

Wayne State University
Detroit, MI

\$83,100 to support a collaborative among professors in Wayne State's College of Education, archivists at the Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, and Detroit-area teachers to create a platform for archives-based curriculum units and lesson plans for K-12 classrooms and learning community groups of teachers and teaching students using the platform. (DP-103023-20)

ARCHIVES COLLABORATIVES

For projects to develop a working collaborative designed to enhance the capacity of small and diverse organizations with historical records collections.

Wisconsin Library Services
Madison, WI

\$80,300 to support a partnership among the Wisconsin Library Services, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and Recollection Wisconsin to support digital readiness in small and under-resourced local historical societies and historic preservation organizations across the state of Wisconsin. Through workshops, demonstrations at the statewide Digital History Fair, consultations, and other resources, the collaborative plans to create a Digital Readiness Community of Practice that provides the knowledge, tools, resources, and infrastructure to digitize, manage, and provide online public access to archives and historical records. (RJ-103067-20)

Densho
Seattle, WA

\$90,000 to support the Community Archives Collaborative, a partnership among four community-based archives: Densho, which seeks to preserve and share history of the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans to promote equity and justice today; the South Asian American Digital Archive; Interference Archive, which explores the relationship between cultural production and social movements; and the The Texas After Violence Project, which preserves the voices, experiences, and perspectives of people directly impacted by violence in Texas. The Community Archives Collaborative, develop resources and educational tools, and host a convening for a newly established network of community-based archives to share skills, trainings, and best practices; leverage pooled resources; and provide peer-to-peer mentoring in order to support long-term sustainability and growth. (RJ-103091-20)

A cooperative agreement with the University of Virginia was approved to continue to support Founders Online.

VI. Other Business

Mr. Eck reported that Robyn Engibous passed along a message from Senator Sullivan has been working with Senator Carper's staff about co-sponsoring reauthorization language. If adopted, it would reauthorize the NHPRC through 2026 at \$10 million a year.

The Commission went into Executive Session at 11:37 am.