

National Historical Publications and Records Commission
Executive Summary Minutes
May 24, 2024

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Dr. Colleen Shogan, at 9:00 am at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC.

Commission Members Present:

Colleen Shogan, Archivist of the United States
Glen Asner
Jonathan Bronitsky
Meredith Evans
Christine Lamberson
Janice Ruth
Katherine A.S. Sibley
C. James Taylor, *online*
Darin Waters
Kathleen Williams
Tanya Zanish-Belcher

NHPRC staff present:

Christopher Eck, Executive Director
Jeff de la Concepcion
Keith Donohue
Julie Fisher
Darrell Meadows
Nancy Melley
Annette Paul
Anastacia Scott
Alex Wilson

National Archives staff:

John Hamilton, Congressional Liaison
Jay Bosanko, Deputy Archivist of the United States
Ellis Brachman, Senior Advisor to the Archivist

I. Welcome

Dr. Colleen Shogan welcomed everyone and administered the oath of office to Dr. Meredith R. Evans, welcoming her and Dr. Kathleen A.S. Sibley to the Commission.

The following Resolution was presented and approved by the Commission:

KATHLEEN WILLIAMS joined the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in 2021 as representative of the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators. Prior to joining the board, she had served on the staff for more than 13 years, including over nine years as its Executive Director. In May 2024, Ms. Williams will retire as Director of the Archives of the National Gallery of Arts. A Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, she holds degrees from the College of the Holy Cross and Goucher College.

Her work as a board member of the Commission reflects her passion for its mission. Whether serving on the committees to review the Strategic Plan or working tirelessly to improve processes and policies, Ms. Williams used her deep understanding of the agency to help develop the new panel review system, encourage collaboration among archives, and strengthen the connection between the NHPRC and the National Archives.

Saying goodbye once is difficult enough, but now we are faced with the prospect of a second farewell, this time to wish her a bon voyage in retirement. We will remember and emulate her close scrutiny of our work, her insistence on excellence, and her commitment to ensure that all Americans, wherever located, have access to the records that shape the American story. Kathleen will be very much missed, and the Commission thanks her—*again*—for her dedicated service and contributions to its programs with our sincere respect and affection.

II. Minutes of the November 2023 Meeting and Agenda

Dr. Shogan called for approval of the Minutes and Adoption of the Agenda, and a motion passed by unanimous consent.

III. Congressional Update

John Hamilton provided an update, citing Dr. Shogan's numerous meetings with Members of Congress solidifying both NARA's and the NHPRC's good impression. He also expects that the Senate will continue to add Congressionally-Directed Spending grants in future appropriations but has been working with staff to better align such projects with NHPRC programs and policies. Ms.

Williams asked if the good relationship with Congress augured well for any reauthorization, and Mr. Hamilton explained that it is more difficult, at this time, to advance reauthorization in the House.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Eck summarized the applications and recommendations before the Commission at this meeting; introduced new staff member Alex Wilson and the pending new hires; and spoke briefly about the increased number of earmarks and the likelihood they will continue to rise.

V. Executive Committee Report

Dr. Zanish-Belcher reported from the Executive Committee. They recommended the addition of the following language in all of the grants announcements: *“The Commission requires that grant recipients acknowledge NHPRC grant assistance in all publicity, publications, and other products that result from its support.”*

The Commission approved grant announcements by unanimous vote:

Archival Projects

Capacity Building for HBCU Archives

Discovery and Access to Congressional Records Collections

The question of the Public Engagement announcement was tabled until the program review. Ms. Zanish-Taylor also discussed calling a meeting of the Oversight Committee

V. Program Review

Archival Projects

During program review, Ms. Melley pointed to the lack of the traditional “Questions Letter” as problematic in making recommendations to the Commission. Panels and staff raised questions after panel review that ordinarily would have been asked of the applicant for further explanation or clarification. As a result, most of the recommendations have contingencies attached.

Dr. Sibley asked why some projects with high scores were not recommended for funding, and Ms. Melley explained the current panel system. Several Commissioners offered suggestions for improvement, including insisting that panels vote again at the end of the discussion and resubmit

scores, as well as diversifying the panels to include varied archival experience and perspectives. Mr. Meadows said that increasing staffing might shift some of the burden away from the program officers, allowing them to offer more assistance in proposal development and writing. Dr. Shogan agreed that the “idea is only half of the proposal, and capacity is second.”

In terms of the proposals, Ms. Ruth wondered about the perception that staff or panels might be “risk-averse” in their recommendations, and Dr. Shogan said that she would not want to raise the risk potential, and would not support it, as she is highly aware that the Commission must responsibly use taxpayer dollars to support projects.

Public Engagement

Ms. Melley observed that the Public Engagement program is not getting sufficient numbers of applications, and Dr. Evans felt that it may stem from a lack of personnel at institutions to commit to public engagement projects, despite its importance to the future of archives.

At the Executive Committee meeting Ms. Melley had asked for an opportunity to pause in the current round for a more thorough assessment of the program’s future.

The Commission unanimously approved a resolution to “postpone the Public Engagement program announcements for consideration at the November 2024 meeting while the Oversight Committee and staff work on language for its goals and objectives.”

VI. Proposal Review

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

RH-104804 Sibley

RH-104730 Waters

During the program review, the Commission made the following recommendations:

Archival Projects

University of Alabama

Tuscaloosa, AL

\$110,798 to support a project to enhance finding aid description and digitize an anticipated total of 40,230 records referring to Alabama's coal and iron labor history, including the Brierfield Iron Works, Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, and the Shelby Iron Company. (RH-104728)

University of Georgia

Athens, GA

\$137,080 to support the Finding Their Names project to digitize and enhance description and discovery of documents from approximately 80 collections related to enslavement in Georgia. The enhanced description will include a form of reparative description that will name enslaved individuals in item- and folder-level scope and content notes. (RH-104735)

Citizens Motorcar Company

dba America's Packard Museum

Dayton, OH

\$51,030 to support the processing and digitizing of the *Automobile Quarterly* Collection (1962-2012), to enhance access through a finding aid for 1,143 cubic feet of production records, slides and negatives, and research files, and to digitize and provide online access to a sample of 1,500 photographs, documents, and drawings from this vintage motorcar publication. (RH-104737)

Amistad Research Center

New Orleans, LA

\$150,000 to support a project to arrange, describe, and provide long-term preservation, conservation, and access to approximately 140 linear feet of historical records on African American Freemasonry: the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free & Accepted Masons for the State of Louisiana (1857-2017). (RH-104756)

San Diego Air and Space Museum

San Diego, CA

\$150,000 to support a project to catalog, rehouse, digitize, and create a finding aid for the San Diego Aviation Company's Rohr/Goodrich Collection. Founded in 1940, Rohr/Goodrich was a major contributor to aviation manufacturing. The museum will increase online discoverability of the 170,000 images. (RH-104767)

Museum of Chinese in America
New York, NY

\$149,400 to support a project to digitize approximately 16,000 images from 443 rolls of 35-mm negatives taken in 1975 from the photography collection of Emile Bocian (1912-1990). In his capacity as a photojournalist for the now defunct *China Post*, Bocian documented New York's Chinese American community throughout the 1970s and 1980s. (RH-104769)

University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH

\$109,349 to support a project to complete archival processing of the records of the Cincinnati Branch of the NAACP related to the 1974 *Bronson v Cincinnati Board of Education* desegregation case (215 linear feet), the city's most significant case in the fight for school desegregation. The collection includes correspondence, court filings, background research on segregation in education, the conditions of the schools, curriculum, and information about how Cincinnati Public Schools addressed the decree. (RH-104772)

New York City Department of Records and Information Services
New York, NY

\$148,093 to support a project to expand public discovery of 268 cubic feet of records created by the New York City Commission on Human Rights (1945-1976). The records include minutes, reports, speeches, correspondence, and planning files created to address systemic injustice. The department will digitize for online access 53 cubic feet of the earliest records. (RH-104776)

B&O Railroad Museum, Inc.
Baltimore, MD

\$102,542 to support the second phase of a project to process an additional 25,000 records of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Relief Department. The first phase processed 15,000 records from the B&O Railroad's efforts to respond to their employees before programs such as workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, private health insurance, and other such social insurance and security programs existed. (RH-104778)

University of Nebraska at Omaha
Omaha, NE

\$150,000 to support a collaboration with Great Plains Black History Museum to arrange and describe the museum's archival collection, 115 cubic feet of material dating from 1870 to 2015 that documents the development of the Black community in Omaha, Nebraska, and more broadly in the Great Plains. (RH-104785)

Old Dartmouth Historical Society
dba New Bedford Whaling Museum
New Bedford, MA

\$147,972 to support a project digitizing approximately 348,000 pages from 1,200 whaling logbooks and journals, spanning from 1669 to 1977. The logbooks and journals detail not only how many whales were taken and where, but also detail unique interactions with coastal and islander communities and Indigenous nations and tribal groups, historical weather data, and information about crew members. (RH-104805)

Public Engagement

During the proposal review, the Commission raised questions about application DP-104748, the GLBT Historical Society. The application was voted upon separately, with four YEAs (Evans, Zanish-Belcher, Waters, and Ruth), five NAYs (Williams, Bronitzky, Sibley, Shogan, and Taylor). ABSTAINING were Mr. Asner and Ms. Lamberson. *No funding was recommended.*

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Raleigh, NC

\$141,264 to support the North Carolina American Indian Heritage Commission and the State Archives of North Carolina to partner with state-recognized tribes (Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian, Haliwa, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneech Band of Sapani Nation, Sappony, and the Waccamaw Siouan) and the North Carolina Native American Youth Organization to collect and publish online at least 144 oral histories of American Indian elders and tribal members, train American Indian youth as oral historians, and to create guidelines for collecting and sharing American Indian oral histories. (DP-104730)

Upstander Project, Inc.
Boston, MA

\$112,262 to support a project to expand access to historical records relating to Indigenous peoples from the 16th through the 19th centuries held at the American Antiquarian Society, including books, pamphlets, mission press imprints in various Indian languages, missionary reports, Indian captivity narratives, and fictional works concerning Indigenous peoples. Upstander will create digital learning resources and presentations of contextualized materials, and collaborate with educators through workshops encouraging inclusion of these materials into lesson plans and curricula. Project staff will relaunch the *Bounty* Teachers' Hub site, built for Upstander's 2021 film, *Bounty*, which tells the story of the 1755 Phips Proclamation declaring the Penobscot people enemies to the province of Massachusetts Bay. (DP-104763)

South Asian American Digital Archive
Philadelphia, PA

\$150,000 to support “From Home to History,” a nationwide participatory archiving initiative in which community members will collect, preserve, digitize, transcribe, and share 1,500 archival items online to shed light on the diverse experiences of South Asian Americans. The initiative consists of three components: six archival challenges, calling for contributions built around specific formats or themes; six training workshops on topics such as physical and digital preservation, oral history methods, or metadata creation; and building an online community of practice for community historians. (DP-104804)

The Vanport Mosaic
Portland, OR

\$140,850 to support a project, using audio and video histories and other materials, to create an augmented reality walking tour of the lost city of Vanport, Oregon. Built as wartime public housing in Multnomah County, Oregon, between the contemporary Portland city boundary and the Columbia River, Vanport was destroyed in a 1948 flood. Using a collection of over 100 audio/video oral history interviews with former residents and survivors, as well as six intergenerational dialogues with elders and descendants and close to fifty short documentaries, Vanport Mosaic intends to design and build an augmented reality walking tour app drawn from community-based historical records. (DP-104806)

Publishing

University of Tennessee

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [*Papers of Andrew Jackson*](#), the seventh president of the United States. Project staff will advance editorial work on Volumes 13 (1835) and 15 (1837), and expand the New Jackson Document Discoveries and Native Voices sections of the project website. (PE-104719)

Ramapo College of New Jersey
Mahwah, NJ

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [*Jane Addams Papers*](#), an American settlement activist, reformer, social worker, sociologist, public administrator, and author. Project staff will digitize, create metadata, attach scanned images, and transcribe 1,200 documents; proofread 1,500 documents for publication on the *Jane Addams Digital Edition*, and submit Volume 5 of *Selected Papers of Jane Addams* to the University of Illinois Press, and begin research and document selection for Volumes 6-7. (PE-104726)

Cumberland University
Lebanon, TN

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [Papers of Martin Van Buren](#), the eighth president of the United States. Project staff will develop and publish a list of keywords for Series 1-5; add “known places of author” and “known places of recipient” for Series 1-5; complete first-pass and metadata verification and publish 800 documents in *Series 7: Vice President*; and complete initial transcription of 500 documents in Series 14: *Retirement*. (PE-104732)

Indiana University
Indianapolis, IN

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [Frederick Douglass Papers](#), a leading orator, abolitionist, social reformer, writer, and statesman. Project staff will complete production for publication of *Correspondence Series*, Volume 4; begin final production on *Journalism and Other Writings Series*, Volume 2; finish editorial work and submit manuscript for *Correspondence Series*, Volume 5; transcribe and verify texts of 300 unpublished letters from 1866-1880 and add them to the digital edition; and upload corrected text for *Autobiographical Writings Series*, Volume 3, and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*. (PE-104738)

University of Maryland
College Park, MD

\$125,000 to support the [Freedmen and Southern Society Project](#) to edit and publish *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867*. Project staff will construct an index and provide revised page numbers for *Law and Justice*, Volume 7; review document annotation for chapter 4 of *Family and Kinship*, Volume 8; review annotation in and proofread chapter 5; and undertake preliminary selection, transcription, verification, and provide annotation of documents originating from two separate slave states for *Church, School and Community*, Volume 9. (PE-104739)

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation
Springfield, IL

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [Papers of Abraham Lincoln](#), sixteenth president of the United States. Project staff will work on the Campaign Digital Edition (March 4, 1849-November 6, 1860) to: tandem proof and annotate 400 documents; write biographies of associated events, organizations, persons, and places; fact-check and “sense read” 400 documents and associated biographies; and publish 400 documents. (PE-104741)

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Piscataway, NJ

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [Thomas A. Edison Papers](#), noted American inventor and entrepreneur. Project staff will complete selection and transcription of the 150 of 300 documents for Volume 11

(Sound Recording); complete thematic essays and annotation for Volume 11; edit the years 1925-1927 of the Edison General File; identify and index remaining item sets from outside repositories; and create biographical and organization database on Omeka-S platform. (PE-104742)

Villanova University

Villanova, PA

\$120,000 to support a project to edit and publish *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, an online edition at informationwanted.org that identifies and publishes advertisements taken out by or concerning formerly enslaved people looking for separated family members and friends from the early stages of emancipation through the early 1920s. Staff will work to: identify ads in the 123 short-run newspapers held by the Wisconsin Historical Society and accession and publish ~458 new ads; conduct usability studies with genealogists and educators to identify improvements to the educator resources on the site; continue partnerships with school districts in Pennsylvania and Texas; tag new ads and work with TrueFiction to produce a historical comic book for middle to high school students, English language learners, and reluctant readers. (PE-104744)

Mississippi State University

Starkville, MS

\$124,993 to support the *Civil War & Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi Digital Documentary Edition*, a documentary edition built from the collections of nine governors from late 1859 through 1882, Staff will work on the Governor Stone Correspondence & Papers (1876-1882) to: transcribe, tag and review of 1,500 documents and upload to the site with metadata; draft annotation and two-stage verification for 90% of tags; support the work of seven authors of a special issue on Reconstruction for *Civil War History*; and host a workshop at the 2024 annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association. (PE-104752)

University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the *Papers of Julian Bond*. A pioneering voice in American politics for some five decades, Julian Bond (1940-2015) was a civil rights advocate, legislator, and teacher. Staff will collect and enter metadata into a database for 5,000 items from Series 2: *Correspondence*; review and resolve issues from crowdsourced transcriptions; single-verify transcriptions for 3,000 pages and launch as an “Early Access” content set; and hire and train student apprentices. (PE-104761)

University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the *Papers of James Madison*, fourth president of the United States. Staff will proofread pages and prepare index for volume 14 of the *Secretary of State Series*; draft 50 percent of the annotation and complete 25 percent of tandem proofreading for volume 15 of the *Secretary of State Series*; begin drafting annotation for Volume 16 of the *Secretary of State Series*; complete all editing and proofing of

Volume 5 of the *Retirement Series* and submit volume to the University of Virginia Press; and begin drafting annotation for Volume 6 of the *Retirement Series*. (PE-104764)

University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

\$125,000 to support a project to edit and publish the [Papers of George Washington](#), first president of the United States. staff will work to: publish print volumes for *Revolutionary War Series 34 and 35*; complete substantive review, copyediting, and indexing of *Revolutionary War Series 36*; complete remaining text checking, annotation, substantive review, and copyediting for *Revolutionary War Series 37*; complete 85% of text checking and annotation for *Revolutionary War Series 38*; and add *Revolutionary War Series 31* to the digital edition. (PE-104765)

University of Virginia

Charlottesville, VA

\$125,000 to support the [Presidential Recordings](#) project at the Miller Center of Public Affairs to edit and publish transcriptions from secret White House tapes. Project staff will work to transcribe approximately 24 hours of recorded material from the *Johnson Tapes: July 1965 through October 1965* and deliver the transcriptions to the publisher for subsequent incorporation into the digital edition. (PE-104777)

University of West Florida

Pensacola, FL

\$125,000 to support the [Papers of Roger Taney: A Digital Documentary Edition](#), the personal and professional papers of Attorney General and Treasury Secretary under Andrew Jackson, jurist, and Fifth Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Staff will accession an additional 1,500 documents; transcribe 2,000 manuscript pages; collate, complete verification, and annotation for 300 documents and prepare XML files; complete Name files for 100 persons; and secure permissions for materials in Volume II. (PE-104779)

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lincoln, NE

\$124,976 to support the [Charles Chesnutt Cleveland Archives](#), a pioneering African American writer, lawyer, and voting rights activist, to be published to the Charles Chesnutt Digital Archive. Project staff will continue internships with Cleveland-area students; advance collaborative relationship with Western Reserve Historical Society and the African American Archives Auxiliary and hold public events with them and/or the Rust Belt Humanities Lab or Cleveland Public Library; obtain, process, transcribe, annotate, and publish 150 items of correspondence, with images; and update the catalog of Chesnutt's known correspondence and drafts. (PE-104780)

Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA

\$124,974 to support the *Colored Conventions* project (CCP). Since 2014, the CCP has been working to collect, catalog, and transcribe scattered records collections of the 79 Colored Conventions held in the Civil War era, the nation's largest movement for Black civil rights during the 19th century. The CCP intends to create and publish editions for each convention on <https://coloredconventions.org/>. Staff will: conduct a search to hire a documentary editor; train the editor and co-editor by facilitating exchanges with CCP's network of collaborators; customize the CCP Omeka site's collection plugins; verify transcriptions, add metadata, curate a Names index, annotate documents, and provide references to major historical events; and publish selected documents related to 79 state, regional, and national conventions. (PE-104783)

University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC

\$125,000 to support a selective digital edition of the *Papers of William Short*. After serving as Jefferson's secretary, William Short (1759-1849) became a career diplomat and successful financier and philanthropist. Project staff will complete transcription of selected letters (1782-1795) and begin transcription of documents from 1795 to 1810; complete and review translations of selected letters in French (1782-1785); begin translations of selected documents in Spanish (1793-1795); complete and review annotations for 1782-1785 letters; complete final review and publish first 26 documents, as well as 18 calendared items. (PE-104784)

The Commission adjourned for lunch at 11:55 pm and went into Open Discussion at 12:30 pm. The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Eck at 1:15pm