

STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, November 9, 2015

Conference Call

2:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order:

This meeting by phone conference of the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) commenced at 2:00 p.m. on November 9, 2015. Participants were: Kevin Cherry, state coordinator/deputy secretary; Sarah Koonts, deputy state coordinator; Billy King; Jim Martin; Karen Paar; Kyle Wilkins. Also participating were staff members Andrea Gabriel and Kim Hayes.

II. Introductions and Approval of the Minutes:

Deputy State Coordinator Sarah Koonts called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and all participants introduced themselves. Ms. Koonts then briefly went over the process of governor appointments to the SHRAB. New appointments are sometimes delayed, so people already serving can remain on the board until replaced by another appointment, even if the term is expired. We are happy to have members continue serving on the SHRAB and will notify board members when the governor appoints a replacement.

Sarah then directed attention to the minutes from the conference call held on April 15, 2015 that had been sent out by e-mail and asked if there were any questions or corrections. Board members had no corrections to the minutes. Kyle moved for approval of the minutes and Karen seconded. The board unanimously approved the motion.

III. Report of the State Coordinator/Deputy Secretary:

Sarah recognized Dr. Kevin Cherry, who now began his report:

Dr. Cherry began by thanking all SHRAB members for serving, saying what this board does helps to greatly enhance outreach and services of State Archives. Last year was the department's most successful year ever. The department had the most visitation, most volunteer time, and most donations outside of capital project giving than ever, due to many very successful and high quality programs. Visitation was up also due to 2014/15; that period was the last year of Civil War Sesquicentennial.

Legislation: Overall, the department was very successful in the legislature, and sustained no substantial budget cuts. The cuts that did happen were here and there but they were small. Sarah provided the department legislative liaison and administration, input on sunshine legislation for the State Archives that open up records previously closed. New legislation permits opening of records after 100 years. The N.C. Historical Commission was given responsibility for monitoring state monuments, including the approval for monument removal and construction of monuments on all state property. Legislation also passed that directs the State Archives to hold special exhibits around the state and federal constitutions. We're planning those exhibits. The same legislation transfers the non-current constitution from the Secretary of State's office to the State Archives.

Cemetery bill: Each agency now must report to the State Archives any cemeteries on state property, and we will make that information available to the public. Archaeology will be responsible for the initial compilation of the data.

Transfer of some the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) divisions to DCR: Perhaps the biggest impact on our department this year comes from the transfer of 5 divisions from DENR to DCR. We are now DNCR (Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources). The N.C. Zoo, three aquariums, 34 state parks and natural areas, the Museum of Natural Science and the Division of Land and Water Stewardship were transferred. This doubles the size of our department and brings 1,110 FTE (full time equivalent employees, several temp and seasonal employees, buildings, and vehicles. Visitors won't notice any changes because everything will happen behind the scenes. The reason for this change is to better cross-promote and market visitor experiences for state attractions.

Historical Commission news: At the last meeting at Edenton, the Commission voted unanimously to begin process of planning a monument on grounds of the State Capitol to honor the cultural contributions of African Americans to the state; this process is already in its early stages.

IV. Report of the Deputy State Coordinator:

Sarah Koonts, Deputy State Coordinator, now began her report:

Sarah thanked Dr. Cherry for his report and stated she was very pleased about sunshine legislation being passed, many people worked hard on that and it is a great piece of legislation that will have a positive impact on our division. There are also positive repercussions already resulting from combining with DENR. The State Archives is working with the State Parks division on digital collections. Sharing our digital collections and combining our efforts could benefit educators and ultimately reach broader audiences online, so we're excited about what's to come of this collaboration.

Sarah began the division report with an update on the project to have our WWI discharge cards digitized. The cards have now been scanned and sent to Family Search—the LDS Church—a large international entity that has many volunteer indexers. Family Search is ready to open the scans to their indexers now, so the project is moving along nicely. Our staff has recently completed scanning other digital collections, including the 1901 pensions. We're focusing on repurposing some of our scanned collections and scanning other material that can be used to promote STEM—science, technology, engineering, and math—educational materials such as astronauts, early expeditions, and science-related activities. Sarah then mentioned the *Treasures of Carolina* exhibit, now on display at the NC Museum of History. All SHRAB members should have received an invitation to the exhibit opening, and Sarah encouraged everyone to go see the exhibit if they had not yet done so. The exhibit features the work as well as the collections of the State Archives. It opened October 23 and runs through June 2016. There is a companion catalog that can be purchased for \$20 with expanded images and text about State Archives' collections. The catalog was designed to live on past the exhibit time frame.

It's Revolutionary! project: The State Archives is working with Historic Sites to display historic documents in our collections at various historic sites. This project is part

of an ongoing effort to get our documents out into local communities including perhaps programming/exhibit on the state constitution.

There were no questions about Sarah's report on division activities.

V. Old business

Closed Grant:

Sarah moved to old business. First was the final report on the closed grant—"The Next Generation: Expanding the Traveling Archivist Program." The final report on this project was sent to SHRAB members. Sarah deferred to Andrea to highlight elements of the report. Andrea said the beginnings of the TAP (the Traveling Archivist Program), our field services program—went back to the SHRAB strategic plan in 2007. A grant from the NHPRC funded a pilot program to test the efficacy of developing a field services program whereby a contract archivist would visit and assist smaller repositories in need of training and guidance. Hal Keiner was the initial traveling archivist, followed by Dick Lankford. This last grant was to set up the infrastructure to build a network of trained archivists around the state to visit and help smaller repositories throughout the state. Andrea referred everyone to the report, and reported that we had a good group of folks who participated in The Next Generation training. She reported that several participants had since gone on to other jobs. Questionnaires received from the program participants indicated an interest in continuing to be a part of TAP. Sarah added that in the strategic planning effort two years ago, we wanted to look at the feasibility of transitioning from a centralized model of TAP to a decentralized one to deliver these services regionally. This is because it simply is not practical to rely on one travelling archivist to cover the state. We wanted to explore other options. Sarah mentioned we will return to the discussion of TAP and its evolution under new business.

Current grant:

Sarah moved on to discuss the current grant, "Teaching Digital NC," and the board was provided with a short list of activities. This grant involves hiring a contractor to survey digital collections and to create lesson plans and tutorials using them. Sarah again recognized Andrea to walk through the main activities. Andrea said that we first needed a project archivist so we hired Jo Ann Williford for that position; she has great background both in education and knowledge of archives collections. Andrea and Jo Ann met with DPI (NC Dept. of Public Instruction) in early summer and DPI is very interested in incorporating primary sources in lesson plans for students and teachers. Jo Ann wants to talk to them monthly to understand what will help them most regarding software and the delivery of tutorials. The initial focus shifted somewhat from surveying repositories to determine what materials would have relevance to the three topics—WWI business and industry, and civil rights and liberties—to examine and identify what materials already exist online. The project uses collections hosted by the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) with the intent to survey what's already online that fits into those three categories. The N.C. Digital Heritage Center, through UNC Chapel Hill, feeds North Carolina collections to DPLA. We hope to eventually narrow the categories some more, once we see what's available. Andrea asked for SHRAB volunteers to help look at the sites. Lesson plans will be developed around the digital records, posted to the department's educational website and that of SHRAB. Rather than host the digital images

as a separate collection, there will be pointers to the images that live in their own repositories. Minimal metadata will be included.

Andrea then described what's involved with volunteering to help with this project. There is a list of North Carolina repositories containing hyperlinks to their online collections hosted through DPLA. Sometimes a site has 30-40 items; four repositories including the State Archives have thousands of images. We're looking for repositories that have materials around the 3 topics—digital images of maps, photographs, film, and a variety of public or private records from which to create lesson plans and tutorials for students and teachers. As the project progresses we'll talk with DPI about what the teachers actually need from us. This type of educational program may serve as a pilot for future educational efforts.

Sarah thanked Andrea for the details about the grant and reiterated the task at hand of going to the sites to see what has been digitized and find out what's available. Looking at the different websites helps rule out things that don't fall into one of the categories. For example, there are 150 sites on DPLA but they don't all have relevant materials, so just knowing which ones don't have anything will start narrowing down the sites on our list. The next SHRAB meeting will be in early spring and that's a good opportunity to review what has been pulled out of these sites and look at where we need to go with the lesson plans. Andrea mentioned this is a great way to get in some SHRAB hours, and it would be helpful if everyone could take a few of the sites and help us start a list. Sarah said this activity fits with NHPRC direction, supporting using original sources in education. Rather than using lesson plans with secondary sources, students will use original material. This objective fits within the NHPRC's goals to support education, specifically the use of original records. This grant will run until 2017.

There were no questions. Sarah asked members to send an email to Andrea, Kim, or her if you would like to help with this. Andrea said she will send links & assign repositories for them to look at. Also, Andrea asked if anyone knows of existing specific collections on those three topics to contact her.

VI. New Business

TAP for 2016: Sarah began by recapping the previous discussion about continuing TAP in the future. We discussed the possibility of having one more round of training to see if anyone wanted to be trained to be included in the network. To that end, \$4,000 is set aside to support one round of TAP applications. This should also be sufficient to support training for about three people to go along on a visit. Right now we'd like to have another round of TAP applications and site visits in late spring/early summer. That means the application review would be in late spring. Sarah asked for feedback on this plan, asked the group if they do indeed want to have another round of applications. Site visits will depend on where the applications come from and what nearby archivist can make the trip. Karen commented that this sounds good, and asked if we lost people from earlier rounds. Andrea reported that we've had no more TAP visits since Dick finished his last round with the trainees. However, questionnaires indicate that people are interested in continuing to be a part of TAP and at some institutions this type of outreach is considered professional development. Dick felt certain that those who accompanied him could conduct a TAP visit. If we keep with a de-centralized model, it's important for people to understand the TAP people are coming from the State Archives

and not from another repository. TAP remains a program of the State Archives. Andrea said we may consider one more round of training. If we keep the visits short and keep within the region she thinks the decentralized program model is doable. Sarah asked if everyone was in agreement with the timeline of meeting in the spring to review TAP applications, and all agreed it sounded fine. Andrea asked anyone on SHRAB interested in pursuing TAP training to send her an email and let her know.

VII. Other business

News from NHPRC : Sarah commented that she wasn't able to attend the most recent meeting, but stated they are undergoing a strategic planning effort of their own. She said the NHPRC appreciated all the input provided by SHRAB boards across the country about their draft plan. They are working on an updated version and will send it out for comments when they revise and are ready for more feedback.

One piece of feedback they received from archives around the country reflected pushback on their proposal to move aggressively toward digital efforts. Local repositories don't have the resources to digitize records before making them available, and they don't want to cut out those traditional activities. It's the only program around that gives money to repositories to make records accessible. Sarah said she is looking forward to the next round of feedback.

Our division received a three-year grant from NHPRC for our state electronic records program. The NHPRC provided funds to test the preservation of government email. The program will develop strategies for determining what emails should be preserved by creating criteria upon which to identify those agencies and positions/functions within those agencies that should be preserved, such as policy-making positions, regulatory authority, or when the position itself performs a function that generates archival material. One example: Historic Preservation works with DOT on environmental review of buildings—a regulatory role with several staff members involved in the process, so we would want to preserve those emails. The other piece of the grant will test natural language processing tools to sort and flag individual emails that contain certain word or phrase parameters including personal/confidential information. With so much email, there is a need to streamline the process of examining and preserving pertinent emails. The State Archives is pleased the grant is getting started. Email is challenging and we're hoping to give the larger archival community best practices and lessons learned. This project will include working with other states.

There were no questions or further discussion regarding this grant. Sarah advised the board members that we'll need to have an onsite meeting in March so we can review progress on images for the Teaching Digital NC grant as well as applications for TAP. Sarah asked the board members to keep this in mind for the next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

With no objections and nothing further to discuss, Karen made a motion to adjourn, and Kyle seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Sarah reminded everyone to get in touch with Andrea about helping to look at repositories for the new grant. The conference call meeting adjourned at 2:50p.m.