

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Conference Call  
February 6, 2017  
2:00 – 3:30 pm EST**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Council Interim Actions  
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Rachel Vagts)**

**BACKGROUND**

Current parliamentary policy agrees on validating board decisions made remotely, and ratifying the Council's online and conference-call decisions via the Consent Agenda does not conflict with any existing SAA policy.

**DISCUSSION**

Given the Council's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Council actions via the Consent Agenda contributes to streamlining the group's work and improves access to the interim decisions of SAA's elected decision makers.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the following interim actions taken by the Council between December 9, 2016, and January 6, 2017, be ratified:**

- Reviewed the report of Peter Gottlieb, SAA's Representative to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), from the November 30, 2016, NHPRC meeting. (See Appendix) (December 9, 2016)
- Adopted the [November 14-16, 2016, Council meeting minutes](#). (January 6, 2017)

**National Historical Publications and Records Commission**  
**(NHPRC) November 30, 2016 Meeting Report**  
**(Prepared by SAA Representative Peter Gottlieb)**

The major agenda items at the November 30 NHPRC meeting concerned the work on the Commission's strategic plan initiatives. The Commission adopted its strategic plan at its May 2016 meeting. Staff immediately began to focus on its key components.

Executive Director Kathleen Williams reported on the SHRABs, Government Email, and Public Engagement initiatives. On the SHRABs initiative, Commission staff will meet with selected state coordinators and SHRAB members at the Council of State Archivist's 2017 annual meeting to discuss how to increase the effectiveness of boards. That annual meeting will also host a discussion of the current status of archival management of government email. Exploratory discussions of the public engagement initiative have also begun.

Williams also reported on the grant funding programs that have been reconfigured in the new plan, including that there will no longer be separate grants for electronic records and that the archives access grants now fall into two separate programs: one offering smaller amounts of funds for a larger range of repositories and the other providing relatively few, but larger, grants, especially for collaborations among several archives. Finally, she reviewed changes in NHPRC's grant programs administration: requiring smaller cost share for some archives grants; reducing SHRABs' roles in reviewing grants, more aggressive dissemination of information about grant opportunities; accepting short, preliminary proposal overviews that will be peer reviewed before selection for development into full proposals.

Darrell Meadows (NHPRC Director for Documentary Editions) also gave a separate report on the publications initiative. Commission staff have convened meetings of editing project directors, digital publication experts, and scholars to begin discussions toward facilitating searchable, open access digital editions. They have engaged staff from the Mellon Foundation in the discussions, looking toward Foundation funding support for later developmental grant projects.

In other business, Archivist of the US David Ferriero provided an overview of NARA's role in the presidential transition. This includes the administration of the electoral college voting and reporting, the packing and shipment of records from the Obama White House, the work with agencies to transfer their records and informing new political appointees of federal records laws and regulations. NARA Deputy Chief Operations Officer Chris Naylor also gave a much more detailed report on the White House Transition activities, focusing on the administrative committees that have been formed to make the transition and on the initial steps to ship Obama records to temporary storage in the Chicago area.

NARA's Director of Congressional Affairs John Hamilton reported to the Commission on the outlook for NARA's objectives in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Though it is still early to have much concrete information, NARA already knows who is likely to chair the key committees that handle NARA's and NHPRC's primary business. The general tone of Hamilton's report, while

guarded, was optimistic about NARA's strong reputation in Congress and about its prospects in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Finally, the Commission held a lengthy discussion about the problems surrounding the Abraham Lincoln papers project, before voting to approve the project's deferred 2016 funding application.

As usual, the Commission reviewed and voted on the funding requests submitted since its last meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Gottlieb