

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
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**SAA’s Born-Digital Records and Records Generally:
Status Update Report from Council-Designated Group**

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BACKGROUND

This task originated with the Council’s August 2010 decision to discontinue printing Council meeting minutes in *The American Archivist* and instead to rely on the SAA website as the de facto repository for minutes. The task was restated in January 2011: “Access to Council Minutes: Investigate use of persistent URL for minutes stored online, becoming part of an electronic archive, trusted digital repository for SAA.”¹ By January 2012 the wording had expanded to “[investigate] what is necessary for SAA in terms of a Trusted Digital Repository, persistent URLs, AA/Metapress URLs, and scale requirements.” At that point the task was re-assigned to Council members Kaplan, Landis, and McCrea.²

The brief discussion of this issue at the 0113 Council meeting is supplemented by important background information in the Discussion item submitted by Kaplan, Landis, and McCrea for that meeting, especially pages 1-8.³ Council chose not to take the action recommended, appointing a formal task force to tackle the issue, and instead “agreed with the conclusion in the discussion item that a more detailed SAA records schedule, dealing with both paper and digital records, was needed as a framework for born-digital records management, but delayed discussion of background issues raised until a draft records schedule could be considered. ... The Council asked Kaplan, Landis, and McCrea to work with a representative from the Records Management Roundtable [Houston], University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee SAA archivist Michael Doyle, and a staff member designated as the records officer for the SAA office [Mueller] to draft SAA records retention guidelines for consideration by the Council.”⁴

¹ <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0811-1-I-C-ToDo0511.pdf> .

² <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0612-I-C-ToDo0112.pdf>, item E8.

³ <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0113-IV-K-SAARecords.pdf> .

⁴ <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0113CouncilMinutes.pdf>, item IV-K, pages 13-14.

STATUS UPDATE

Our goal is to create a records schedule that identifies, as comprehensively as possible, the records series that should be sent to and permanently retained as part of the SAA Archives. As a secondary goal, we are including in that records schedule recommended retention periods for the non-permanent records that are most easily identified from the SAA office file structure as well as the permanent records that should remain in the SAA office.

During a series of nine conference calls between June and December 2013 we have reviewed and discussed a variety of sources for information regarding the documentation of SAA's core functions and records created. These sources have included the file structure used by the SAA office staff to maintain active records, the SAA website, and the "local knowledge" of current Council members. We have sought input as needed from members of the SAA staff, and have completed draft series descriptions for approximately 75 percent of SAA's core records, as well as guidelines for non-permanent and permanent records that should be maintained at the SAA office, rather than sent to the Archives. A project management site on Basecamp⁵ contains the minutes of all of these conference calls, the series descriptions identified so far, and background documents.

We anticipate completing our work during additional conference calls in February-March 2014, and will have for the Council's review a final report prepared for the May 2014 Council meeting, including a records schedule with series descriptions and retention periods for a significant portion of SAA's archival, permanent, and non-permanent records.

⁵ <https://basecamp.com/1873275/projects/2974310-saa-records>. Access is limited to group participants and SAA office staff.