

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call
February 11, 2019
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Council Interim Actions
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Erin Lawrimore)**

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 November 28, 2018, and December 28, 2018, be ratified:

- Confirmed the following SAA Fellows to serve on the 2019 [Committee on the Selection of SAA Fellows](#): Amy Cooper Cary, Ann Gilliland, and Rachel Vagts. (November 28, 2018)
- Approved the November 2-3, 2018, Council [meeting minutes](#). (November 29, 2018)
- Reviewed a report from SAA's Representative to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, Dennis Meissner, covering the Commission's most recent meeting. (Appendix) (December 28, 2018)

Report to SAA on NHPRC Meeting, November 14, 2018

(Prepared by SAA Representative Dennis Meissner)

Approved Grant Requests. At the November 14 meeting the Commission approved support for 31 proposals totaling \$3,468,729 in awards for projects undertaken in 27 states.

- For the Publishing Historical Records in Documentary Editions Grants: 7 projects, with one project contingent upon the successful completion of two requirements by December 31, 2018.
- For the State Board Programming Grants: 18 projects.
- For the Access to Historical Records – Major Initiatives Grants: 6 projects.

Budget for 2018-19 Cycle. The NHPRC received an appropriation of \$6 million for grants in March 2018. The President’s budget for FY2019 contained no funds for the NHPRC. At the end of May, the House Appropriations Sub-Committee marked up the FY19 funding bill and provided \$6 million for the Commission, to match the prior year’s appropriation. Again, the total amount and the comparatively early adoption are in large part due to aggressive work by Commission member Rep. Mark Meadows (R-SC), who has really taken NHPRC and its mission under his wing and promoted it to his congressional colleagues. As a result of the 2018 mid-term elections, Rep. Meadow leaves the Commission at the end of 2018. He will be succeeded by a Democratic congressperson who has yet to be appointed.

NHPRC Strategic Plan Implementation

The NHPRC staff members are more than two years into implementing the Strategic Plan approved May 2016. The following is a summary of highlights for the six-month period, May-October 2018.

Strategic Goal One: Connect the National Archives with the nation’s archives.

- **Initiative on new publishing methods.** Eight initial planning grants were funded by Mellon, the funding partner. The Digital Edition Publishing Cooperative projects have all begun meeting. Mellon and the NHPRC have discussed the schedule for the Implementation grant application process. Mellon increased the funding available for this from \$2M to \$3M and a schedule for review and selection has been prepared for 2019.
- **Initiative on Digital Records Preservation & Access.** Nancy Melley organized a Government Email Symposium that took place on September 15, 2017 in the Innovation Lab at the National Archives downtown. She followed this with a presentation of findings at the Best Practices Exchange Conference in Boston in November 2017. The Case Studies for the project have been posted on the NHPRC website. Melley is preparing a white paper to accompany them. She also discussed the topic at the joint SAA-NAGARA-CoSA annual meeting held in Washington, DC in August 2018.
- **Initiative on the Future of State SHRAB Boards.** The initial state board symposium took place July 12, 2017, during the CoSA annual meeting in Boise, ID. A follow up meeting was held with CoSA’s Executive Board in April 2018. CoSA leadership shared a

proposal for block grants from NHPRC to the state boards as a method of reducing administrative burdens and improving the reach of the state board program. A meeting of state coordinators and board members was held as part of the SAA-NAGARA-CoSA joint annual meeting to discuss other issues coming out of the symposium, such as board member training, the submission of annual reports by all boards, and improved communication among the boards.

Strategic Goal Two: Expand access to the nation’s historical records.

- **Develop a Single “Access” grant program with two distinct tiers and a new, two-stage application process.** The Commission is using this initiative to simplify its “access” grants category. In the second offering of the Major Initiatives program, NHPRC received 42 preliminary applications from 26 states and the District of Columbia in January 2018. Because these are designed as collaborative, multi-institution projects, more repositories are represented in this applicant pool than this number suggests. From this pool of 42, the NHPRC invited 12 applicants to complete a full application against our July 11 deadline. 10 applicants submitted.

Strategic Goal Three: Public engagement in preserving and discovering the American Record.

- **Implement a Public Engagement grants program.** These grants are aimed at encouraging and funding the projects of “citizen archivists.” The Commission received eight Public Engagement with Historical Records applications at the October 2018 deadline. These applications will undergo peer review before being considered at the May 2019 Commission meeting.

Strategic Goal Four: Enhance the capacity of small and diverse organizations with records collections.

- **Develop a grants program to encourage collaboration for small and diverse organizations.** This is a new special initiative to bootstrap smaller institutions who have lacked the knowledge or capacity to apply for federal grants in the past. An NHPRC subcommittee formed after the June 2018 Commission meeting (on which I sit) is discussing this proposal in conjunction with efforts to better engage underrepresented institutions and develop archives collaboratives. This could end up being a hub-and-spoke arrangement in which one or more robust repositories partners with and mentors smaller institutions in its region or cultural niche.
- **Improve and streamline the application peer review process.** Staff continue to use the internal grants management system to manage the workflow of the peer review system. The method is more secure and has reduced the need for separate email exchanges with reviewer.
- **Support and offer workshops.** Staff conducted or proposed workshops on NHPRC grant programs (half and full day), with a focus on regional and state archives organizations.