

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 22 – 24, 2014
Chicago, Illinois**

**Executive Committee Report
(Prepared by Bill Landis and René Craig)**

Executive Committee Actions and Discussions

- Signed on to an OpenTheGovernment.org letter to members of the House and Senate conference committee working on the Farm Bill in support of efforts to keep a dangerous provision out of the Farm Bill that would cut off access to a broad swath of information about agriculture and livestock operations. (January 10, 2013)
- Signed on to an OpenTheGovernment.org letter urging House Oversight and Government Reform Chair Issa and Ranking Member Cummings to pass the Presidential and Federal Records Act Amendments of 2013 (H.R. 1233), which would ensure an orderly process for dealing with claims of privilege over the records of former presidents and provide protections for other federal records. (January 13, 2014)
- Discussed an invitation from Christopher Felker for SAA to collaborate on his “Doing Archives” project and determined that “SAA is not interested in pursuing an arrangement at this time.” Danna Bell, in her communication, asked Felker to remove from promotional materials SAA’s name as a potential partner and encouraged him to contact SAA component groups to further develop his ideas and gain member support for them. (January 25, 2014)
- Signed on to an OpenTheGovernment.org letter asking the House leadership to schedule a vote on the Presidential Library Donation Reform Act, a bipartisan bill injecting some transparency into currently unregulated and undisclosed fundraising for presidential libraries. (February 3, 2014)
- Collected feedback from the Council and submitted comments to NHPRC on revisions to its grant program. (February 2014)
- Signed on to an OpenTheGovernment.org letter supporting the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014, a bipartisan bill cosponsored by House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-Md.), and Representative Mike Quigley (D-Ill.) to amend the Freedom of Information Act to promote greater government transparency and accountability. (February 24, 2014)
- Reviewed agenda materials for the April 10-11 ICA Executive Board meeting in Paris forwarded by Bryan Corbett. (March 2014)
- Approved IPWG’s draft of a letter to the U.S. Copyright Office from SAA providing comments on the “Study on the Right of Making Available.” (April 2014)

- Given the Council’s feedback on the Coalition for National Learning’s proposed operating principles, discussed whether SAA should sign on as a “founding member” of the CNL (soon to be renamed). (April 2014)
- Discussed the review and approval process for a new SAA Records Retention Policy. (April 2014)

Council Interim Actions and Discussions

- Monitored news regarding the destruction of local records in the courthouse basement of Franklin County, North Carolina. (January 2014)
- Discussed management of internal work document, the Council Action List. (January 2014)
- Received periodic updates via Beaumont from the National Coalition for History. (January – May 2014)
- Reviewed feedback from members responding to Bell’s post, “The Jobs Thing...,” on *Off the Record*. (February - March 2014)
- Received a copy of the electronic newsletter of the International Council on Archives from Bryan Corbett. (February 2014)
- Received periodic updates from Roe regarding the Coalition for National Learning. (February – May 2014)
- Monitored a threatened closure of the National Archives for Black Women’s History collection (Mary McLeod Bethune National Historic Site) and provided additional information to SAA groups to clarify the situation. (February 2014)
- Provided feedback on revisions to NHPRC grant program. (February 2014)
- Reviewed and edited two iterations of work plan documents for Strategic Plan. (February – April 2014; see Agenda Item 0514-II-A)
- Monitored news on the closure and consolidation of National Archives facilities in Anchorage, Fort Worth, and Philadelphia. (March 2014)
- Adopted the minutes of the January 23-26 Council meeting. (Passed unanimously March 3, 2014.)
- Created the Committee on Public Awareness (COPA) to provide strategic information and advice to the SAA Council to enhance SAA’s capacity to promote the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society. COPA may collaborate with the Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy (CAPP) on the identification of key audiences, messages, and mediums to ensure a coordinated approach to SAA’s priorities and communications. COPA is distinguished from CAPP in that COPA generally is concerned with influencing opinions about the value of archivists and archives among the general public and stakeholder groups other than legislators and regulators (e.g., archives users, institutional resource allocators, etc.). (Passed unanimously March 17, 2014; see **Appendix**.)
- Reviewed and provided feedback on the draft Best Practices for Volunteers. (March 12-21, 2014)
- Reviewed CAPP’s draft of SAA’s statement on the closing of three NARA facilities. (April 2014)
- Provided feedback on the Coalition for National Learning’s proposed operating principles and discussed whether SAA should become a founding member. (April 2014)

Committee on Public Awareness

I. Purpose

The Committee provides strategic information and advice to the SAA Council to enhance SAA's capacity to promote the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society. The Committee recommends to the SAA Council the public awareness priorities on which SAA should focus its attention and resources, within the context of the Society's mission and strategic plan. In addition, the Committee works with staff and outside counsel to develop programs that promote the value and role(s) of archivists and archives nationwide.

The Committee on Public Awareness (COPA) is distinguished from the Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy (CAPP) by virtue of the audiences with which each group generally interacts and whose opinions it seeks to influence. CAPP generally is concerned with influencing legislative and regulatory (i.e., public policy) decisions of government at all levels; COPA generally is concerned with influencing opinions about the value of archivists and archives among the general public and stakeholder groups other than legislators and regulators (e.g., archives users, institutional resource allocators, etc.). The two committees may collaborate on identification of key audiences, messages, and mediums to ensure a coordinated approach to SAA's priorities and communications.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Term:

The Committee consists of eight members (including a chair and vice chair) who are appointed by the SAA Vice President for staggered three-year terms. The individual who is selected by the Vice President as vice chair, typically from among the incoming third-year members, becomes vice chair in the fourth year of service and accedes to chair in the fifth year. Individuals may be reappointed to the Committee.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee has the following duties and responsibilities:

A. Acting proactively, the Committee:

- Works closely with SAA staff and, when available and appropriate, outside public relations counsel to develop work plans for enhancing public awareness of archivists and archives.
- Prepares drafts, for Executive Committee or Council approval, of key public awareness messages, seeking input from members, component groups, and experts as appropriate.
- Oversees development and distribution of low-cost, low-barrier tools and training for archivists to use in creating public awareness initiatives in their own local environments.
- Seeks member, public, and media feedback to continuously increase the effectiveness of and involvement with public awareness activities, including but not limited to American Archives Month.
- Determines and implements effective methods for tracking metrics associated with public awareness of and appreciation for archivists and archives.

B. Acting in cooperation with other organizations and groups:

- Brings to the Council's attention areas in which collaboration with internal groups and external organizations, including the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, regional archival associations, and others may advance the Society's public awareness interests.

- At the request of the Council or with its approval, cooperates with such organizations in pursuing public awareness efforts that further the interests of SAA and its members.

C. Acting in response to requests or events, the Committee:

- Responds in a timely fashion to requests from the President (acting on behalf of the Council) or the Executive Director for background information and recommendations on matters related to public awareness issues.
- Develops and coordinates strategies for the Council and SAA to use in responding rapidly and appropriately to public awareness opportunities.
- Collaborates with SAA component groups to ensure that the Committee and the Council are aware of and responsive to the public awareness issues that are of concern to members.

IV. Reporting

The Committee works closely with the President, its Council Liaison, and the Executive Director to ensure that it is responsive to the Council's needs and is working in coordination with the staff office. In certain cases, when time is of the essence, Committee communications with the President and Executive Director may be discussed and acted upon solely by the Executive Committee.

Adopted by the SAA Council: March 17, 2014.

Support Statement: The tasks associated with accomplishing Goal 1 in SAA's Strategic Plan are many and require a focused effort by not just staff, but also member volunteers. The Committee on Public Awareness would advise the Council on ways in which to promote the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society. In collaboration with the Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy and staff, the new committee would provide the member expertise and engagement needed to move SAA forward on this important goal.

Relation to Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Advocating for Archivists and Archives, Strategy 1.1., Provide leadership in promoting the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society.

Fiscal Impact: Given the importance of beginning work on Goal 1 actions as soon as possible, a face-to-face meeting of the committee in the spring or early summer of 2014 is warranted. The approved FY14 budget includes \$5,210 for an anticipated meeting of the Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy that will not take place (Program 107, Activity 3). Those funds could be redirected to a meeting of the Committee on Public Awareness.