

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
May 12–13, 2020  
Virtual Meeting**

**Executive Director's Report  
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

Reports on Membership, Education, Publications, the Annual Meeting, and Technology appear elsewhere in the staff reports for this Council meeting (0520-VI-D). This report summarizes other Headquarters activities since December 2019.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The major activity completed in response to SAA's Strategic Plan since December 2019 was submission in mid-April of a grant proposal to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for conduct of A\*CENSUS II. We hope to receive good news about the proposal in late July. In addition, Peter Carlson and Felicia Owens provided staff support to the launch and inaugural meeting of the Archival Compensation Task Force.

**HEADQUARTERS OPERATIONS / HUMAN RESOURCES**

In light of the pandemic:

- The staff has worked remotely since March 16. We maintain contact using a variety of methods: The directors (Teresa, Peter, and Rana) and I have a morning call each weekday; we meet as a full staff via Zoom every Wednesday morning; we're making very active and effective use of Slack for both individual and group communications; and we've scheduled an optional "water cooler" get-together (now scaled back from daily to two days per week) to check in and discuss topics other than work.
- Finance/Administration Director Peter Carlson has been working on various aspects of personnel and office administration, including: 1) seeking information from our insurance providers about coverage for employees' health insurance needs, 2) researching what, if any, payroll implications have arisen in light of various legislative actions; 3) conferring with our real estate consultants to anticipate what, if any, relief might be possible in our office space lease arrangements; and 4) assessing our current investments with our Merrill Lynch advisors to make sure that we continue to rebalance our investment profile to position ourselves for the return of "normal" market conditions. As part of his ongoing research, he has attended free webcasts on contingency planning and the effects of COVID-19 on business operations and near-term business strategies.

- Peter and Member Services/Accounting Specialist Lakesha Thaddis have developed several work-arounds to ensure that accounting, financial reporting, and payables can be accomplished while staff are working remotely. (This was the primary area of deficiency revealed during our pre-lock-down systems test on March 11.) Systems challenges remain, however, and Peter has worked in the office most days; Lakesha joins him on Fridays so that we can pay bills and process payments that are received via mail.
- We're using this time to take advantage of the many free webcasts that are being offered by the American Society of Association Executives and Association Forum of Chicagoland on topics including crisis communication, virtual conferencing, and membership development in the time of COVID-19.

See Matt Black's Technology report (0520-VI-D-6-Tech) regarding ongoing work and refinements of the still-new association management software system that we launched one year ago. Matt and Peter have kicked off our Education CEU project (a left-over from our go-live with NimbleAMS). We hope to have on-line transcripts ready in the next three to four weeks.

We have temporarily suspended recruitment for the Education Specialist position that Akila Ruffin left in March. Akila decided to move to Atlanta to be near her family. She is continuing to work with us on a project basis while she seeks a full-time opportunity in her new hometown.

I completed my self-evaluation for my 2020 performance appraisal.

We will conduct staff performance appraisals in June. Every staff member completes a written self-appraisal and meets with their supervisor to discuss performance, set goals for the coming year, and review job descriptions.

## **GOVERNANCE**

Governance Manager Felicia Owens drafted the minutes of the 1219 Council meeting and 0320 Council conference call, which were adopted by the Council and posted [online](#).

Felicia prepared all election materials for the SAA website and oversaw the work of our outside vendor for conduct of the 2020 SAA election. The online ballot was live from March 2 to March 20. The voter participation rate of 24% was better than in the past four years (23% in 2019, 17.8% in 2018, 18.9% in 2017, and 22.2% in 2016) and came close to the 2015 rate of 24.2%.

Peter has invested significant time in creating worksheets and analyses that will aid us (Treasurer Amy Fitch, the Finance Committee, and the staff) in drafting and reviewing FY 2021 Budget scenarios for the Council's consideration in June. Given the many challenges associated with running a national professional association during the COVID-19 pandemic and anticipating the impact of this crisis on SAA in the coming years, the Council may expect to see a very different budget document for discussion than you've seen in the past.

Amy and Peter have moved through the SAA and Foundation Finance Committees a proposal for

consolidation of funds. The Council will receive the proposal for review/approval in the coming weeks.

Felicia prepared materials to assist Vice President Rachel Vagts and the Appointments Committee in their work. See the Vice President's report at 0520-VI-B for a summary of activities to date.

Abigail Christian and I served on the Publications Editor Search Committee and Teresa Brinati and I will serve on the Journal Editor Search Committee.

## **SAA FOUNDATION**

The staff provided support to the Foundation Board of Directors as well as its Grant Review Committee, Development Committee, Finance Committee, Nominating Committee, and newly created Archival Workers Emergency Fund and the AWEF Grant Review Committee. See the Foundation Board's report at 0520-VI-G for detailed information.

As always, I'm happy to respond to any questions or comments.