

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
August 12 – 13, 2013  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

**External Representative Report: National Historical  
Publications and Records Commission  
(Prepared by SAA Representative Peter Gottlieb)**

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission convened on May 30, 2013, at approximately 11:00 am ET. I participated via conference call.

**Executive Secretary's Report (Kathleen Williams)**

- There is no new draft of the NHPRC strategic plan. The materials in the May 30 meeting packet were previously drafted.
- NHPRC staff members are pleased with the first round of proposals in the Innovations in Archives and Historical Editing funding category.
- Announcement of launch event for Founders Online website.
- Update on "Digital Citizen" report draft. (Note: "Digital Citizen" is a report for White House staff on NHPRC purpose and goals. I am a member of an advisory committee to NHPRC on this report). Everyone at NHPRC, NARA, and on advisory committee agrees that the report is a great opportunity to advocate for the Commission; everyone also agrees it's not yet ready for prime time and that it needs bolder ideas and more focus. NHPRC staff are working on a new draft.

**Executive Committee Report (Ray Smock)**

- Marcus Garvey and United Negro Improvement Association project: Smock reviews the special report on this documentary edition and the long-standing issues with the project. NHPRC staff recommends \$40,000 to support project for 2013, conditional on the project's submission of an analysis of current state of work and on a revision of current work plan and publication arrangements. Possibility of moving to online publication plan.
- Grant funding opportunities notices: Commission members voted unanimously to approve the notices for Innovations in Archives and Historical Editing, Documenting Democracy, Publishing Historical Records.  
(<http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/> The approved notices might have some updating and editorial changes from those in this link.)
- NHPRC Strategic Plan: Smock reviewed current draft of plan and how it relates to NARA's strategic plan. After brief discussion, Williams requested Commission members to send her any comments about current draft. (Note: Six main goals of draft 2014 NHPRC strategic plan are the same as those in <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/about/strategic-plan.html>)

- SAA/CoSA/ NAGARA Joint Statement on NHPRC: Following are highlights of the discussion of this agenda item.
  1. Most NARA/NHPRC staff and Commission members view the criteria offered in the statement as aligning with NHPRC’s current guidelines for evaluating grant proposals and with the Commission’s general objectives.
  2. Archivist of the US David Ferriero stated that he intends to respond by letter to the statement and suggested that he might point out how SAA/CoSA/NAGARA criteria relate closely to NARA/NHPRC strategic plans and to main points in “Digital Citizen” draft.
  3. Ferriero added that new federal budget guidelines imply additional cuts for NHPRC.
  4. While some Commission members expressed approval for criteria in the SAA/CoSA/NAGARA statement, others thought that they have a disapproving tone regarding NHPRC past practices. (Ferriero specifically noted that he does not read the statement that way.)
  5. How does NHPRC ensure “tangible results” of its projects? Williams explained the performance objectives that apply to each project and that project staff must report annually. One member asked that data on these performance standards be circulated more widely to demonstrate NHPRC’s rigorous evaluation of the results of its grant funding
  6. Note: Both CoSA Representative Gerald Handfield and I at different times during the meeting were asked if we could offer any background about the archival organizations’ statement. Because neither of us had been contacted about the statement, we demurred.

The Commission approved a resolution of appreciation for former Commission member Diane Vogt O’Connor.

### **Grant Proposals for May 2013 Meeting**

- The Commission approved all proposals in the Innovation category.
- The Commission approved all proposals in the Documenting Democracy category.
- Editorial Institute: Commission members discussed the Institute’s current curriculum, format, and funding. They raised the following questions: How does NHPRC staff view the Institute as a long-term funding commitment? How available is Institute’s training online? What is the composition of attendees, in terms of professional experience in documentary editing? Is the level of funding for the Institute appropriate (should participants pay more of their own costs to attend)? Should NHPRC resume its direct management of the Institute, rather than grant funds to the Association for Documentary Editing? Commission approves funding request for Institute.
- Publishing Modern Era: The Commission approved all proposals in this category as submitted, with two exceptions:
  1. The Commission asked the Executive Director to communicate with the staff of the Freedmen’s Papers project concerning qualifications of project staff.
  2. The Commission adopted a motion to tighten guidance and conditions for continued funding of Marcus Garvey/UNIA papers project.

After an executive session that produced no major decisions, the meeting was adjourned at about 2:15 pm ET.