

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 11 – 12, 2014
Washington, D.C.**

**Interim Council Actions: March 17 – July 29, 2014
(Prepared by President Danna Bell)**

BACKGROUND

According to Sturgis' *Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*¹ (SAA's designated guide to parliamentary procedure²) and to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*,³ the personal approval of a proposed action obtained from all or a majority of board members separately (as in a conference telephone call or, in SAA's case, an online vote) is a board decision that must be validated because no meeting was held during which the proposed action could properly be debated. Action taken by the board on the basis of individual approval can become an official act if the action is ratified by the board at a regular meeting.

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

Beginning in May 2013, a Consent Agenda was added to each Council meeting to help manage the Council's use of time at its in-person meetings. During the May 2014 meeting, a Council member suggested that the Council's online decisions be ratified via the already existing Consent Agenda so that SAA continues to be an open and transparent organization. Placing the Council's interim actions on the Consent Agenda at each meeting for ratification brings forward the decisions of SAA's governing body in the minutes of that group's meeting.

Although interim actions currently appear in the minutes, they are somewhat buried under the Executive Committee's report. Given the Council's robust use of an email discussion list to function as a group and to 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

¹ Alice Sturgis, *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, 4th ed., pp. 37-38.

² SAA Bylaw 9, <http://www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section1/bylaws>.

³ *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 11th ed., p. 486, l. 33 to p. 487, l. 12.

THAT the following interim actions taken by the SAA Council between March 17 and July 29, 2014, be ratified:

- Adopted the minutes of the May 22-24, 2014, Council meeting. (Passed unanimously on July 15, 2014.)
- Adopted an *SAA Code of Conduct*, specified a review cycle, and adjusted existing policy to administer the *Code*. (Passed unanimously on July 23, 2014.) (**Appendix**)
- Approved petition from The Catholic University of America to form a student chapter. (Passed unanimously on July 29, 2014.)

RECOMMENDATION 1

THAT the following Code of Conduct, as revised from the May 2014 draft (additions underlined, deletions struck through), be adopted:

SAA Code of Conduct*

SAA does not tolerate harassment in any form. In keeping with the core principles stated in its “[Code of Ethics for Archivists](#)” ** and “[Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy](#),” the Society of American Archivists is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for its members and others who participate in its conferences, events, meetings, formal mentoring relationships, and online spaces, regardless of age, color, creed, disability, family relationship, gender identity/expression, individual life style, marital status, national origin, physical appearance, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Harassment may include abusive verbal comments and/or discriminatory images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.

Conference, event, meeting, and online participants who are asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. Those who violate these rules may be expelled from the conference, event, or meeting at the discretion of the SAA Executive Director or organizers or may be denied access to the online space at the discretion of the administrator or the SAA Executive Director. Persons who have been expelled or denied access may appeal to the SAA Executive Committee.

If you feel that you are in immediate danger at any time during an SAA Annual Meeting or event, contact law enforcement (by dialing 911) or the facility front desk without delay. If you are not in immediate danger but feel that you are being harassed or that someone else is being harassed, or if you have other concerns, please contact the SAA Executive Director immediately.

At the SAA Annual Meeting: Go to the Onsite Registration Desk and ask the SAA staff member there to contact the Executive Director. You may be asked for a cell phone number at which the Executive Director can reach you.

At Other SAA Events/Meetings: Discuss your concerns with the presiding officer or instructor and/or contact the SAA Executive Director at 866-722-7858 or nbeaumont@archivists.org.

In SAA Online Spaces: Contact the administrator or the SAA Executive Director. Content presented at SAA conferences or meetings or online may at times deal with sensitive subject matter, ranging from visually sensitive historical material (such as images related to acts of genocide) to sexually explicit language or images (such as in archival letters, nude photographs, or film or audio recordings). This policy is not intended to constrain scholarly or

professional presentation, discourse, or debate, as long as these exchanges are conducted in a respectful manner.

* This policy is based on *US OpenGLAM Friendly Space Policy* (https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/US_OpenGLAM_Launch/Friendly_space_policy), which in turn is based on the *Geek Feminism Wiki sample policy* (http://geekfeminism.wikia.com/wiki/Conference_anti-harassment_policy).

** See particularly “Archivists cooperate and collaborate with other archivists, and respect them and their institutions’ missions and collecting policies. In their professional relationships with donors, records creators, users, and colleagues, archivists are honest, fair, collegial, and equitable.”

Support Statement: A Code of Conduct may serve to increase the diversity of participation in SAA events by encouraging open and safe places for members to meet.

Impact on Strategic Priorities The Code of Conduct responds directly to Strategic Priority 4.2, “Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association,” and especially to 4.2.2., “Remove barriers, perceived and actual, to broad participation by SAA members in the activities of the organization.”

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of adopting a Code of Conduct is unknown. There will certainly be some staff time involved, but the extent of that time is unclear. There are no other direct costs associated with the Code’s adoption.

RECOMMENDATION 2

THAT the Code of Conduct be reviewed in conjunction with SAA’s Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy (next review: January 2016).

Support Statement: This revision is needed to allow for periodic review of the Code of Conduct.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The Code of Conduct responds directly to Strategic Priority 4.2 “Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association,” especially 4.2.2., “Remove barriers, perceived and actual, to broad participation by SAA members in the activities of the organization.”

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of adopting a Code of Conduct is unknown. There will certainly be some staff time involved, but the extent of that time is unclear. There are no other direct costs associated with the Code’s adoption.

RECOMMENDATION 3

THAT Section III. Executive Committee, B. Duties of the SAA Governance Manual be revised as follows: (additions underlined, deletions struck through)

6. Review and respond to appeals made in response to actions related to Code of Conduct violations.

Support Statement: This revision is needed to allow SAA to administer the Code of Conduct.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The Code of Conduct responds directly to Strategic Priority 4.2 “Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association,” especially 4.2.2., “Remove barriers, perceived and actual, to broad participation by SAA members in the activities of the organization.”

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of adopting a Code of Conduct is unknown. There will certainly be some staff time involved, but the extent of that time is unclear. There are no other direct costs associated with the Code’s adoption.

RECOMMENDATION 4

THAT Section A of the Uniform Guidelines for SAA Websites and Online Communications be revised by adding a third paragraph as follows: (additions underlined, deletions struck through)

The entire SAA network, as defined above, is subject to the SAA Code of Conduct.

Support Statement: This revision is needed to allow SAA to administer the Code of Conduct.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The Code of Conduct responds directly to Strategic Priority 4.2 “Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association,” especially 4.2.2., “Remove barriers, perceived and actual, to broad participation by SAA members in the activities of the organization.”

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact of adopting a Code of Conduct is unknown. There will certainly be some staff time involved, but the extent of that time is unclear. There are no other direct costs associated with the Code’s adoption.