Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 17-18, 2015
Renaissance Cleveland Hotel
Cleveland, Ohio

Consent Agenda: Ratify Interim Executive Committee Actions
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Tanya Zanish-Belcher)

BACKGROUND

Current parliamentary policy agrees on validating board decisions made remotely, and ratifying the Executive Committee's decisions made on behalf of the Council via online and conference-call discussion via the Consent Agenda does not conflict with any existing SAA policy.

DISCUSSION

Given the Executive Committee's robust use of an email discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Executive Committee 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 Executive Committee between May 9 and August 7, 2015, be ratified.

- Finalized contract with SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont for a three-year period, May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2018. (May 2015)

- Approved SAA letter from President Kathleen Roe (drafted by the Intellectual Property Working Group) on "Comments on Orphan Works and Mass Digitization." (June 2015)

- Approved SAA letter from President Kathleen Roe (drafted by the Intellectual Property Working Group) on "Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works." (June 2015)

- Approved a draft statement on "Qualities of a Successful Candidate for Librarian of Congress" for circulation to other groups for feedback and possible sign-on. (June 2015)

- Approved "Information for New Council Members" and draft orientation schedule. (July 2015)

- Extended charge of the [Technical Subcommittee on Archival Facilities Guidelines](#) for a period of 12 months so that the group can complete its work. (July 2015)

- Approved signing on to "[The London Manifesto](#)," which has been published by the Library and Archives Copyright Alliance as a way to advocate for uniform copyright exceptions across all EU states. (August 2015)

- Approved an SAA letter to Facebook (drafted by the Web Archiving Roundtable) requesting functionality that would allow a page owner to download the contents of his/her page(s) for archives preservation purposes. (August 2015) (See Appendix.)

August 5, 2015

Via email to press@fb.com

Mark Zuckerberg and Members of the Facebook Board of Directors:

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) is North America's oldest and largest national archival professional organization. Our profession is dedicated to documenting the activities of institutions, communities, and individuals in order to provide authentic and reliable primary sources to researchers. This letter concerns the ability to download archives for pages created on Facebook.

Facebook is an incredibly important platform for documenting the lives and activities of more than a billion people around the world.[i] We commend you for enabling users to download their "archive" periodically from Facebook. This archive includes a user's messages, chats, likes, searches, photos, videos, and more.[ii] It is conveniently packaged as a zip file, which contains commonly understood file formats that can be viewed with a web browser. This data is of great use to archivists because it allows donors to easily collect their Facebook activity when they are donating their materials to an archive. The data presents a unique snapshot of the individual's activities on Facebook. Visitors using the donated materials in an archive can view this content in the context of other materials. Most importantly it is authoritative because it comes directly from Facebook and the donors themselves.

As you know Facebook users often create pages for their businesses, organizations, places, community groups, and more. Per your guidelines,[iii] Facebook pages are administered by an authorized representative of the entity in question. When an entity such as a business or community group is donating materials to an archive, it would be extremely useful if donors were able to download the contents of their pages so that the contents could be included with the donated materials. Unfortunately this function is not currently supported. In addition, Facebook's terms of service prevent this content from being collected without Facebook's permission (see section II.C in Facebook's Pages Terms).

SAA's members strongly encourage you to add functionality that allows a page owner to download the contents of his/her page(s). This would allow archival institutions to accept

donations of this material so that it can be made part of a collection and be made available to researchers who are examining other materials from the donor.

We believe that Facebook is a platform that offers an unprecedented ability for users to make their voices heard, to organize, and to effect change in their lives. As archivists we are dedicated to selecting, preserving, providing access to, and ensuring responsible custody of primary resource materials related to our diverse communities. We believe that the content in Facebook pages that has been managed by particular organizations, communities, and individuals will prove to be an indispensable part of that record.

Sincerely,

Kathleen D. Roe
President, 2014 – 2015

cc: Trevor Alvord, Chair, SAA Web Archiving Roundtable
        Kate Stratton, Vice Chair, SAA Web Archiving Roundtable
        Bethany Cron, Chair, SAA Records Management Roundtable
        Brad Houston, Immediate Past Chair, SAA Records Management Roundtable
        Robert Spindler, Chair, SAA Congressional Papers Roundtable
        Nancy Beaumont, SAA Executive Director

---

[i] http://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/
[ii] https://www.facebook.com/help/405183566203254
[iii] https://www.facebook.com/page_guidelines.php