

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 13, 2018
Washington, DC**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Council Interim Actions
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Kris Kiesling)**

BACKGROUND

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

Given the Council's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and 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

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Council between May 18, 2018, and July 16, 2018, be ratified:

- Drafted and approved a Council resolution recognizing an accomplished archivist and long-time SAA leader. (Council awards remain confidential until they are presented at the Annual Meeting. This resolution will be included in the 0818-1 Council meeting minutes.) (May 18, 2018)
- Approved the minutes of the May 7-9, 2019, Council meeting. (May 30, 2018)
- Drafted and approved a "[Statement on Removal of ISIS Records from Iraq by New York Times Reporter](#)," expressing deep concern about recent reports related to archival records in Iraq, namely from the April 4, 2018, article in which Rukumini Callimachi admits to removing more than 15,000 pages of Islamic State documents from Iraq. (June 6, 2018)
- Reviewed a report from the SAA representative to the International Council on Archives Section on Professional Associations, Becky Haglund Tousey. (Appendix A) (June 7, 2018)

- Adopted the new “[Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy](#),” as prepared by the SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force on Primary Source Literacy. (June 18, 2018)
- Approved a revised [issue brief](#) on Net Neutrality, originally drafted by the SAA Committee on Public Policy. (June 26, 2018)
- Reviewed a report from the SAA representative to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, Dennis Meissner, on the Commission’s June 7, 2018, meeting. (Appendix B) (July 6, 2018)
- Elected, at the recommendation of the SAA Foundation Board, JoyEllen Freeman and Angelique Richardson as new class B members of Board for the 2018-2021 term. (July 9, 2018)
- Approved a [position statement](#) on “Congressional Records as Public Records.” (July 16, 2018)

**Society of American Archivists
Interim Report
June 7, 2018**

**External Representative Report to Council:
International Council on Archives
Section of Professional Associations (SPA)
(Prepared by Becky Haglund Tousey, CA)**

The International Council on Archives' (ICA) Section of Professional Associations (SPA) Steering Committee met in Berlin, Germany, May 22-25, 2018. I attended as a representative of both the Society of American Archivists and the Academy of Certified Archivists. This was the first SPA meeting in recent memory where every steering committee member was in attendance. No one sent regrets. This was made possible because of ICA (PCOM) travel support for the representatives from Senegal and Chile.

SPA MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The steering committee met over 4 days. Besides myself, other steering committee members represented associations in Canada (Quebec), Spain (Catalonia), Chile, China, France, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Senegal. The Canada representation is new.

One of the key take-aways from this meeting is that SPA's position organizationally within ICA needs to change. It should not be a Section. Sections represent types of repositories and types of archival content. But the member associations (category B members) represent the archives profession across the world. The entity that represents category B members should be on par organizationally with the Forum of National Archives (FAN) which represents the category A members.

SPA Budget and Administrative matters

As usual, the committee spent time dealing with administrative matters related to budget, membership, the SPA website and how to use our "worksite" collaboration space, and future meeting logistics. The number of ICA category B members (professional associations) grew from 74 associations last year to 87 associations this year. That is the largest increase in many years.

Call with Anthea Seles, ICA Secretary General

On Wednesday morning we had a 1-hour Skype call with Anthea Seles, the new ICA Secretary General. She replaced David Leitch who retired in February. Anthea began by introducing herself and talking about her impressions of ICA, her priorities and her ways of working. ICA is a complex and formal organization and she wants to make governance less complicated. ICA needs to be more flexible and respond to issues as they arise. Her priorities are to diversify the networks within ICA and to make more connections with allied professions and sister organizations. Many issues need to be resolved within the head office and on the website. A

strategic review is underway now – which is very challenging for an international organization. Anthea agrees that SPA “represents the profession” across the world and should be on equal footing with FAN as a governing entity rather than a section. However, SPA and FAN will not always be on the same side of issues – they have different perspectives. One example is the recent statement on Archives and Human Rights. SPA supported the statement but FAN could not because of the political implications it raises for many countries. She said David Leitch is looking at the ICA constitution and will be recommending some changes. So the timing is good to bring up our recommendation to change the placement of SPA. The whole structure of ICA needs to be overhauled but change happens slowly and is complicated by French laws. I volunteered to draft a statement on behalf of SPA to David Leitch about the need to change the placement of category B members (professional associations) from a section to a position within the organization which reflects its parity with FAN.

We also discussed with Anthea some of the pain-points we have in dealing the Paris head office. Dues invoices are still sent out manually. Some associations have not gotten renewal notices and later are notified their membership has been cancelled for non-payment. And there are still many problems with the website. Andrea said ICA does not have the resources to work on the website this year. Many sections have been asking about starting a blog. Anthea said a section can create their own blog as long as it can be migrated at some point into the Druple system.

There was discussion about the upcoming election for President, VP of Finance and VP of Programms. All three office holders announced they are running for a second 4-year term, which is allowed. Calls have gone out to the membership for nominations of other candidates. So far no one has come forward to run against the incumbents. The feeling among SPA is that having an uncontested election is not good practice. We stressed to Anthea the importance of having a contested election with at least two candidates for each office.

SPA Strategic Projects

The bulk of our meeting time was spent working on our four key Action Plan projects. These projects were identified as priorities during our meeting last spring in Oslo:

- SPA Directory of Member Associations
- 2019 SPA Film Festival
- Africa Strategy
- Elevator Pitch Workshop Tool Kit

Working on projects with a committee of 12 people can be cumbersome. So SPA Chair Vilde Ronge and I decided to change the way we approached the discussions. Instead of having the entire committee work on every project, we divided the committee into four working groups of three people each. Each working group was assigned one of the projects and spent most of one day in discussions with instructions to come up with concrete next steps for that project. Then each group reported back to the full steering committee. This resulted in more accountability and was more productive.

SPA Directory of Member Associations

The existing association directory has not been updated since 2012. A survey will be sent to each association to solicit correct contact information. The primary challenge is the frequent turnover of association leadership so contact information often is no longer valid. We will communicate to associations the benefit of having an association email address (i.e. president@association.org) rather than using an individual’s email address as the primary

contact. There is also a need to identify professional associations which are not currently members of ICA. Once the directory is updated a marketing effort will be targeted at the non-member associations.

2019 SPA Film Festival

We learned a lot as a result of our first Film Festival in 2017 at the Seoul annual meeting. The working group made some changes to the previous categories. For 2019 they decided give one award for content, one award for artistic perspective and one award for originality (including humor). They are also adding a student award for 2019. As before, the overall theme of the video entries will be advocacy. The 2019 Film Festival will be announced on June 9th 2018 which is International Archives Day (IAD). Submissions will be accepted from September 2018-March 2019. We will review and select the winners at our steering committee meeting in May 2019. And winners will be announced on IAD June 9, 2019. A program proposal will be submitted for the 2019 fall annual meeting to show the winning entries.

Africa Strategy

SPA submitted a workshop proposal for the Cameroon annual meeting this November. The goal of the workshop is to help African associations strengthen their capabilities, advocacy and collaboration. We should hear in the next month if the workshop is accepted for the program. SPA would like to be able to collate and share information about what types of collaborative projects are going on between any country associations and African repositories or African country associations. We have gathered some anecdotal information from a few associations. But so far we have not been able to figure out how to accomplish something more systematic with just our volunteer steering committee. We will look at the option of PCOM funding.

It was very helpful to get the input and perspective of Alassane Ndiath, the Senegal representative, during our meeting. This was the first SPA steering committee meeting he has been able to attend. In Africa, professional associations are typically joint library-and-archives associations. And it is the national archives of a country which is the key influencer within the association. Alassane says it is very important that the national archives of African countries support the efforts of the associations, especially in the area of training. If that support is not there, the associations will not survive. In our Skype call with Anthea she said the strength of any African association largely depends on the archives legislation in that country, including where national archives are placed within the government. If the national archives is well placed and viewed as valuable, then the association will be stronger. If the national archives is not well placed, and being employed there is seen as a punishment, then there is no opportunity to influence and the association will be weak.

It is also very important to create a network of the associations across the African continent, even though the groups will be divided by the two languages, English and French. SPA will reach out to PCOM to see if funds are available to invite African association representatives to the workshop and annual meeting. Alassane will assemble of list of those who should be invited.

Elevator Pitch Workshop

The Elevator Pitch workshop which SPA held at last fall's Mexico City annual meeting received great feedback. In order to leverage that experience we are creating a tool kit that can hopefully be used by any association. The tool kit will include all the necessary instructions, framework, sample scenarios and evaluation tools we used. Vilde's Norway association provides funds for

educational projects. So she will ask her association for funds to hire a graphic designer to take our content and create an attractive tool kit. It will be produced in English and French and Norwegian.

Communication with member associations

We agreed it is well past time to retire the old newsletter format and use the “news” feature of the SPA website. The content will be similar but more timely since it will not be tied to the newsletter’s twice-yearly schedule. Short informational items from associations will be published each month. Some logistical and translation issues have to be worked out. But we established a communications calendar. Each of the 12 steering committee members will be responsible for providing content from their association(s) during one month of the year. Content from other associations will be published as it is received. I have been assigned the month of October. I will follow up later about what SAA news we can share for October.

EXECUTIVE BOARD & PROGRAMME COMMISSION SPRING MEETING

SPA Chair Vilde Ronge attended EB/PCOM meetings in Paris shortly before our SPA meeting in Berlin. EB and PCOM are heavily promoting the Cameroon annual meeting and stressing how important it is to have good attendance.

Vilde reported that 85% of ICA’s annual budget comes from Category A membership fees (the national archives). She did not have figures for what percentages come from Category B (associations), Category C (institutions) and Category D (individual) members. For a number of years the governance entity that represents the national archives members – FAN (Forum of National Archives) – has not been active. It is essentially invisible. There is a recognition that FAN needs to be more visible and transparent. UK National Archivist Jeff James is the new chair of FAN and is trying to “reactivate” it. He distributed a survey to all the national archivists recently and he shared the results at the EB meeting. The results showed that only a small % of national archivists see ICA as relevant, which is very disappointing. But many national archivists also said ICA “could be relevant.” ICA still has a lot of work to do to make FAN a more integrated and transparent part of the organization. It is the “political” arm of ICA and often has a different perspective on issues than those in other memberships categories.

Vilde told me privately that in informal discussions during the spring meetings in Paris, Anthea talked about SAA being an “important partner” of ICA. Anthea asked if Vilde could go to the SAA 2018 annual meeting in August and represent ICA. I told Vilde it may be more productive for Anthea or David Fricker (ICA President) to attend instead. Vilde said she would convey that message to Anthea and David. I don’t know if there is any wiggle room in the schedule for this coming annual meeting. But if Anthea or David could attend, would there be time for an informal meeting with Nancy and Tanya (or others)? Should I suggest to Anthea that she make a visit to the SAA office in Chicago to see how a well-run association office works? In my opinion, ICA could benefit greatly from SAA staff’s expertise. Another option is to submit a 2019 SAA annual meeting proposal that would enable deeper collaboration between ICA, SAA, ACA and Canada associations.

MEETING WITH ARCHIVES STUDENTS

Late Wednesday afternoon we all took a train ride to Potsdam, Germany to meet with a dozen archives students at Potsdam University of Applied Sciences. The archives department there has

seven staff members, several of whom also work at the nearby state archives. I thought it would be of interest to share an overview of their degree programs.

B.A. Archival Science – 7 semesters

Semester 1-2: fundamentals

Semester 3-6: advanced studies – compulsory and options modules

Practical project

Semester 7: Bachelors thesis

M.A. Archival Science – 6 semesters

Long-distance course designed as part-time for people who work full-time

Applicants must hold a university degree in any area of humanities

Begins every other year, in years with odd numbers

M.A. Information Sciences – 3 semesters

Records management and IT-focused curriculum

Applicants must hold a Bachelors degree with not less than 30 credits in information science, data or records management

FUTURE ICA & SPA MEETINGS:

- 2018 – ICA annual meeting, Yaoundé, Cameroon, November 24-28
- 2019 – Spring SPA meeting in Santiago, Chile, mid-May
- 2019 – ICA annual meeting, *TBD* *, October or November
- 2020 – Spring SPA meeting in Beijing, China
- 2020 – ICA Congress, Abu Dhabi, UAE in November

** The 2019 annual meeting was going to be a joint ICA/ARA (UK Association) meeting in Edinburgh. But negotiations broke down. Each will hold a separate meeting in 2019. ICA is looking at other UK or Europe locations. <https://www.ica.org/en/joint-ica-ara-statement-on-2019>*

FOR SAA COUNCIL: DISCUSSION OR ACTION TOPICS

- Just an FYI: This year the big topic during our informal discussion time was the new European Union Data Protection legislation that protects individuals' personal data. There are still lots of questions, and great concern, about how this will impact archives in the EU. Some say it is the “death of archives” and others say there are safeguards and exceptions in place that will mitigate the negative impact on archives. At the very least it will create a great deal of work for archival institutions as they have to rethink how they handle information requests (and keep reference statistics) and look at the information in their hard copy and digital holdings.
- Should I pursue the idea of inviting Anthea Seles or David Fricker to attend the SAA annual meeting this year? Or is it better to plan ahead and arrange a more intentional program opportunity for the 2019 annual meeting? Would Nancy and the SAA staff be open to a visit from Anthea Seles?

**Society of American Archivists
Interim Report
July 6, 2018**

**External Representative Report to Council:
National Historical Publications and Records Commissions
June 7, 2018, Meeting
(Prepared by Dennis Meissner)**

The full commission met the morning and afternoon of June 7, preceded by the regular meeting of the Executive Committee the previous afternoon.

New Executive Director

This meeting was the Commission's first opportunity to meet Christopher Eck, the new Executive Director who has been serving since March. Mr. Eck comes to the National Archives from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency as its Terrestrial Archaeology Program Manager for the Strategic Partnerships Directorate. Prior to that position, he worked as the Federal Preservation Officer for the First Responder Network Authority, as Cultural Resources Program Manager for the Air National Guard headquarters, and as Historic Preservation Officer for the General Services Administration's regional headquarters in Atlanta.

He has also led the Miami-Dade Office of Historic Preservation as its Executive Director and was Administrator and County Historic Preservation Officer for the Broward County Historical Commission. He was worked on the boards of the Fort Lauderdale Historic Preservation Board, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, and as a library visiting committee member for Loyola University New Orleans. He earned a B.A. in History from Loyola University New Orleans, an M.A. in History and Historical Archaeology from the University of Massachusetts Boston, and a J.D. from the University of Miami. Although he lacks direct experience in archives, Chris seems to be a quick study, fully engaged with the NHPRC mission, and deeply appreciative of the NHPRC staff. I am looking forward to working with him over the next three years.

Funding of the Commission

The House Appropriations Subcommittee granted \$6 Million in funding to NHPRC "right out of the gate" in March, which has not happened in quite a long time and spares it the usual agony of wondering whether it will be able to fund ongoing commitments and advertise the next cycle of grants. AOTUS David Ferriero credits Congressman and Commission member Mark Meadows with unusually proactive work behind the scenes in urging his colleagues to support the NHPRC and its work.

Approval of Grants

At the October 2017 deadline the NHPRC had received 71 applications for the Archives Leadership Institute, Public Engagement with Historical Records, Access to Historical Record Archival Projects, and Publishing Historical Records programs. During the course of the review process, seven applicants were deemed ineligible. Two applicants in Access to Historical

Records: Archival projects later withdrew their applications. There is also one deferred grant application from Access to Historical Records-Major Initiatives. As a result, at the June 7 meeting the Commission considered 63 applications requesting \$6,266,380 in grant funds. The applications came from institutions located in 25 states. Among the grant programs under consideration this cycle, the staff recommended support for 31 proposals totaling \$4,093,283 in NHPRC award funds. The staff recommendations would result in a variety of projects being undertaken in 15 states. Following discussion of the staff recommendations in each grant category, the Commission approved the full staff recommendations with some minor adjustments. As has been the case so far in my tenure, the small staff does an exemplary job in understanding the applicants and their proposals, often going back to some of them multiple times with questions and suggestions. The result tends to be a recommended slate of projects that leave Commission members very little to quibble with.

NHPRC Strategic Plan Implementation

The NHPRC staff members are two years into implementing the Strategic Plan approved May 2016. The following is a summary of highlights for the six-month period, November 2017 – April 2018.

Strategic Goal One: Connect the National Archives with the nation's archives

Initiative on New Publishing Methods. This \$2 Million initiative funded by Mellon hopes to support new approaches to and mechanisms (digital) for creating and publishing documentary editions that foster collaboration and sustainability. Eight planning grants were funded by Mellon. The Digital Edition Publishing Cooperative projects have all begun meeting. Four representatives from each project will come to the National Archives in September to discuss workflows and lessons learned. Mellon and the NHPRC have discussed the schedule for the Implementation grant application process.

Initiative on Digital Records Preservation and Access – with a first focus on government email. Nancy Melley organized the Government Email Symposium that took place on September 15, 2017 in the Innovation Lab at the National Archives downtown. A subsequent session was held for NARA staff that will combine these findings with a presentation from NARA Corporate Records Management Group. The Case Studies for the project have been posted on the NHPRC website. Melley is preparing a white paper to accompany them.

Initiative on the Future of State Boards. Dan Stokes convened the initial state board symposium on July 12, 2017 during the CoSA annual meeting in Boise, ID. A follow-up meeting was held with COSA's Executive Board in April 2018. COSA leadership shared a proposal for block grants from NHPRC to the state boards as a method of reducing administrative burdens and improving the reach of the state board program. The move toward block grants to states would be a major departure from the intensely competitive process currently in place among SHRABs, and would attempt to achieve some progress in every state and bring all state programs up to some acceptable threshold.

Publish and disseminate findings on best practices, tools, and methodologies drawn from funded projects, authored by staff and others. Darrell Meadows organized for the January 2018 Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association a series of linked presentations on "Primary Sources and the Historical Profession in the Age of Text Search." The five-part series includes presentations on Historical Research in the Digital Age, Documentary Editions in the Digital

Age, Experimentation in Digital Documentary Editing, Primary Sources in the Classroom, and Theory and Method in the Digital Age.

Strategic Goal Two: Expand access to the nation’s historical records

Develop a Single “Access” grant program with two distinct tiers and a new, two-stage application process. The goal here is to implement new grants programs for “Access to Historical Records” that attract new types of applicants and that will experiment with new, more effective grant application procedures.

Major Initiatives (large grants): In January 2018 NHPRC received 41 preliminary applications from 25 states and the District of Columbia. Because these are designed as collaborative, multi-institution projects, many more repositories are represented in this applicant pool than this number suggests. In addition, they introduced a short, preliminary application process to this grant program. From this pool of 41, the NHPRC invited 11 applicants to complete a full application against a July 11 deadline.

Archival Projects (small grants): At its October 2017 deadline, the Commission received 39 applications. 16 (41%) of the applicants were applying to NHPRC for the first time. The high proportion of new applicants suggest that staff’s outreach efforts and the structure of the new grant program is working to meet this goal.

Strategic Goal Three: Public Engagement in preserving and discovering the American record

Implement a Public Engagement grants program. NHPRC received nine Public Engagement with Historical Records applications at the October 2017 deadline. The quality of the applications overall was somewhat lacking and only recommend two proposals for funding. Fortunately, they are seeing in both Major Initiatives and Archival Projects a number of applicants that are also proposing innovative methods to engage the public with historical records. Commission staff will engage in targeted outreach to encourage more and better applicants to the Public Engagement program.

Strategic Goal Four: Enhance the capacity of small and diverse organizations with records collections

Improve and streamline the application peer review process. Staff continue to use the internal grants management system to manage the workflow of the peer review system. The method is more secure and has reduced the need for separate email exchanges with reviewers.

Support and offer workshops. Staff continued their efforts and conducted or proposed workshops on NHPRC grant programs (half and full day), with a focus on regional and state archives organizations. Nancy Melley gave the grant workshop at the Midwest Archives Conference in Chicago in spring 2018.

Survey applicants/potential applicants about processes and programs. After deliberation, we decided to delay the next survey until Fall 2018 to have more time to assess how the new programming was working.

As always, I truly appreciate the opportunity to make a continuing contribution to SAA by serving on the Commission. Please let me know if you would at any time like to receive more information about the Commission and its operations and initiatives.