Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
September 23, 2020
Virtual Meeting

Agendas and background materials for SAA Council meetings are publicly available via the SAA website at: http://www2.archivists.org/governance/reports. Each Council meeting agenda comprises Consent Items, Action Items, Discussion Items, and Reports, and the number/letter in the minutes (e.g., II.A.) corresponds to an item listed on the agenda. The minutes summarize actions taken and the outcomes of discussions. Reports generally are not summarized in the minutes, but provide a wealth of information about the work of appointed and component groups and the staff. To view the reports–and all other background materials–see the SAA website.

President Rachel Vagts called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. CT on Wednesday, September 23. Present were Vice President Courtney Chartier; Treasurer Amy Fitch; Executive Committee Member Melissa Gonzales; Council members Eric Chin, Stephen Curley, Petrina Jackson, Derek Mosley, Ricardo Punzalan, Mario Ramirez, Meg Tuomala, and Rachel Winston; and SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont, Publications Director Teresa Brinati, Finance/Administration Director Peter Carlson, Education Director Rana Hutchinson Salzmann, Information Systems Administrator Matt Black, and Governance Manager Felicia Owens.

Guests included SAA staff members Abigail Christian, Akila Ruffin, Carlos Salgado, Michael Santiago, and Lakesha Thaddis, who briefly joined the virtual meeting to meet and introduce themselves to the new Council.

I. COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Adoption of the Agenda

Vagts introduced the agenda, noting that she would like to hold a brief Executive Session at the end of the meeting. (Agenda items are presented in these minutes based on the original sequencing to minimize confusion.) Chin moved adoption of the agenda as revised, Tuomala seconded, and the agenda was adopted unanimously (**MOTION 1**).

B. Status of Council To Do List

Council members briefly reviewed the status of actions listed in this internal working document. No updates were made.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were adopted by consent (**MOTION 2**).

Move Consent Items: Ramirez

Second Consent Items: Punzalan
Vote: PASSED

A. Ratify Council Interim Actions

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Council between August 31 and September 15, 2020, be ratified:

- Approved the August 3, 2020, Council meeting minutes. (August 31, 2020)

- Approved the August 7, 2020, Council meeting minutes. (September 15, 2020)

III. STRATEGIC PLANNING

The following documents were provided for reference:

A. Current Strategic Plan 2020-2022

B. Current Strategic Plan Dashboard

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve *ACRL/RBMS-SAA Guidelines on Access to Research Materials*

Tuomala introduced a recommendation from the SAA Standards Committee to approve revisions to the *ARCL/RBMS-SAA Guidelines on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries*, as prepared by the ACRL/RBMS-SAA Joint Task Force to Revise Guidelines on Access to Research Materials. Revisions included removing ambiguous language, acknowledging the range of repository types and how the guidelines can be utilized, and removing redundant or outdated information, as well as addressing a request from the SAA Committee on Public Policy to include digital and born-digital materials that were not previously covered. The Council agreed that the new version is much improved. This was the final approval needed to formally adopt the new version of the *Guidelines on Access to Research Materials.*

The Council noted that the Joint Task Force did not receive any substantive member comments on their initial proposed revisions, despite issuing a formal, public call across various channels. Noting that other standards groups have recently struggled to gather member comments, the Council agreed to consider new approaches for soliciting feedback on draft standards.

MOTION 3

THAT the revisions proposed by the ACRL/RBMS-SAA Joint Task Force to Revise Guidelines on Access to Research Materials to the *Guidelines on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries* (Appendix) be approved.

Support Statement: The *Guidelines* were developed collaboratively with representatives from SAA and ACRL/RBMS. Circulating the task force's proposed changes to this long-maintained

document through both library and archives communication channels has allowed for a well-rounded and thoroughly vetted tool. Although the approval process through both organizations was more prolonged than expected, the resulting guidelines clarify how archivists can advocate for and facilitate equitable access to resources and services, including digital collections.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: Approval of this standard will have direct, positive impact on SAA Strategic Goal #3 (*Advancing the Field*, 3.3), given that this standard was developed in collaboration with allied library professionals and will have national reach. The standard will contribute to Goal #1 (*Advocating for Archives and Archivists,* especially 1.3) by strengthening the ability of those who manage archival collections to protect the accessibility of the historical record.

Fiscal Impact: None.

Move: Tuomala
Second: Punzalan
Vote: PASSED

B. [Proposal to Form Accessioning Section](#)

The Council reviewed a petition to form a new Accessioning Section. Noting previous Council discussions about the sustainability of SAA's section structure and its capacity to foster engagement among members—as well as the compelling nature of this proposal—the Council agreed to seek additional information from the petitioners and from current groups related to this special interest (specifically the Acquisitions and Appraisal and Description sections) before proceeding.

C. Other Action Items from Council Members

No other action items were brought forward.

D. Executive Session (as needed)

The Council briefly convened in executive session at the close of the meeting.

MOTION 4

THAT the Council move into Executive Session.

Move: Fitch
Second: Punzalan
Vote: PASSED

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Topics for 2020-2021 Council Forums/Listening Sessions

The Council brainstormed about topics for upcoming listening sessions and forums that may be of current interest to SAA members and agreed to issue a survey to gather members' ideas. More information will be shared with members as soon as possible.

B. Debrief of 2020 Virtual Joint Annual Meeting

The Council briefly shared feedback on the 2020 Virtual Joint Annual Meeting and reviewed related reports from the staff (VI.D.) and the 2020 Program Committee (VI.E.). Beaumont noted that the 2021 Program Committee has begun brainstorming potential models for the 2021 conference, which will inform the call for proposals.

C. Other Discussion Items from Council Members

Jackson and Punzalan provided a brief update on the current work of the Nominating Committee, and the Council discussed various ways that they might encourage more interest in running in the general election. Notably, they discussed ways to share more about their experience serving on the Council and the many tangible and intangible benefits they've appreciated.

VI. REPORTS

Reports are discussed by the Council only as needed and generally are not summarized in the minutes (with the exception of the Executive Committee report, which details interim actions of the Executive Committee). They do, however, provide a wealth of information about the work of appointed and component groups and the staff. To view the reports–and all other background materials–see http://www2.archivists.org/governance/reports.

A. President

Vagts reported on progress with A*CENSUS II, which includes working to confirm all members for the ten-person working group and assisting staff with drafting a memorandum of understanding with Ithaka S+R, the research consulting firm.

Vagts received an inquiry from the Public Library Archives/Special Collections Section about concerns with recent layoffs at the Birmingham Public Library. The Committee on Public Policy is developing a statement on closure of archives for both current and future situations.

B. Vice President/President-Elect

Chartier noted that she has begun work on the annual appointments process and has appointed Audra Eagle Yun to chair the 2021 Appointments Committee. The official call for volunteers will be issued in October.

The Council reviewed, but did not discuss, the following reports:

C. Treasurer

D. Staff: Annual Meeting

E. 2020 Program Committee

F. Other Reports from Council Members/What Are You Hearing from Members?

No further reports were brought forward.

I. COUNCIL BUSINESS (continued)

A. Review of September 2020 To Do List / Talking Points

Due to time limitations, Council members will review via the discussion list the draft list of action items and talking points stemming from the meeting.

B. Adjournment

The Council meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:58 p.m. on Wednesday, September 23.

ACRL/RBMS-SAA Guidelines on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries
(Proposed Revisions, September 2020)

Introduction

Both the Society of American Archivists' Core Values and Rare Books and Manuscripts Section's Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion emphasize the importance of providing access to materials. This document is intended to be applied in conjunction with the SAA Code of Ethics for Archivists, the RBMS Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians, and other related professional statements and standards. Within the context of repository types, audiences, collections, or other factors, these Guidelines can serve as an advocacy tool and foundation for policies and procedures to facilitate equitable access to resources and services.

Discoverability
- Establish a minimum baseline for intellectual access to holdings, even in the case of unprocessed and/or restricted materials.
- Enable the discoverability of collections with finding aids, catalog records, blogs, web pages, databases, and other means.
- Assess discovery tools regularly and update as needed.

Physical and Digital Materials
- Make available all materials intended for public access, regardless of format.
- Implement policies, procedures, and programs to ensure the authenticity, reliability, completeness, and preservation of materials from one user to the next.

Laws, Regulations, and Restrictions

- Restrictions on access may be imposed to protect national security, by law, by institutional mandate, tribal laws, cultural stewardship practices, by donor agreement, or to preserve materials. If restricted due to preservation concerns, provide materials in an alternative format.
- Fulfill legal and institutional obligations to protect privacy or confidentiality as outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Privacy Act, and other applicable laws or regulations.
- Make information on restricted materials accessible.
- Advocate for limited or no restrictions when negotiating with donors of materials.
- Periodically review and reevaluate restricted material. Remove restrictions when they are no longer required.
- Implement security measures to safeguard staff and collections.

Copyright
- Communicate the copyright status of materials.
- Ensure researchers understand that they are responsible for adhering to copyright law[1] when copying, using, or publishing from materials.

Accessibility

- Factor accessibility into all areas of access including the reading room, collections, exhibits, services, and events.
- Address and advocate for policy and workflow changes to remove barriers.
- Comply with state and federal guidelines for accessibility of collections, venues, and services according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)[2], Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), respective SAA and ALA accessibility guidelines, and other related parameters.[3]
- Provide alternative format options to accommodate users.

Reproductions and Use

- Provide access to collections at no direct cost to users.
- Make policies governing access and use available.
- Offer reproduction services administered in accordance with the copyright laws, institutional access policies, and repository regulations.[4]

---

[1] For more information on copyright and user rights please see the SAA pamphlet available here: https://www2.archivists.org/publications/brochures/copyright-and-unpublished-material.
[2] The ADA guidelines relate to gaining physical access to the building, room, or space.
[3] American Library Association, Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy: http://www.ala.org/asgcla/resources/libraryservices. Society of American Archivists, Guidelines for Accessible Archives for People with Disabilities https://www2.archivists.org/standards/guidelines-for-accessible-archives-for-people-with-disabilities.
[4] ACRL/RBMS Guidelines Regarding Security and Theft in Special Collections: http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/security_theft; ALA Copyright information and resources: http://www.ala.org/advocacy/copyright