

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call Minutes
October 6, 2017
1:00 – 2:00 pm ET**

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 Tanya Zanish-Belcher called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. on Friday, October 6. Present were Vice President Meredith Evans; Treasurer Cheryl Stadel-Bevans; Executive Committee Member Kris Kiesling; Council members Steven Booth, Courtney Chartier, Amy Cooper Cary, Brenda Gunn, Bergis Jules (joining at 1:15 p.m.), Erin Lawrimore, Bertram Lyons, and Audra Eagle Yun; and SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont, Publications Director Teresa Brinati, Finance/Administration Director Peter Carlson, and Governance Program Coordinator Felicia Owens.

I. COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Adoption of the Agenda

Zanish-Belcher introduced the agenda. Cooper Cary moved adoption of the agenda, Kiesling seconded, and the agenda was adopted unanimously (**MOTION 1**).

B. Status of Council Action List

Council members briefly reviewed and provided updates on the status of actions listed in this internal working document.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

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

Move Consent Items: Cooper Cary

Second Consent Items: Stadel-Bevans

Vote: PASSED (Booth, Chartier, Cooper Cary, Evans, Gunn, Kiesling, Lawrimore, Lyons, Stadel-Bevans, Yun. Absent: Jules.)

A. Ratify Executive Committee Interim Actions

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Executive Committee in September 2017 be ratified:

- Reached out to contacts at the National Archives and Records Administration for an Explanation of Records Scheduling Process as It Applies to Proposed ICE Schedule. (See Appendix.) (September 6, 2017)
- Declined to join an Associations Alliance Task Force proposed by the Association of Canadian Archivists. (September 12, 2017)

B. Ratify Council Interim Actions

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Council between August 15, 2017, and September 14, 2017, be ratified:

- Reconvened an SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force to Revise the Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries. (See Appendix for Joint Task Force description.) (August 15, 2017)
- Approved the minutes of the [July 24](#) and [July 29](#), 2017, Council meetings. (September 8, 2017)
- Approved the minutes of the [August 22, 2017](#), Council conference call discussion of the location of the 2019 Annual Meeting. (September 13, 2017)
- Elected four Class B members to the SAA Foundation Board: Sharmila Bhatia (2017-2020), Waverly Lowell (2017-2020), Dennis Meissner (2017-2020), and Michele Pacifico (2017-2020). (September 14, 2017)

C. Independent Archivists Section Standing Rules

THAT the following standing rules of the Independent Archivists Section be approved:

Independent Archivists Section of the Society of American Archivists

STANDING RULES

I. Mission

The Independent Archivists Section seeks to facilitate and foster the sharing of ideas, information, and support among archivists outside the traditional archival repository. This includes, but is not limited to, independent contractors, private archivists, digital archivists, and freelance and consulting archivists.

The Independent Archivists Section seeks to offer members advice and support on topics ranging from the nuances of business as an independent contractor to curation and access in a non-traditional repository. Unique facets of ethical and preservation activities with a thorough lack of institutional support will also be examined both by and for those working in non-traditional archives.

II. Membership

Membership in the Independent Archivists Section of the Society of American Archivists is open to anyone who has an interest in archival consulting or freelancing and to those archivists for private collections held in non-traditional repositories.

Non-SAA members may participate in the section's listserv and access the microsite but *may not* vote or hold a leadership position as either chair or steering committee member.

III. Governance

A. Bylaws and Standing Rules

These standing rules of the Independent Archivists Section shall serve as a supplement to the SAA Section Bylaws, which govern all SAA sections. Please refer to [Section IX. Sections](#) of the SAA Governance Manual for information on membership, section election procedures, reporting requirements, and more.

B. Officers

The officers of the Independent Archivists Section shall be a chair, vice-chair, immediate past chair, and a web liaison. Only members of the SAA and of the Independent Archivists Section may serve as officers of this Section. One new vice chair/chair-elect shall be elected by the members of the Independent Archivists Section and shall serve a three-year term, the first year as vice chair/chair-elect, the second year as chair, and the third year as immediate past chair.

The web liaison shall be elected for a term of two years. The web liaison is responsible for spearheading the maintenance and regular updating of the Independent Archivists Section microsite as well as collaborating with the Steering Committee to coordinate the creation or collection of new content for the microsite. The web liaison also is responsible for working in tandem with the Steering Committee to ensure that the Section is using various communication modes, such as the Section listserv and social media, to communicate with the Section membership about news and events.

C. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall consist of the officers and five members, for a total of nine members. The Steering Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the officers and its members may be assigned specific responsibilities by the chair. The Steering Committee shall plan each annual meeting of the Section. The Committee should be made up of a diverse representation of the Section membership. These include, but are not limited to: contract archivists, unique repositories-business, unique repositories-academic, et al.

The Steering Committee will assist the Chairs in:

- The solicitation and review of materials for the microsite;
- The planning of the annual meeting;
- Setting the agenda, creating meeting activities, etc.;
- The creation of new initiatives for the membership at large (i.e.: webinars, talks, workshops, etc.);
- The election process, including soliciting and reviewing potential candidates; and

- Leadership of subcommittees, to be appointed or elected as needed as determined by the Chairs.

D. Elections

Elections shall be conducted online with the assistance of the SAA staff and in accordance with guidelines for section elections as specified in [Section IX. Sections](#) of the SAA Governance Manual. Availability of the online ballot and deadline for voting shall be announced by the chair to all section members via the section's official email discussion list and website.

The Steering Committee members shall serve three-year terms, two members being elected at each year on the annual election ballot, with additional members elected if for any reason unexpired terms need to be filled. The Steering Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the officers and its members may be assigned specific responsibilities by either chair. The Steering Committee shall plan each annual meeting of the Section.

The Steering Committee, working with the immediate past chair, will announce a call for nominations and review the candidates for the ballot. The Committee shall solicit from Section members for the positions to be filled.

All persons whose names are submitted to the Committee or proposed by the Committee itself shall be considered nominees if they agree to have their names placed in nomination and are members of SAA and the Section. The Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that there is at least one nominee for the position of vice chair/chair-elect and that the number of nominees for membership on the Steering Committee is not less than the number of positions to be filled. The Nominating and Elections Committee shall distribute information about the nominees to the membership of the Section by June 15. A simple majority of the votes cast shall be required for election to vice chair/chair-elect. Members of the Section may vote for as many nominees for Steering Committee member as there are positions to be filled and the nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. Elected officers and Steering Committee members shall assume office at the conclusion of the annual meeting of the Section.

V. Meetings

The Independent Archivists Section shall meet once a year at the SAA Annual Meeting at the time and place scheduled by the SAA executive office. Additional meetings of the entire membership or the Steering Committee may be scheduled by the chair if needed to carry out the business of the Section.

VI. Amendments

Any member of the Independent Archivists Section may propose amendments to these standing rules. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the chair at least 60 days prior to the annual section election. The chair shall publish proposed amendments at least 45 days prior to the annual section election and voting on the proposed amendments shall be in the same manner as the election of officers.

To ensure alignment with SAA's governance documents, any amendments to the section's standing rules should be reviewed by the executive director (or her/his designee) and the section's Council liaison by May 1, before they are put forward in a referendum for vote by the section membership. Proposed amendments to the section's standing rules will appear on the section's annual election ballot for final approval by a two-thirds majority of voters. Any adopted amendments should be posted promptly to the section's official microsite and be noted in the section's next annual report to the Council. Any revisions

to the section's name or mission/description must be submitted to the Council for final approval. For more information on amendment procedures, see [Section IX. Sections](#) of the SAA Governance Manual.

Adopted by the SAA Council, October 2017.

Support Statement: These standing rules have been reviewed by SAA staff and the section's Council liaison and have been determined to align with Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual. These standing rules will provide the appropriate structure and flexibility to establish this new section.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: These standing rules will provide the framework for this new section in supporting all four goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. The new section will serve an underserved, but growing, demographic of the SAA membership and archives profession.

Fiscal Impact: None.

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve Section Name Changes

Three sections requested to change their group's name to better reflect the evolved mission and scope of the section. Each section conducted a member referendum on the name change and all were approved by a simple majority of voting members.

1. [Architectural Records Section](#)

MOTION 3

THAT the name of the Architectural Records Section be changed to the Design Records Section and that the group's description be revised as follows (*strikethrough* = deletion, *underline* = addition):

~~Architectural Records Section Bylaws~~ Design Records Section Standing Rules

I. NAME. The name of the section shall be ~~Architectural~~ Design Records Section of the Society of American Archivists.

II. MISSION. The ~~Architectural-Design~~ Records Section (~~ArchRS~~) (DRS) of the Society of American Archivists supports the preservation of design records that includes but are not limited to, architectural, engineering, landscaping landscape architecture, planning, urban design, graphic design, and construction records. ~~and This community brings together care-givers to~~ discusses the storage, conservation, arrangement, preservation, access, and description problems inherent in specialized records. The Section's mission is to provide a forum for members to discuss issues related to access and management of records from the architectural, design, ~~records~~ and related fields.

Support Statement: The change in name of the “Architectural Records Section” to the “Design Records Section” more accurately reflects the work of Section members and raises awareness of shared characteristics among records from design-based disciplines.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: This action will not affect SAA’s strategic priorities.

Fiscal Impact: This action will have minimal impact on SAA staff or finances.

Move: Kiesling

Second: Gunn

Vote: PASSED (Booth, Chartier, Cooper Cary, Evans, Gunn, Kiesling, Lawrimore, Lyons, Stadel-Bevans, Yun. Absent: Jules.)

2. Lesbian and Gay Archives Section

MOTION 4

THAT the name of the Lesbian and Gay Archives Section be changed to the Diverse Sexuality and Gender Section and that the group’s description be revised as follows (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*):

~~**Lesbian & Gay Archives Section**~~
Diverse Sexuality and Gender Section
of the Society of American Archivists

STANDING RULES

Article 1. Name.

The name of this section shall be the ~~Lesbian and Gay Archives Section~~ Diverse Sexuality and Gender Section of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), hereinafter referred to as ~~LAGAS~~ DSGS.

Article 2. Objectives.

- A. Bring together people who are concerned about the collection, preservation, description and research use of archival materials documenting LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual/Ally) people and their communities.
- B. Keep LGBTQIA issues in archives and history ~~more~~ visible within SAA.
- C. Educate archivists about the importance of identifying and preserving historical records documenting the lives, accomplishments, and cultures of LGBTQIA people.
- D. Act as a liaison between SAA and community-based LGBTQIA archives. Encourage and facilitate the participation of LGBTQIA archivists in SAA activities and the professional archival community.
- E. Exchange information with other LGBTQIA professional groups

Support Statement: The name of the Lesbian and Gay Archives Section should be changed to the Diverse Sexuality and Gender Section because the new name is much more inclusive and utilizes language that is more contemporary and reflective of the group's goals and priorities.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: This proposed name change addresses a number of SAA's strategic priorities, including:

- 1.3 – Provide leadership in ensuring the completeness, diversity, and accessibility of the historical record.
- 4.2 – Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association.
- 4.3 – Continue to enrich the association with greater diversity in membership and expand leadership opportunities.

Fiscal Impact: The only fiscal impact will be the time needed by staff to change the name of our subgroup both online and in print.

Move: Lyons

Second: Yun

Vote: PASSED (Booth, Chartier, Cooper Cary, Evans, Gunn, Kiesling, Lawrimore, Lyons, Stadel-Bevans, Yun. Absent: Jules)

3. Recorded Sound Section

MOTION 5

THAT the name of the Recorded Sound Section be changed to the Audio and Moving Image Section and that the group's description be revised as follows (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*):

Recorded Sound Section Bylaws **Audio and Moving Image Section**

STANDING RULES

I. NAME. The name of the section shall be the ~~Recorded Sound Roundtable~~ Audio and Moving Image Section (AMIS).

II. MISSION. The mission of the section is to serve as a forum for discussing the role, needs, ~~and care~~ preservation, and management of sound recordings in audio and audiovisual archival collections.

Support Statement: Changing the name of the Recorded Sound Roundtable to the "Audio and Moving Image Section" will more accurately reflect the work of Section members and raise awareness of the challenges and complexities of working with audiovisual materials and audiovisual collections.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: This action will not affect SAA's strategic priorities.

Fiscal Impact: This action will have minimal impact on SAA staff or finances.

Move: Stadel-Bevans

Second: Kiesling

Vote: PASSED (Booth, Chartier, Cooper Cary, Evans, Gunn, Kiesling, Lawrimore, Lyons, Stadel-Bevans, Yun. Absent: Jules.)

B. Statement on the Value and Importance of the U.S. Census

In light of vacancies in the positions of the U.S. Census Bureau Director and Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer as well as rumors about the likelihood of significant cuts to the Bureau as it ramps up for the 2020 Census, Council members worked with Committee on Public Policy Chair Dennis Riley to draft the statement below.

MOTION 6

THAT the following Statement on the Value and Importance of the U.S. Census be approved as amended (*strikethrough* = deletion, *underline* = addition).

Society of American Archivists Statement on the Value and Importance of the U.S. Census September 2017

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) notes with concern ~~three~~ two factors that may compromise the capacity of the U.S. Census Bureau to perform its long-standing and critically important work of documenting the nation's population: ~~the retirement of Census Bureau Director John H. Thompson, the current vacancy~~ vacancies in the positions of Bureau Director and Deputy Director/and Chief Operating Officer, which creates a leadership vacuum, and the Trump Administration's proposal to make significant cuts in non-defense-related federal funding. As the Bureau prepares for the 2020 Census, it must have the stable leadership and resources needed to fulfill its Constitutional mandate to conduct a decennial census and to continue its other important work (including the American Community Survey, the Economic Census, and other censuses and surveys).

SAA calls on Congress and the Administration to provide full funding and sufficient staff to ensure that the U.S. Census Bureau can meet its mandate efficiently and effectively. The U.S. Census Director must be a non-partisan professional who is qualified to perform the duties and responsibilities of the office.

Background

Since 1790 the Census has served as a record of the American people, collecting valuable information related to numbers, geographical location, origin, race, immigration status, education, and employment. The data collected by the Census determine apportionment of seats in the United States House of Representatives; factor into school districting; provide age search information for qualifying for Social Security and other benefits; and serve as the basis for distribution of billions of dollars in federal funds to local, state, and tribal governments for such infrastructure improvements and services as:

- Hospitals and emergency services,
- Schools and job training centers,

- Senior centers, and
- Bridges, tunnels, and other public-works projects.

The Census as a Historical Record

“It would be difficult to write history either social or economic or indeed political without statistics, and it would be a very defective economic or social history of the United States that ignored the statistics compiled by the United States census,” wrote Joseph Hill of the U.S. Census Bureau in 1908.¹

The data collected during the decennial census is vital to the historical record and serves as the basis of other federal datasets, including the Bureau of Economic Analysis’ per capita income series. Genealogists rely on Census information to trace family histories. Social scientists and historians use Census data to track trends in and changes to American society over decades. Census information can be vital to researchers and advocates seeking data to support legislation and causes. Additionally, Census records capture information about individuals who otherwise might not leave historical records behind—such as immigrants, people of color, the illiterate, or the poor—and thus provide important documentation of marginalized communities.

SAA’s Public Policy Agenda notes that archival records created by government serve certain public needs that are fundamental to the nature of a democracy. These records:

- Ensure the transparency and accountability of government at all levels.
- Ensure the protection of citizens’ rights and individual privacy.
- Guarantee the administrative continuity necessary for good governance.
- Make accessible evidence of the diverse and complex elements of the human experience.
- Preserve historical documentation for the next generation.

U.S. Census records are among the most important in ensuring individuals’ rights, the accountability of our government, and the accessibility of historical information. Therefore, the Society of American Archivists calls on Congress and the Administration to provide the resources necessary to ensure that these records are created, preserved, and made accessible for future generations.

Approved by the SAA Council on October 6, 2017.

Sources

What Is the Census: <https://www.census.gov/2010census/about/>

National Archives Information about the Census: <https://www.archives.gov/research/census>

Reamer, Andrew. “Counting for Dollars: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Distribution of Federal Funds.” Brookings Institute, March 2010. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0309_census_report.pdf

Strain, Michael R. “The Census Is a Valuable Economic Tool.” American Enterprise Institute, June 15, 2012. <https://www.aei.org/publication/the-census-is-a-valuable-economic-tool/>

Swierenga, Robert P. “Historians and the Census: The Historiography of Census Research.” *The Annals*

¹ Joseph A. Hill, “The Historical Value of the Census,” Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1908, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1909), 1:199.

of Iowa 50 (1990), 650-673. <http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=9478&context=annals-of-iowa>

Support Statement: SAA’s Public Policy Agenda notes that archival records created by government serve certain public needs that are fundamental to the nature of a democracy. U.S. Census records are among the most important in ensuring individuals’ rights, the accountability of our government, and the accessibility of historical information.

Relation to SAA Priorities: Supports SAA’s commitment to “providing leadership in ensuring the completeness, diversity, and accessibility of the historical record” (Goal 1.3.) as well as several priorities within the Public Policy Agenda (e.g., “Make accessible evidence of the diverse and complex elements of the human experience” and “preserve historical documentation for the next generation”).

Fiscal Impact: None.

Move: Yun

Second: Gunn

Vote: PASSED (Yes: Booth, Chartier, Cooper Cary, Evans, Gunn, Jules, Kiesling, Lawrimore, Lyons, Yun. Abstain: Stadel-Bevans)

C. Other Action Items from Council Members

No other action items were brought forward.

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Sign On to American Historical Association Statement on Confederate Monuments

The Council reviewed the American Historical Association’s Statement on Confederate Monuments and ultimately decided not to sign on to the statement, as it does not adequately address archivists’ specific concerns about the recent controversy. Council members agreed to further consider preparing an SAA statement at their November 2017 meeting.

B. SAA Statement on Government Transparency

Zanish-Belcher noted that as the Committee on Public Policy has been working to suggest revisions in SAA’s Public Policy Agenda, the group saw a need for a simple statement on the value and importance of transparency in government – a concept that is embedded throughout the text of the Agenda but is not stated explicitly. The Council agreed, making only a few revisions to remove mention of specific current events so that the statement can apply to future situations or concerns about transparency in government.

MOTION 7

THAT the following SAA Statement on the Value and Importance of Transparency in Government be approved as amended (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*).

SAA Statement on the Value and Importance of Transparency in Government October 2017

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) promotes the protection and accessibility of records found in governments, organizations, and archives repositories. Because records ensure the protection of individuals' rights, the accountability of governments and organizations, and the accessibility of historical information, equal and equitable public access to government information is a cornerstone of our democracy.

SAA firmly believes that the critical nature of information in a democracy places the burden to prove the need for confidentiality, or the legitimacy of excluding information from the public domain, on those asserting such claims. Therefore, SAA strongly opposes any effort by presidential administrations to deny U.S. citizens access to government information found in archives and records.

SAA will continue to work with individuals, groups, and allied organizations to monitor the impact of the ~~current~~ Administration's ~~recent~~ decisions affecting access to the public record—including most recently questions of secrecy in a proposed border security bill, access to Mar A Lago visitor logs, and a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gag order on employees speaking with the press, among others—and to ensure that our voices are heard on these issues.

Support Statement: This statement makes explicit SAA's position on the value and importance of transparency in government, a concept that is embedded throughout the SAA Public Policy Agenda but not addressed specifically.

Relation to SAA Priorities: Supports SAA's commitment to "providing leadership in ensuring the completeness, diversity, and accessibility of the historical record" (Goal 1.3.) as well as several priorities within the Public Policy Agenda (e.g., "Make accessible evidence of the diverse and complex elements of the human experience" and "preserve historical documentation for the next generation").

Fiscal Impact: None.

Move: Stadel-Bevans

Second: Kiesling

Vote: PASSED (unanimous)

C. Promoting Availability of Disaster Recovery Funding

Zanish-Belcher encouraged Council members to promote the SAA Foundation's National Disaster Recovery Fund for Archives to those affected by recent hurricanes. She noted that the SAA Foundation will discuss at its November meeting whether the scope of the fund should be extended to offer support to archives in Mexico, the Caribbean, and other international archival communities.

D. Other Discussion Items from Council Members

No other discussion items were brought forward.

E. Executive Session (as needed)

The Council did not hold an Executive Session.

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. Executive Committee

The Council ratified this report at Consent Agenda item II.A.

B. President (Verbal Update)

Zanish-Belcher noted briefly that since July she had:

- Written an article for the October/November issue of *Archival Outlook* highlighting various statistics about the 2017-2018 volunteers appointed to SAA groups, including number of first-time appointees.
- Appointed three individuals to the six-person SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force to Revise the Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries. We currently are awaiting word of the ACRL/RBMS appointees.
- Published an *Off the Record* blog post on disaster resources and funding in light of recent natural disasters.
- Begun work on a proposal to create a new working group to revise the Best Practices for Working with Archives Researchers and Employees with Disabilities.
- Contacted the Association of Canadian Archivists for clarification of a proposal to create a task force to explore an Associations Alliance, and subsequently notified the organizer that SAA declines to join at this time.

She further noted that the SAA Membership Committee intends to field a brief survey on professional development support and that the Executive Committee had approved release of a news item pointing to the previously issued Joint Statement on “Use of Non-government Email Accounts for the Conduct of Public Business.”

C. Vice President / President-Elect (Verbal Update)

Evans noted that she had discussed with two individuals their willingness to serve as co-chairs of the 2019 Annual Meeting Program Committee.

D. Treasurer

The Council reviewed, but did not discuss, this report.

E. Staff: Executive Director

Beaumont reported that, unfortunately, the National Museum of African American History and Culture will not be available to host the All-Attendee Reception for the 2018 Joint Annual Meeting. The Council brainstormed other venue ideas; Beaumont will consult with conference staff to determine viable options.

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

No other reports were brought forward.

I. COUNCIL BUSINESS (continued)

A. Review of October 2017 Action List / Talking Points

Council members reviewed the draft list of action items stemming from the meeting.

B. Adjournment

Evans moved adjournment, Stadel-Bevans seconded, and the Council meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:49 p.m. on Friday, October 6.