

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 14–16, 2016
Chicago, Illinois**

**Executive Director’s Report
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

Reports on Membership, Education, Publications, the Annual Meeting, and Technology appear elsewhere in the staff reports for this Council meeting (1116-VI-E). This report summarizes other Headquarters activities since August 2016.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Advocacy activities have been front and center since August. During this period we:

- Promoted widespread member participation in [American Archives Month](#) (October).
- Implemented [#AskAnArchivist Day](#) on October 5, with the following positive results:

Year	Unique Users	Total Tweets	Tweets per User
10/30/2014	1,949	6,065	3.1
10/01/2015	3,184	7,845	2.5
10/05/2016	3,742	10,005	2.7

- Worked with the Committee on Public Policy to prepare and vet two issue briefs for consideration at this Council meeting (Freedom of Information Act at 1116-II-C and Confidentiality of Private Information Held in Records Created by the Federal Government’s Executive Agencies at 1116-IV-A) and to prepare a recommendation that the Council reconvene a working group to draft revisions to the 2009 ALA/SAA Joint Statement on Access to Research Materials (1116-IV-B).
- Implemented Session 1 of SAA’s new [“Advocacy Café” webinar series](#), featuring Kathleen Roe and guest David Carmicheal. The five-part series of 30-minute webinars is “designed to inspire ideas and stimulate discussion about advocacy.” The sessions are offered for free to members and \$39 for nonmembers. The first session drew attendees from 104 locations. All sessions will be available “online, on demand.”

- Worked with the Executive Committee to sign on to an OpenTheGovernment.org “Proposal to Strengthen Records Accountability” to be shared with the newly elected President of the United States’ transition team. (See the Executive Committee Interim Actions at 1116-II-B for the text of this proposal.)
- Worked with the CoSA/NAGARA/SAA Joint Working Group on Issues and Awareness to draft a transition team document focusing on archives and records. COPP Chair Dennis Riley took the lead on this project, working from a similar document shared with the Obama transition team in 2008-2009.
- Worked with NCH Executive Director Lee White and others to investigate the status of 1) legislation in New Jersey that could reunite the archives and records management functions under one division and 2) commonwealth-wide cuts that would compromise the staffing of the Library of Virginia.

Based on its discussion in August of [SAA’s response to the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando](#), the Council asked Rachel Vagts and me to review “SAA’s Criteria for Advocacy Statements” to determine whether it should be revised. Beyond two very minor editorial revisions (marked with strikethrough and underline in the Appendix), we believe that the statement adequately indicates that the Executive Committee and/or Council will be consulted before a statement is issued (see highlighted text).

In addition, we worked with Nance McGovern to execute launch of her [#Try5SAA](#) diversity and inclusion initiative and to create an “[SAA’s Communication Channels](#)” page on the website.

GOVERNANCE

- Felicia and I drafted the minutes of the 0816-1 and 0816-2 Council meetings and assisted the Council and Executive Committee with online discussions and votes. See 1116-II-A-CouncilInterimActions and 1116-II-B-ExecCommInterimActions.
- Felicia updated all section and roundtable rosters based on information provided by these component groups after the Joint Annual Meeting, and worked with the groups to achieve a 100% compliance rate for submission of annual reports.
- Staff made arrangements with our service provider to conduct an all-member online referendum on the Council-proposed amendments to the SAA constitution and bylaws. The referendum was conducted between October 13 and October 27. A total of 676 members participated (11.39% participation rate) and the amendments were adopted by a significant margin (641 in favor, 35 opposed).
- Felicia worked on updating the vacancies spreadsheet for 2017 so that Tanya Zanish-Belcher and her Appointments Committee have the information needed to do their work. The [Call for Volunteers](#) went live on the SAA website on October 18 and appears in the November/December issue of *Archival Outlook*.

- Staff prepared materials and made logistics arrangements for the November 2016 Council meeting.

HEADQUARTERS OPERATIONS / HUMAN RESOURCES

- With Solveig's impending retirement on December 31, we have been interviewing prospective candidates for her position. As noted in all communications about her plans, Solveig will remain available to SAA as a consultant or independent contractor beyond her retirement date. We have at least several special projects for her!
- We are astounded that it's been a year (or a little less) since four individuals—Brienne Downing in Education, Felicia Owens in Governance, Abigail Christian in Publications, and Michael Santiago in the Service Center—joined the SAA staff. Many members have praised their performance at the Joint Annual Meeting in Atlanta. I can attest to their excellent performance and outstanding attitude every day at the office!
- As most of you are aware, SAA's staff benefits (health insurance, dental insurance, retirement contribution, life insurance, etc.) are an important component of total compensation for our staff, and that helps us compete with other employers to attract and retain good employees. With last year's health insurance premiums going up more than 26% and daily news reports of huge premium increases, we are happy to report that our group insurance premiums went *down* by a whopping 0.01%. This means that we are able to keep our pre-ACA plan for at least another year and be confident that we are offering some of the best coverage available on the market today.

SAA FOUNDATION

- Felicia drafted the minutes of the 0816 Foundation Board meeting.
- I worked closely with Foundation President Fynnette Eaton to vet individuals who volunteered and/or who were suggested to serve as Class B members of the Foundation Board. The Board recommended a slate that was approved by the Council on October 5. See the complete roster [here](#). For the first time since adoption of the Foundation's new governance structure, we now have a full complement of 16 Foundation Board members!
- I worked with Fynnette and Nance on Annual Appeal communications, and with Teresa and Abigail on implementing #GivingTuesday as part of the 2016 Annual Appeal. See the Board-adopted development plan [here](#).
- Peter, Matt, Carlos, and I worked on revising all Foundation donation forms to reflect the consolidation of funds and to make them more user-friendly.
- Staff prepared materials and made logistics arrangements for the November 2016 Foundation Board meeting.

As always, I'm happy to respond to any questions or concerns that you may have.

SAA's Criteria for Advocacy Statements

The Society of American Archivists, **through its Council or Executive Committee**, periodically is asked to take a position, make a statement, or take action on an issue that arises within the larger context of American society. ~~Very r~~Recent examples include ~~{~~the heinous murders of members of the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, in June 2015 ~~or~~ and the U.S. Supreme Court's decisions in support of gay marriage and certain provisions of the Affordable Care Act~~}~~.

Some SAA members believe that SAA should speak for all archivists on these types of broader social issues. SAA has been compared with the American Library Association and other organizations that choose to issue statements on social issues, whether or not related directly to the missions of those organizations.

Although some – or even most – of SAA's leaders, members, and staff may hold similar views on social issues and matters of social justice, the organization as a whole does not have the resources or knowledge of a consensus to comment or act on every social issue that emerges. To choose to comment or act on one issue to the exclusion of others would raise concerns about how SAA reaches a decision about when to become involved and when and how the broader membership is consulted (or even polled) about their individual positions on a given social issue.

SAA will take a position, make a statement, or take other action only on issues that are related directly to archives and archival functions. SAA recognizes that social issues and archival concerns may overlap (e.g., in matters of personal privacy, access to public information, or misuse of records for political purposes). **In these cases, the SAA Council or Executive Committee will consider the prudence and potential impact of becoming involved in the issue.** Members may recommend that SAA take action on an issue by following [Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action](#).

As an organization that values social responsibility, the public good, and the completeness of the public record and that understands the importance of advocacy, SAA encourages its members to engage with social issues to the extent that they, as individuals, are able.

Adopted by the SAA Council, August 2015.