

Committee on Public Policy
Monthly Conference Call
Agenda
January 13, 2020

Present: Audra, Brad, Bryan, Eira, Kathleen, Krista, Logan, Nancy, Sam, Sarah, Virginia

Absent: Nicholas?

- 1. Volunteer to take notes:** Sam
- 2. 2020 Presidential Candidate questions follow-up**
 - a. Since the last meeting, Eira + Logan + Sam revised the document for final review. Nancy submitted this to the Exec committee for review.
 - b. Exec committee approved the draft. Nancy and Exec team will work on minor rephrasing/restructuring of questions. Nancy will send the final draft to COPP before/when it goes out.
 - c. Nancy plans to send communications to remaining campaigns by the end of the week.
 - d. Eira asks: will we include some kind of “friendly deadline” to encourage early responses? Nancy: it’s possible, but we can’t guarantee the outcome. We don’t want to discourage responses.
 - e. Bryan: Did anyone watch the New Hampshire library candidate forum? (Seems like no).
- 3. Archives on the Hill Assessment follow-up**
 - a. Will defer to February to leave time for further discussion on the document ([available here](#))
 - b. All members please review and comment by January 31.
 - c. Kathleen’s recommendation: that COPP decide in the coming month(s) whether we want to commit to/recommend to SAA an intense overhaul of the organization’s advocacy infrastructure or continue to respond ad hoc as situations arise.
 - d. From Nancy: since 2014, the strategic plan has included goals to expand advocacy efforts to reflect long-term goals to advocate nationally for more significant and permanent preservation funding.
 - e. From Sarah: Reminder that the 2019-2021 [work plan](#) contains similarly ambitious goals, so we can and should clarify what we need for support from SAA.
- 4. Briefs/statements assessment**
 - a. Brad and Krista - nothing new to report at this time.
 - b. Krista asks if their prior recommendations can be accepted as they are.
 - c. Sarah asks if they can present final recommendations for immediately (short/medium term) actionable items. Reminds the full committee to consider and look for substantive gaps. Is there anything else we should be covering that we have not yet addressed?
 - i. Nancy - closing of archives and disposition of materials comes up frequently, and SAA does not have boilerplate language to build upon. We *have* made such statements in the past, so SAA staff would like contemporary guidance for

future situations. Sarah recalls significant pushback from membership in the past, as some responded unfavorably to the suggestion that any closures could be justified.

- ii. Krista - electronic records keeping/FERMI is also missing, as are specific qualifications of a state archivist. Nancy et. al. recommend working with CoSA on this last item. Kathleen recommends taking a “skills and competency” based approach.
- iii. Sam + Eira would like to see documentation of gaps that COPP is not able to address for political, circumstantial, or logistical reasons. Perhaps with language of formative positions or key points known (internal “Ghost statements”)

5. Review Spring 2020 work plan

- a. Committee Governance
 - i. Develop roles and responsibilities for committee members ([done already](#))
 - ii. Develop assessment metrics by which we can evaluate the success of our initiatives - current interested parties include Sam ++++?
- b. Communication and Outreach
 - i. Develop internal and external communications plans
 - 1. Sarah will review our planning meeting notes to get the full scope of this task. Possibly creating comm plans for internal distribution by COPP across various SAA platforms and for external distribution (by SAA staff) when deliverables are approved and published.
 - 2. Bryan is interested.
 - ii. Schedule and assign briefs and statements (pending completion of BH and KF's assessment). Two are in the hopper:
 - 1. Judicial records brief is on the schedule for Spring 2020. Krista and Eira are tentatively interested. We should reach out to Jess Farrell, Irene Gates, Ed Moloy, and Michelle Marie Trumbo (panelists at SAA 2019 on this topic). Consider reaching out to Dennis Riley and CoSA as well.
 - 2. Congressional records is underway (see report below)
- c. Legislative Advocacy
 - i. All members please review Archives on the Hill assessment finalization ([available here](#)) in the context of our current work plan and make recommendations for future initiatives - e.g. training for Council and staff, training for members, partnerships for advocacy campaigns, etc.

6. Reports from COPP/CPS conference call and COPP/LGRS webinar

- a. SAA position on Congressional records/“papers” - Sarah, Bryan, Brad, and Audra met with members of the Congressional Papers Section (including current archivists for the House and Senate) + their rep Brenda Gunn.
 - i. It was an opportunity for both groups to realign expectations and establish a common understanding of events leading up to the statement. CPS reps remain deeply concerned that legislators will read any SAA statement as a political effort to compel them in spite of regulatory silences. COPP remains convinced that this is a fundamental legislative priority for the profession, donor

preferences notwithstanding. CPS wants to amplify or build upon the existing continuing resolution ([H. Con. Res. 307 of 2008](#)) which encourages members to prioritize the historic preservation of their records.

- ii. Sarah reminded CPS that we would be moving forward with the Judicial Records brief in the spring, which had connotations for any future recommendations on congressional records. CPS representatives plan to develop some kind of starting language for a recommendation to strengthen *H. Con. Res. 307 of 2008*.
 - iii. Sarah strongly recommends we move forward with a full issue brief that complements the CPS statement. Ideally, this might identify a phased approach for legislative advocacy by SAA. A strengthened resolution can be included as a preliminary step towards full, enforceable, funded legislation. We are ideally working in good faith towards a mutually agreeable solution, but we may reach a point where SAA Council simply needs to stake out an official position.
 - iv. Bryan recommends that we carefully document the process of drafting these documents so future COPP/CPS members have a *clear* idea of the background. Brad reiterates our obligation to the overall profession and the American public, which precludes us from privileging the interests of any sub-group.
- b. COPP/LGRS webinar - Sarah, Brad, and Bryan joined Local Government Records section for a webinar, building upon educational materials developed by Eira and Sam at SAA 2019. Attendees included a significant number of COPP alum, and new members reported finding it very useful. Current COPP members and LGRS partners felt the webinar was a success. Ideally, COPP will look for additional opportunities.
 - i. Nancy asks who else we might target or approach. Perhaps Government Records Section (per Kathleen) or SNAP (per Sam).

7. National Humanities Alliance Advocacy Day follow-up

- a. Currently, SAA is not planning to send anyone to NHA for 2020.
- b. We still need to decide if we are going to send SAA members to DC for advocacy efforts. Sarah recommends no, since the SAA budget is in deficit and we do not have a clear plan or agenda issue. 2021 would be a better time to prepare and move forward. Kathleen, Krista, etc agree.

8. Updates from other groups

- a. **Council**
 - i. No updates at this time (Audra)
- b. **SAA/COSA/NAGARA/RAAC Joint Working Group**
 - i. See [notes](#) [I added a folder for JTF meeting notes to our meetings and agendas folder; I'll upload them when I get them]
- c. **COPP/COPA/I&A/RAAC**
- d. **COPA**