

# **Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board**

**Minutes of Meeting – September 7, 2005**

**Rhode Island State Archives**

**337 Westminster Street**

**Providence, R.I.**

**Attending: Mark Brown, Allison Cywin, Donna DiMichele, Stephen Grimes, Michael Hébert, Margaret Long, Marlene Lopes, David Maslyn, Marilyn Massaro, and Gwenn Stearn, Coordinator.**

**Not attending: Jane Civins, Jonathan Galli, and Leonard Panaggio.**

**Meeting called to order: 10:05 a.m.**

**I Minutes of the meeting May 4 and June 1, 2005**

**Maslyn moved to approve the meeting minutes. Long seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.**

**II Introduction of new Board member Margaret (Peggy) Long**

**Stearn introduced new Board member Peggy Long, Scituate Town Clerk. Stearn remarked that Long was recommended by former Board member Marie Bennett, who is now President of the RI Town &**

**City Clerks Association (RITCCA). Peggy is active in RITCCA and serves as Secretary to that body. She has made great strides in the care and preservation of Scituate's historical municipal records, including applying for and being awarded, a RI Foundation-Ott Fund grant, and a State Archives-Local Government Records Grant. Board members introduced themselves to Peggy. A suggestion was made to hold the spring (2006) Board meeting in Scituate.**

### **III Report on the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators annual meeting**

**Stearn reported on the COSHRC annual meeting, held in conjunction with the National Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators (NAGARA) annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia.**

- The SHRAB & State Coordinators manual has been updated. A CD version is also being prepared that covers points in the manual and which will also permit local information to be inserted.**

- Last year COSHRC conducted a survey of State Archives and Records Programs. All 50 states and the District of Columbia responded. Once the data has been fully compiled and analyzed, results will be available on the Council's website. The Board will be informed as information of interest becomes available.**

- Information collected by COSHRC from states' board members has**

been entered into a database. This will allow information to be distributed by COSHRC to individual board members. It will also permit COSHRC to know more about the people who make up state boards, and where there may be gaps in constituency/stakeholder representation.

- There has been an ongoing effort by COSHRC to update its 1989 publication on the executive records of Governors. Executive Chamber Records: A Guide for Governors has been revised and will be presented and distributed at the National Governors' Association (NGA) annual meeting. The publication will also appear on the NGA website for future reference by Governors and their staffs.

- COSHRC will pursue a national initiative to develop a state-based funding program for historical records. The initiative calls for a substantial increase in the amount of federal funds to be made available for the care of historical records nationwide. The proposal would establish a program through NHPRC to distribute funds to the states using a formula similar to that now in place for funding historic preservation and also library services. A national action agenda is to be developed. The COSHRC Board has had discussions with the National Archives, NHPRC, and the Society of American Archivists (SAA). Ideally, the new funding mechanism would annually provide each state board with \$200,000. Any additional funds would be allocated, based on a population and land area formula. Stearn further remarks that it would be permissible to hire an archivist, either

**part-time or full-time, to support the Board and its initiatives. Monies would also be used for re-grants and training, among other things.**

- COSHRC has applied for a two-year NHPRC grant to focus on local government archives. The project is intended to lay the groundwork for stronger local government archives by analyzing their current conditions and needs and determine what services, standards, and funding strategies work best to ensure long-term preservation and access.**

- As of October 1st, the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators will become the Council of State Archivists (CoSA). The membership debated and voted the change. The COSHRC website will become [www.cosa.org](http://www.cosa.org).**

- There will be a joint annual meeting of SAA, NAGARA and CoSA, July 31—August 6, 2006 in Washington, DC.**

#### **IV Continued planning for Rhode Island Archives Week (November 6-12, 2005)**

**Leonard Panaggio has sent a letter with further suggestions for RI Archives Week. Members discussed a new edition of the poster and Hebert offered to provide copying services. Long motioned to approve use of the new version, Cywin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. DiMichele offered to distribute the posters**

and handouts to school libraries. The Board also discussed other avenues for distribution. It was agreed that the poster and handouts would be distributed to academic, school and local libraries, hospital archives, and to state tourism. Stearn distributed a draft letter addressed to repositories in the state for the purpose of encouraging participation in Archives Week. Members discussed and made comments regarding the letter.

## **V Old Business**

- Board grant application to the National Historical Publications & Records Commission (NHPRC)**

Stearn distributed the two-page Project Summary from the grant application. She also reported that the Commission's independent reviewers and staff would be sending questions about the project proposal, to which she must respond by September 30th. The grant application and those responses will then be sent to Commission members for funding consideration at NHPRC's November meeting.

## **VI News and Announcements**

DiMichele announced that the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) historical records had been processed at URI—Special Collections. The records will be delivered to the State Archives. DiMichele also mentioned that she and Sarina Wyant sit on

**the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) Advisory Committee that meets three times a year. Board members are welcome to have a tour and make a presentation to that Committee. DiMichele also thanked members for submissions to the New England Archivists (NEA) Newsletter, News & Notes section.**

**Maslyn reported that he has re-applied for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to offset the costs of processing the Senator Pell Papers. URI is also beginning to digitize audiotapes from the Senator Chafee Papers for future access on their website.**

**Brown announced that a position description has been drafted for filling the vacancy of University Archivist at Brown University.**

**Grimes reported that the Supreme Court Judicial Records Center received a \$30,000 grant from the Rhode Island Foundation to microfilm 18th Century court records.**

**Stearn remarks that she has requested funds for FY07 to purchase a microfilm scanner in order to digitize microfilmed records for access on the State Archives website.**

**Stearn reported that the House has restored NHPRC funding in its budget bill at \$7.5 million—\$5.5 for grants and \$2 for program administration. Funding by the Senate is not yet resolved. She also**

mentioned receiving a letter from Congressman Langevin about House action and funding levels for NHPRC. She thanked Board member who had signed, and encouraged others to sign the associated electronic petition. In total there were 37 Rhode Island petition signers.

## **VII Adjournment**

Long made a motion to adjourn and Massaro seconded the motion. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Read and approved January 4, 2006