

# **Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board**

**Minutes of Meeting – March 1, 2006**

**Rhode Island State Archives**

**337 Westminster Street**

**Providence, R.I.**

**Attending: Mark Brown, Jane Civins, Donna DiMichele, Stephen Grimes, Michael Hébert, Marlene Lopes, David Maslyn, Marilyn Massaro, and Gwenn Stearn, Coordinator**

**Not attending: Allison Cywin, Jonathan Galli, Margaret Long, and Leonard Panaggio**

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

## **I Minutes of the January 4, 2006 meeting**

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

## **II Board appointments**

**Stearn announced that Governor Carcieri had made the requested reappointments to the Board. A 2006 roster was distributed and members were asked for any updates to the information.**

### **III Historical Records Regrant and Training Project**

**Stearn reported that a press release about the grant award and project had been issued on February 23rd. She mentioned that an error in the release had since been corrected. Copies were distributed. It was sent by the Secretary of State's Office to media outlets that routinely receive press releases, but had not yet been picked up by local papers. The information had appeared on Cox.net and was currently posted on the Department of State's website, as well as the State Archives Division's homepage. DiMichele offered a link from the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) blog to the press release. She also offered to distribute the release by e-mail to libraries. Brown suggested that the information appear in the New England Archivist's (NEA) newsletter.**

**Stearn reported that the Project Archivist position had been revised to incorporate several Board suggestions. The job announcement was posted on the NEA listserv, the Archives & Archivists listserv, the Simmons GSLIS job-line, and the LORI job-line, among others. Maslyn and Stearn will be conducting interviews. She solicited questions that members would like posed or addressed during the interviews. Brown suggested that a copy of the grant be provided to interview candidates. Lopes also suggested sending a packet, including information on the State Archives. In response to questions raised, Stearn explained the employment status of the**

**Project Archivist position in light of the State's ban on hiring contract employees and creating new FTEs. She also remarked that it would be desirable if the Project Archivist could start in March or April. Once under way, the Project Archivist would be routinely reporting at future Board meetings.**

**Massaro asked whether "Friends of the Library" groups could apply for grants. Stearn answered that "Friends" could apply if acting on behalf of a library. She further remarked that under federal guidelines, grants could only be made to repositories where records were accessible to the public.**

#### **IV News and announcements**

**Stearn reported that President Bush's FY07 budget had again proposed no funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The budget stated it sought to terminate the grants program so that the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) could "focus its resources on its essential federal records management mission." In coordination and conjunction with other interested organizations, the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) will again spearhead the effort to have NHPRC funding restored. Action alerts and further information about advocacy efforts will be forthcoming. She further remarked that CoSA intended to continue pursuing its initiative for the institution of annual formula-based funding for state Boards, to be administered by**

**the NHPRC.**

**Also at the federal level and nationally, Stearn reported:**

- The budget proposed reduced funding for the Department of Education’s Teaching American History Grant program from \$121 million to \$50 million, and for the Institute for Museum & Library Services (IMLS), an increase of \$15 million, with \$39.89 million for museums and \$220 million for libraries.**
- NARA proposes to revise their regulation relating to NHPRC’s grant program. The regulation will be shorter and simpler, and state records programs would become a separate subpart, including grant support “made to designated state agencies for statewide archival services”, including subgrants.**
- The National Endowment for the Humanities awarded preservation and access grants in December to the Preservation Society of Newport, the Redwood Library, Smith’s Castle, South Kingstown Public Library, and for fellowships at Brown University and Providence College.**
- CoSA’s newest initiative will focus on local government records. The two-year NHPRC funded project is entitled “Closest to Home.” More information will be forthcoming.**

**Stearn mentioned that the State Archives is currently hosting a Brown University-Sweaver Center, Royce Fellow, Peiling Li. In addition to processing portions of the Adjutant General’s record group, she is creating an exhibit on Rhode Island deserters during the Civil War. Future fellows may follow based on projects proposed**

by the State Archives.

NEA's Spring Meeting will be held on March 11th at Boston College, with workshops on March 10th. Information is available from Stearn and on the NEA website.

DiMichele announced that she is chairing the NEA fall meeting program committee. The theme is 'Advocacy' and the meeting will be held in Durham, N.H. She also announced that the Northeast Document Conservation Center will hold its free annual workshop on May 15. "Beginning Book Repair" is an all day hands-on workshop to be held at the Barrington Public Library. Further details are available on the OCE calendar.

Massaro announced that the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission will hold its annual meeting April 8th, at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet. Program information is available on their website.

## V Adjournment

Maslyn moved to adjourn and DiMichele seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Read and approved without amendment at the meeting of September 9, 2006.