

Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes – May 7, 2014

Pawtucket Public Library - Woolley Conference Room

13 Summer Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

Attending: Maria Bernier, Allison Cywin, Donna DiMichele, Jonathan Galli, Michael Hebert, Peggy Long, Marlene Lopes, David Maslyn, and Gwenn Stearn, chair.

Not attending: Jane Civins, Russell Franks, Stephen Grimes, and Marilyn Massaro.

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

I Minutes of meeting – March 5, 2014

Lopes moved to approve the minutes. Bernier seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

II Report on Protecting the Past-RI

DiMichele reported that May 30th marks the programmatic end of the IMLS grant. There will be a final meeting in May for discussion and debriefing. The project had a presence in April at the annual

Historical Preservation Conference. Protecting the Past-RI bookmarks have been produced and distributed for May Day and Preservation Week. The project has also been nominated for a Rhody Award in the Education category by Michael Hebert.

III NHPRC grants update

Stearn reported that NHPRC's new grant categories have been finalized. They are (with 2014 deadlines in parenthesis): Access to Historical Records(8/27), Digital Dissemination of Archival Collections (12/4), Literacy and Engagement with Historical Records (12/4), Publishing Historical Records in Documentary Editions, State Government Electronic Records (12/4), and State Board Programming Grants (8/27). The first two only will require state Board reviews. NHPRC has run a series of useful webinars regarding the new grants. The RIHRAB website has been updated to reflect these changes. She further remarked upon the Redwood Library and Providence City Archives' grant applications under the older grant categories, and that they would be considered at the Commission's May 13th meeting.

In other news about federal grant-funding bodies, Stearn commented that the Society of American Archivists and other organizations had issued action alerts concerning House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan's proposal to eliminate funding for NEH and IMLS in the FY15 federal budget. His blueprint, The Path to Prosperity, envisions those and other cultural agencies raising funds from private-sector

patrons.

IV News and announcements

DiMichele spoke of seven grants awarded to small RI repositories by the Ott Fund, including one to the Scituate Town Clerk's Office. Long commented that a new member of staff had prepared the application. DiMichele also announced that the Library of Rhode Island (LORI) had awarded grants to: the HELIN consortium for planning a digital repository, to the Redwood Library for cataloging their decorative arts holdings and for exhibits and programs this summer, and to Providence Public Library for their Teen Tech Squad initiative, targeting 12-18 year olds, which includes a partnership with the RI Historical Society, the Providence Preservation Society, and the Brown University Center for Public Humanities.

DiMichele remarked that HeritageQuest was now available through AskRI.

DiMichele also spoke further to May Day and about an article, Microfilm Still Matters, in Information Today.

Bernier announced that the Newport Historical Society had given the Redwood Library microfilm copies of Newport city records and newspapers, among other materials.

Bernier also remarked that RICH now made digital surrogates of grant-project products available online in a digital library. The initiative was undertaken in celebration of their 40th anniversary.

Galli reported that the Social Security Administration Death Index had been closed and was no longer accessible online. It was removed due to concerns about identity theft. Stakeholders had spoken out, but to no avail.

Galli also informed members about the 13th New England Regional Genealogical Conference, to be held in Providence, April 15-19, 2015. Stearn commented that the State Archives would hold evening hours for attendees on 4/16.

Stearn announced that member Marilyn Massaro had resigned from the Board as well as retiring from her position as curator at Roger Williams Park Museum, where she had worked for twenty five years. Further discussion will take place at the September Board meeting.

V Adjournment

Long moved to adjourn. Bernier seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

After the meeting, Pawtucket Public Library staff member Tim McDuff provided a tour of the Elizabeth J. Johnson Pawtucket History Research Center.

Minutes approved November 5, 2014