

# **Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board**

## **Minutes of Meeting – March 2, 2016**

**Rhode Island State Archives**

**337 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903**

**Attending: Allison Cywin, Dave Maslyn, Donna Longo DiMichele, Michael Hebert, Stephen Grimes, Lori Urso, and Gwenn Stearn, chair.**

**Not attending: Maria Bernier, Jane Civins, Russell Franks, Jonathan Galli, Peggy Long, and Marlene Lopes.**

**Meeting called to order: 10:00 a.m.**

**I Introduction of new Board member Lori Urso, and members to her**

**Board members were introduced to new member Lori Urso, Executive Director of the Old Slater Mill Association.**

**II Minutes of meeting – September 2, 2015**

**Maslyn moved to approve the minutes of September 2, 2015. DiMichele offered a minor correction. Cywin seconded the motion. The corrected minutes were unanimously approved.**

### **III Discussion regarding priorities for 2016**

**Stearn informed members that one of Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea's priorities is to create a permanent facility for the State Archives Division, to include a Rhode Island history center. Her vision encompasses a consortium with other repositories; potentially the RI Historical Society, the RI Supreme Court Judicial Records Center, and the Providence City Archives. Toward that end, the Rhode Island Foundation has provided funds to engage a consultant to conduct a needs assessment. A contract for the assessment was awarded to Tom Wilsted and Michelle Pacifico. Initial meetings and information gathering are scheduled to begin tomorrow. Additionally, the Department of State has submitted a FY17 Capital Budget request for architectural and engineering services as part of the planning for a new facility. The State Archives has also requested FY17 funds to establish a trusted digital repository. Also affecting the State Archives Division is a bill to overhaul the Administrative Procedures Act. If passed, the Rules and Regulations database application must be rewritten to accommodate new requirements, among them that all state agencies' rulemaking records must be made available on the Department of State's website. The State Archives also hopes to apply for a grant to digitize over 10,000 Capitol Television tapes, as well as 1986 Constitutional Convention and RISDIC Commission tapes in analog formats. Once digitized these would be preserved and made publicly accessible online through the digital repository. The State Archives will also increase the number of onsite and online**

exhibits to help raise our profile in the community. Additionally, archives staff were directed to remove all archival holding, fixtures and furnishings from the 337 Westminster Street facility basement. These materials were moved beginning in late August 2015 through February 2016 to offsite storage at Iron Mountain, reconfigured shelving on the first floor, and a decommissioned server room at the Department of State's West River Street offices.

Maslyn inquired whether the records management program would be part of the assessment for a new facility. Stearn replied that the records center did not form part of the proposed new facility, however, the Public Records Administration would do.

Members asked whether smaller historical societies would be considered as part of the facility. Stearn replied that there are many models for shared facilities and looked to the consultants' recommendations in that regard. Members offered to make themselves available to the consultants to share their knowledge and insight.

Stearn reported on the January re-opening of the Charter Museum in the State House. The re-encasements for the document were executed to the same specifications as the Charters of Freedom at the National Archives in Washington DC.

DiMichele discussed opportunities for the State Archives to staff tables at the upcoming RIEMA conference and the Rhode Island Library Association meeting in May. She also mentioned to the Board

that the RHODI project is always looking for articles for their newsletter.

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

Possible venues for the Board's May and September meetings were discussed.

DiMichele informed members about Brown University's "UnConference" entitled Hacking Heritage. Lori Urso sits on its Steering Committee, which will meet on March 12 to develop an agenda of "conversations" relating to the field of history and heritage. (<http://blogs.brown.edu/hackingheritageunconference/>)

DiMichele reported that this year's Reading Across Rhode Island selection has been made—David McCullough's *The Wright Brothers*. He will speak at a May 21st event.

The RI Council for the Humanities has placed a link on their website to the RI Center for the Book's website. A resource guide, including speakers is available.

DiMichele reported that Providence Public Library is ramping-up efforts related to a digital repository.

DiMichele informed members that with respect to the Office of Library and Information Services' website, disaster and preservation

resources are available, including those of NEDCC, CERT, and LYRASIS. Also, a report in the Providence Journal about database resources was incorrect. Money associated with these remains in OLIS's budget.

Maslyn reported that a head of Special Collections and University Archives has not been appointed. A position description hasn't yet been agreed upon, especially with respect to required qualifications. He remains connected in providing advice and services to researchers, with Mark Dionne as acting head.

Maslyn also informed members that the New Leaves Press printing museum at the library will be closed. The printing presses may find a home in the Fine Arts Department.

Urso provided information about live jazz concerts to be held at Slater Mill.

## **V Adjournment**

DiMichele moved to adjourn the meeting. Maslyn seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.