

Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes – January 4, 2017

Department of State

eGovernment & IT Division Conference Room

West River Center

148 West River Street

Providence, RI 02904

Attending: Allison Cywin, Donna DiMichele, Russell Franks, Stephen Grimes, David Maslyn, Lori Urso, and Gwenn Stearn, chair

Not attending: Maria Bernier, Jane Civins, Jonathan Galli, Michael Hebert, Peggy Long, and Marlene Lopes

Also attending: Geralyn Ducady

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

I Minutes of meeting – September 7, 2016

DiMichele moved to approve the minutes. Cywin seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

II Presentation on the RI Historical Society's EnCompass Digital

Textbook

– Geralyn Ducady, Director Newell D. Goff Center for Education &

Public Programs

Ms. Ducady, recently hired to move EnCompass forward, related that she had served for nine years as Curator for Education at the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, and previously worked at the San Diego Museum of Man.

An online demonstration of the EnCompass digital textbook ensued with commentary from Ducady. The project was initiated through a RICH grant in 2015. The project team first conducted a survey of other online digital textbooks and conducted teacher focus groups. The RIC public history program provided support, including hosting the website. RI Department of Education grade span expectations and Common Core were taken into consideration. RIC students wrote the object narratives and questions, with several iterations drafted. Additional teacher focus groups were conducted thereafter. In both before and after focus groups, teachers wanted content to be kept simple. The first unit, Roger Williams and the founding of Rhode Island, launched in October. An intern archivist worked on an Industrialization unit this past fall, with a likely launch in late spring. They anticipate adding two new units each year, in the fall and in the spring. Ms. Ducady also wants to develop a unit about Rhode Island before Roger Williams' arrival, to cover Native Americans. The

website is currently being redesigned for ease of navigation. She envisions greater use of materials other than artifacts, more teacher guidance, and expansion for students of different abilities. The focus has been on RIHS collections and links to lesson plans previously developed by them, however, she hopes to expand beyond those resources going forward.

Board members offered their feedback, insights, and ideas.

III National Historical Publication & Records Commission new grant review process

Stearn explained the new NHPRC review process, that is, grant applications will no longer be reviewed by all members of a state board. Instead, individual state board members will be asked to serve on a single review panel comprised of individual members of other states' boards, who will evaluate a group of three or four similar applications. After further discussion Cywin offered to have her name put forward to serve on a review panel. Urso also offered to serve if NHPRC seeks a second person from Rhode Island.

IV Appointments and reappointments

DiMichele and Franks, whose terms expire January 5, indicated they were willing to have their names put forward to Governor Raimondo

for reappointment. Both Civins and Long had said otherwise, due to their inability to actively serve. Stearn read a message from Civins telling of her pleasure in serving since 1997 and the value she placed in having done so. Discussion ensued about candidates for consideration by the Governor. Stearn will speak with RI Town and City Clerks Association President Lou Cirillo about another municipal clerk to serve on the Board.

V Department of State initiatives and news

Stearn reported that Kaitlynne Ward had been hired as Director of State Archives, Library, and Public Information in the reorganized Department of State information divisions. Ward most recently worked in the Department of Administration – Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, and had worked with Stearn on the State House Charter Museum and Charter re-encasement project. She has a Master's in Public Humanities from Brown, and Bachelor's in History and English from the University of Vermont. Megan (Meg) Hamlin-Black is the newly appointed State Librarian. Stearn has asked Ward to speak at the Board's March meeting.

A RFP for Architectural & Engineering Design Services for a Site Selection Study for the Rhode Island State Archives and its Partners for the Rhode Island Archives and History Center has been posted by the Department of Administration. A mandatory pre-bid conference was held at the State Archives on December 15. Proposals are due

on January 12.

VI News and announcements

DiMichele spoke about a RI Archives Interest Group to engage newer and younger archivists in the field. She envisions using a similar model as that of the Office of Library and Information Services for librarians, with meetings to take place during the workday, the group deciding what they want to discuss, and the speakers they would like to hear from.

Franks moved to endorse this effort, Grimes seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

DiMichele reported that the Protecting the Past-RI Steering Committee will be resurrected, and further called for participants.

Maslyn reported that a 'big data' librarian had been hired at URI, but that the Distinctive Collections and University Archives head had not.

VII Adjournment

Urso moved to adjourn the meeting. Franks seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Approved March 1, 2017