

Rhode Island Historical Records Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2017

Department of State
eGovernment & IT Division Conference Room
West River Center
148 West River Street
Providence, RI 02904

Attending: Maria Bernier, Allison Cywin, Donna DiMichele, Vice-Chair, Russell Franks, David Maslyn, Lori Urso, Theresa Woodmansee, Judy Wild.

Not attending: Michael Hebert, Jonathan Galli, Stephen Grimes, Marlene Lopes.

Public attending: Michele Chiles, RI Historical Society.

Meeting called to order: 10:01 a.m.

Ms. DiMichele introduced new members Theresa Woodmansee and Judy Wild. Roundtable introductions were made. Ms. DiMichele also welcomed Michelle Chiles, Robinson Research Center Coordinator for RI Historical Society, who came to observe the meeting.

I. Approval of Minutes of the March 1, 2017 Meeting

Motion to approve by Mr. Maslyn. Second by Ms. Cywin.

II. Continuing discussion regarding WebEOC – updating cultural heritage organizations' data
WebEOC is a software program used by RI Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) for emergency response. It facilitates communication between first responders, RIEMA, local governments, and other parties. Its database of cultural organizations can be accessed by first responders so they can appropriately manage an incident at cultural heritage organizations. It contains contact data, rudimentary collections information, and building information.

Ms. DiMichele noted that does not have sufficient time to update the WebEOC cultural heritage database on her own, but does feel accountable to it in terms of her professional capacity and ESF 17. She therefore asked the Board members to assist in updating blocks of information.

Under this work plan, each member will be given access to log in and make updates directly into the system, focusing on contact information. Some of the changes may be done from common

knowledge, and then followed up with a call to ask for any major structural or collections updates or changes.

The breakdown of tasks is as follows:

- Mr. Franks and Ms. Lopes will work on the academic institutions and their facilities.
- Ms. Bernier will update cultural organizations in Washington County, and will assist Ms. Cywin with Newport County.
- Ms. Cywin will update cultural organizations in Newport County and Bristol County.
- Ms. Wild will update city and town clerk information.
- Ms. Urso will update cultural organizations in Providence County.
- Ms. DiMichele will update public library information.

III. Update on dPlan and dPlan-RI

Ms. DiMichele discussed the issues with dPlan-RI, an online template with which RI cultural institutions may create a disaster plan, which stem from the proprietary platform on which the software runs and which was developed by North East Document Conservation Center (NEDCC).

Ms. Bernier, who serves on the NEDCC Board, was asked to get an update from NEDCC on the future of the dPlan platform. Ms. Bernier reported that NEDCC was awarded a Mellon Grant to update the dPlan software and move it into an open source system. dPlan-RI could be integrated into the improved system, however there may be a cost. NEDCC's target date for implementation and migration is the end of 2018. Ms. Cywin and Ms. Bernier have attempted to meet with the director at NEDCC, however they are constructing an audio-lab there and have many other matters at hand.

As a footnote, Ms. DiMichele noted that there are approximately 140 dPlan-RI records that require updating, but that it is not a task for the RIHRAB to take on.

IV. Report on New England States Historical Records Advisory Board session at the New England Archivists Spring Meeting

Ms. Bernier attended the meeting on behalf of the RIHRAB. It was organized by Dan McCormick, an archivist for the town of Burlington MA, who invited representatives from each of the New England states HRABs to participate. At the meeting, Ms. Bernier shared news of the

RI state archives and records administration reporting to a director, and the job opening for a new state archivist following the retirement of Gwenn Stearn.

Ms. Bernier noted that the board in Maine has been successful in getting National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) grants for the administration of their board and allow for a robust re-grant program that assist organizations throughout the state. Funding has also been awarded for Roving Archivist programs in MA and CT. We could be tapping into some NHPRC funding for RI.

In Vermont, the HRAB is not doing its own programming, but is doing no-cost partnerships with other state agencies. Ms. Bernier gave the example of the use of archival records them to help solve cold criminal cases.

Kathleen Rowe, representing NHPRC, spoke at the meeting, discussing changes to NHPRC's funding categories and review process, and encouraged more cooperation among the states, and program-sharing that requires only one of the states to serve as fiscal agent for two or more.

Ms. Chiles was invited by the Vice-Chair, to share her experience from the NEA meeting. She served on the Steering Committee for the Local History Roundtable. She is working to get more local groups together, and is seeking funds to do a RI Archivists group. She noted the Drinking about Museum group, though informal, has been good for stimulating dialogue, but some desire more of a working group. Ms. DiMichele similarly noted that she has received approval to do an Archives / Special Collections Roundtable series through OLIS, and would like to do it collaboratively with Ms. Chiles to streamline the efforts.

At the close of her report, Ms. Bernier made a motion to include a NHPRC grant brainstorming session on the September agenda of the RIHRAB. Mr. Franks seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

V. News & Announcements

Ms. Cywin has applied for a grant on behalf of UMass Dartmouth to create virtual and augmented reality tours of the campus architecture, beginning with the Paul Rudolph building. The project combines IT, Architecture, Digital Library, Design and Engineering disciplines.

Awards will be announced in July.

Mr. Maslyn announced that Brown University is hiring a new Assistant Archivist. He also reported that the position of Director for Unique Collections at URI Library is still unfilled. Finally, he noted that URI is going into Big Data, and has hired a librarian and an outside agent to facilitate this.

Ms. DiMichele announced that Town of North Kingstown is forming a Historical Society, which will absorb the NK Genealogical Society. The North Kingstown Free Library is supporting the development of the new Historical Society.

Regarding the RI Archives listserv, a Google group that Ms. DiMichele moderates, she has asked for submissions from RIHRAB members to stimulate more activity on the site.

Ms. DiMichele asked the members to spread the word about the Joseph O'Neill Ott Fund Grant and the RI Supreme Court Historical Society Fund grant, administered by RI Foundation and for which she serves as a reviewer, noting there was an underwhelming response to the request for proposals this year.

Ms. Bernier commented on the successful State Historic Preservation Conference held in Watch Hill on Saturday, and encouraged everyone to attend in the future.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Maslyn, second by Allison Cywin. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.