

Indiana State Historic Records Advisory Board
Minutes – August 17, 2017
Indiana State Archives

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10 a.m. by State Coordinator Jim Corridan.

Roll Call

Present: Jim Corridan, Tom Krasean, John Newman, Curt Witcher, Wes Wilson

Guests Present: Claire Horton, Marilyn Fernandez, Sam Alderfer, Jennifer Hodge

Approval of Agenda

Corridan added Marketing, and AXAEM to the State Coordinator's Report, and Meeting via electronic means to New Business.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will likely be in November.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from May 4, 2017. The minutes were corrected to show that Marilyn Fernandez was present at the last meeting, and the word "error" was changed to "errors" under Item 1 of the State Coordinator's Report.

Motion to approve Minutes of May 4, 2017. Newman – Witcher.

Motion carried.

State Coordinator's Report

1. NHPRC Update

Corridan shared that the executive director of NHPRC is leaving this week. COSA is working with NARA to modify the way NHPRC works. NHPRC is currently not authorized in Congress, which leads to difficulties getting funding. At COSA's annual meeting in July, they discussed SHRAB within NHPRC. Indiana has one of the most functional and appreciated SHRABs. COSA created a task force to devise and develop relationship between COSA and NARA, and SHRAB and NHPRC. Corridan is a member and he will be pushing for SHRABs to be effective advisors.

Newman reiterated that SHRABs should be reviewing grants, which was discussed at the last meeting. Corridan raised that issue at the COSA meeting. Now SHRAB is part of the preliminary grant process, rather than the final approval.

The group discussed the effort on the part of the states to collaborate with the National Archives. Witcher said that NARA'S finding aids and service model are out of date and that the genealogical community has struggled to work with them. He asked what it looked like for NARA to be collaborating with the states, and what would they be contributing. Corridan said that his vision is for NARA's online tools to be available to states.

2. Transparency Initiative

Corridan said that included in the AXAEM software is a public records request portal, which we call APRA. Corridan explained how the system works: citizens submit public records requests, which are then sent to the correct agency. It tracks metrics such as when the request was sent and when it was filled. If it isn't confidential, then the information could be available for other people to see. For phase one agencies opt in to participate. Phase two would invite local government to participate. Corridan said that this is where we currently have compliance issues, because local government units don't always know the laws for response time. This program will help the public access counselor know who needs assistance and training, and will help accountability. It helps the State Archives have visibility related to transparency.

3. Outreach efforts

Sam Alderfer shared that Jennifer Hodge has been getting different tour groups from the public and government, including the Secretary of State and Hendricks County Clerks coming tomorrow. Newman said that Lawson used to be the clerk in Hendricks County. The State Archives has also given tours for members of the House GOP, Rolls Royce retirees, members of Senate GOP Staff, the Department of Education, and county clerks. The largest group was the clerks, which was about 135 people. We'll be working with the Benjamin Harrison Foundation to provide tours to school groups.

Newman asked if we still had the Junior Historical Society. Corridan said that we do not, but that Hodge will be working with high school historical societies. In the last session of the legislature, a law was passed requiring all high schools to create an Indiana history elective. We would like to reach out to all the high schools to provide packages related to the core curriculum. Newman suggested getting involved with DAR, as they have a student manuscript contest.

Corridan said that Representative Burton is introducing legislation about cursive writing. Corridan told him that we are very interested in helping with that. Witcher said that in Allen County, the historical society has gotten recognition and support for their Friends' heritage fund. They were able to pay the bus fees to bring students for tours. He suggested that the Friends do something like this. Wilson said that a lot of schools say that they can't have field trips because they can't afford the buses. Corridan said that the Harrison House raises the money for buses for their trips and that we should be doing this. Newman said that there are county community foundations that could apply for grants. The group discussed that many students cannot read cursive and one day it will be hard to hire archivists who can.

Alderfer said that Hodge is working on creating lesson plans for teachers and Alderfer will make them accessible on our website. We will be hosting webinars with teachers and mobile displays that we could loan to schools.

We recently received display cases from the State Museum and we purchased new cases. Staff members were at the State Fair last week and were able to meet people from around the State and give them information about the archives. We'd like to move towards having an exhibit there during the entire Fair. Alderfer shared some of the marketing tools we have been using, including the Archives Month poster.

Corridan shared that we are branding the AXAEM catalog as Research Indiana. Alderfer showed the group the new layout of the website and demonstrated the help page. Witcher said that it was good that we were defining archival terms and we should continue to do so in order to involve the public. Newman said that we might want to have something to help people understand cursive writing and how to interpret old records.

Alderfer is working on creating a monthly e-newsletter and a quarterly printed newsletter. He is working on customer service and being able to respond to social media queries, as well as looking into online purchasing. Witcher shared that Depauw uses PayPal.

Witcher suggested that we not let perfection get in the way of progress, regarding having a printed newsletter. If someone really wants to see the newsletter, they should find a way to see an electronic form. Witcher said that the top banner being from the State itself will be confusing to users, because they will think it is part of the state archives website. Alderfer said we could pay money to have our own navigation.

4. Building

Corridan said that we are working to move the conversation along with the legislature. Feedback from the Senate and House tours have been positive. He is working to get the Black Caucus out here, as the whole history of the African American experience in Indiana is housed at the State Archives.

IARA has been given a budget increase and will be hiring four new people: a processing archivist, a patron services archivist, an electronic records archivist, and a page. We will be using about \$100,000 of this money to digitize collections. Corridan said we will be working with AXAEM on the options for viewing digital images online. He said that we are hesitant to purchase contentDM, and Wilson and Witcher said they would advise against contentDM.

New Business

1. NHPRC Grant

Witcher said that he agreed with NHPRC's evaluation. He said that smaller institutions are having trouble with funding and maybe another large institution shouldn't be using this money.

2. Meeting via telephone

Motion to authorize SHRAB meetings to be conducted by teleconference. Meetings can be conducted by phone as long as two people are in physical attendance. Wilson – Krasean. Motion carries.

3. 2017 SHRAB Building Report

Newman asked who the document's intended audience is. Corridan answered that it is the decision makers over the buildings: the governor and legislature. Newman said he thinks it needs a policy statement to point out that this is in the government's best interest, and that the Archives does not only have historical information. Corridan said that he had received a comment from Krasean that we should include a listing of the scope and scale of collections. Witcher advised that this should be an appendix.

The group suggested several other changes. Corridan said that he wants to add images. Krasean suggested showing how many requests come from state government. Witcher suggested using the COSA Report on the Importance of State Archives, and Corridan said that maybe it should be an appendix.

Witcher asked why we weren't including the bicentennial efforts on the 3rd page, and Corridan said he would make that more clear. The group discussed using sidebars rather than footnotes.

Corridan said we would put this on our website, as it is a public document. Wilson pointed out that the essential point is that the original building plan was driven by budget, not needs.

The group went over each item of the recommendation portion of the report. When discussing the yearly growth, Witcher asked if we were taking into account the agencies that are currently holding on to their records and should be transferring them, and may transfer them once we have a new building. Corridan said he would have another draft finished by the end of August, and then call a phone meeting to get it adopted.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.