

5 December 1996

From OHRAB

Minutes of the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting, 5 December 1996, Ohio Historical Center Archives Library, Columbus

Board members present: Gary Ness, George Parkinson, Roland Baumann, Jonathan Dembo, Barbara Floyd, Dennis Harrison, Lynn Jacobs, Michael Lucas, Carol Tomer

Board members not present: Alice Cornell

Staff present: Matthew Benz, J.D. Britton

Guest: Steve George, Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission

State Coordinator Gary Ness called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m., and welcomed the board. New member Lynn Jacobs was introduced to the other members of the board, who in turn introduced themselves.

Roland Baumann moved to adopt the minutes of the August meeting as written. Michael Lucas seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ness informed the board on the status of the Ohio Government Information Locator Service. At this time, the progress and implementation of the GILS project depends largely on the outcome of budget negotiations with the state. A preliminary recommendation from the Office of State Management and Budget on the Ohio Historical Society's budget as a whole is expected to be in the Governor's office by the end of December. Based on this information, it remains to be seen whether there will be full or partial implantation of GILS.

State Coordinator Ness then led a discussion on other budget-related items as they related to the Ohio Historical Society Archives Library and electronic records.

Deputy Coordinator George Parkinson then reviewed the remainder of the agenda, and reported to the board on some of the ongoing projects involving the Society. These include Access Through Automation, known as the Capital Project II, and the recent grant proposal entitled The African American Experience in Ohio. This project, as put together by staff and submitted to the Library of Congress/Ameritech National Digital Library Competition, will be a coherent and chronological collection which represents the experience of African American's in Ohio from 1850 to 1920.

Parkinson also updated the board on the continuing process to select and install an Integrated Library System for the Ohio Historical Society, the Cincinnati Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society. The Societies have narrowed the field down to three vendors, Ameritech, VTLS, and Information Dimension. Parkinson extended an invitation to the board members to attend the vendor demonstrations to be held on 22-23 January, 1997.

J.D. Britton, head of the Society's Local History Office briefed the board on the progress of the 1996 Historical

Records Repository Survey (HRRS), which OHRAB is cosponsoring along with the Society of Ohio Archivists (SOA). Britton estimated that 1000 survey forms have been sent out statewide: 200 to public libraries, 100 to college and university libraries, 50 to specialized archives, and 650 to various historical societies, genealogical societies, sites, preservation groups and museums. So far, there has been a 20% return rate overall. The board agreed to help with the distribution of follow-up letters and calls, as well as providing additional funds to cover the costs of a new mailing.

At noon, Steve George, Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, joined the board for lunch. Afterwards, he reported on the status of the newly established Bicentennial Commission. He explained to the board that he saw the plans for Ohio's Bicentennial in the year 2003 falling into five distinct yet related areas, with each area set up for the wide-range of activities designed for the inclusion of the people of Ohio.

These five areas are:

Commemoration: Recognition of the accomplishments of Ohio and its people in all 88 counties. This could include a wide variety of both statewide and local projects, but two priorities could be the restoration of Adena, the home of pioneer and early governor Thomas Worthington, and the increase of historical markers around the state.

Tapestry: Basically a wide range of events that will be designed for participation and engagement by the families of Ohio. Such events would range from the small - localized projects, or even families urged to plan their own events, - to the large, such as planned celebrations in cities, special events, etc. Steve George sees this area - with its "archival overtones" as one that OHRAB - with The 2003 Plan - could participate in.

Celebration: He foresees having opening and closing ceremonies (possible dates: Fall 2002 through close of year - September 2003) marking the official beginning and end of the Bicentennial, with perhaps a statewide holiday decreed for the closing weekend.

Legacy of Knowledge: The educational mission of the Bicentennial, which he sees as having many possibilities, among them major art exhibits, cultural events, technology and science exhibits and scholarly works, including an update of Ohio Writers, or possibly the creation of an Ohio Encyclopedia series.

Teaching of Ohio History: The reinvigoration of the teaching of Ohio history, with a emphasis on activities designed for the inclusion of children. For instance, he hopes to see special projects, contests, and presentations related to Ohio history promoted in the classrooms of Ohio during the Bicentennial celebration.

Continuing the discussion, Steve George stressed that he sees OHRAB as an active participant in the Bicentennial, especially in relation to the many possible archival aspects of the celebration. Since he hopes the Bicentennial will provide a "legacy," and will stand as a project of lasting value to Ohio, he would like to see the board provide guidance and assistance in elevating the Bicentennial before the public.

It was suggested by the board that perhaps a "history fund" could be established during the Bicentennial, and that such a fund would be used to grant money to be used for various small projects around the state, projects that otherwise would go unfinished. Steve George agreed that such a plan is possible, though he feels such a program should not be run by the Bicentennial Commission, but by an separate entity with ties to the Commission. Baumann suggested using some Bicentennial events to create and provide money for the fund, i.e.... a small charge for special events, such as concerts, performances, and exhibits. Consideration was also given to the possibility that such a fund could continue beyond the Bicentennial year, and thus provide a "legacy" to future generations of Ohioans. Lynn Jacobs suggested that the board would be able to provide strong support for the Bicentennial on local levels.

The board also expressed its interest in using the "boost" that the Bicentennial will provide to create a long lasting public interest in archival issues. Steve George suggested that The Ohio 2003 Plan will be presented to the Bicentennial Commission, and saw OHRAB as being involved in lobbying efforts. Furthermore, he expressed his interest in endorsing The 2003 Plan as part of the Bicentennial Commission's plans.

Steve George finished his presentation by discussing the probable time frame for implementation of the Bicentennial Commission and plans. By March of 1997, the full Commission should be seated. He foresees three biennium's, with the first two years devoted to a planning phase, with some implementation taking place during that time. In particular, the second year would involve much of the prep work. By the third year, the plans would be in full swing. While no dates have been set as of yet, he predicts that late 1997 will see some activity.

The board then discussed the 1997 meeting schedule. Harrison moved and Oda seconded that the dates and locations listed below, and the motion carried.

OHRAB Meeting dates for 1997:

23 January - Ohio Historical Center

21 March - Toledo Museum of Art

6 June - Youngstown Historical Center

22 August - Cincinnati Historical Society

5 December - Ohio Historical Center

The board further agreed to discuss arrangements for meeting with local historical societies at the 5 December meeting.

Parkinson made a brief report on the recent rejection of Homefront and Battlefront by the NHPRC, and suggested that the board take up discussion on the status of the regrant, at the 23 January meeting.

The board concluded the meeting with a demonstration of the Ohio Vital Information for Libraries (OVIL) project by Assistant State Archivist Charles Arp and Electronic Records Archivist Janet Carleton. Adjournment followed at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

George Parkinson

Deputy Coordinator

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