

20 March 1998

From OHRAB

Minutes, Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting, 20 March 1998, Oberlin College Archives, Oberlin, Ohio

Board members present: George Parkinson, Roland Baumann, Jonathan Dembo, Barbara Floyd, Lynn Jacobs, Michael Lucas, Jim Oda, Carol Tomer

Board members not present: Gary Ness, Keith Corman, Alice Cornell

Staff present: Charles Arp, Matthew Benz

Deputy State Coordinator George Parkinson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. The board reviewed the agenda. Roland Baumann gave opening remarks, which included a brief history of Oberlin College and the role the college has played in the shaping of American history.

The board then reviewed and adopted as written the minutes of the 5 December 1997 meeting.

Parkinson discussed board re-appointments. He reported that preliminary word from the Governor's office is that board members Jonathan Dembo, Barbara Floyd and Jim Oda, would be re-appointed to three-year terms.

The board heard from Matthew Benz on the status of the Society's "Access Through Automation" project. "Access Through Automation" is an initiative that will result in a computerized library system that integrates all of the basic library functions of the Ohio Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society into an online interactive system using a common database and access procedures.

Recent developments have included a visit with Ameritech representatives to the Western Reserve Historical Society. Another meeting with the representatives is scheduled at the Ohio Historical Society. Current plans call for system testing to begin this summer.

J.D. Britton of the Society's Local History Office reported on the Historical Records Repository Survey (HRRS). Project director Victoria Irons Walch issued a draft report and an executive summary to the Council of State Historical Record Coordinators (COSHRC) in February. Copies of these were distributed to the board. Following Britton's review of the reports, the board agreed to share the results with the survey respondents in Ohio. Michael Lucas made a motion that copies of the summary be mailed to the respondents along with a letter explaining the significance of the survey results, and details on how to obtain a complete copy of the final report. Roland Baumann seconded, and the motion passed, all in favor. The board expressed interest in seeing the raw data for the survey in Ohio, in hopes of conducting their own analysis of the results. The board asked Benz to look into the status of the survey database materials from the Society's Data Processing Department. A follow up report will be given at the June meeting.

Charles Arp then brought the board up to date on the Electronic Records Report. In January, Consultant Margaret Hedstrom submitted a final report titled Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives. Copies of the report as well as a summary page were distributed to the board. Arp stressed what he called the "high points" of Hedstrom's final report; primarily the funding through hard money of two electronic records staff positions at the Society.

Hedstrom writes:

"OHS will not be able to achieve the recommendations in this report unless additional resources are devoted to the Electronic Records Archives Program...regularly funded positions are needed...Probably the most important step OHS can take to advance the electronic records initiative is to fund and fill two positions for electronic records work...."

Arp then gave a demonstration to the board of the proposed Ohio Government Information Locator System (OGILS). The OGILS will allow for the inputting of records retention data directly from the field. OGLIS will also provide the public with access to government records information.

Following lunch, the board discussed possible locations for upcoming meetings.

Parkinson proposed that the Local History Office of the Ohio Historical Society become actively involved in assisting OHRAB in the implementation of a stronger grant program. Raising the awareness of the NHPRC grant process in Ohio is a key concern of the board, and the Local History Office has agreed to assist OHRAB in raising the profile of the grant program. Parkinson suggested that Britton be named as an official liaison between OHRAB and the Local History Office. Britton accepted the position, and the board approved the motion, all in favor.

The board discussed the Ohio Bicentennial Scrapbook project. Jonathan Dembo reviewed the original proposal and the various revisions, and reported that a committee has been named to proceed with the project. This committee reflects the wide interest shown by the archival and library communities in the project. The committee consists of board members Dembo, Lucas, Ness, Parkinson, and Oda, along with Sharon Antle and Jim Strider of the Society, Greg Byerly of Kent State University, Raimund Goerler of the Ohio State University Archives, Fran Haley, Head of the Ohio Library Council (OLC), Meribah Mansfield, Head of Worthington Public Libraries, Kent Minor of the Ohio Department of Education, and Carol Roddy, the Director of the Ohio Public Information Network (OPLIN). The Scrapbook Committee met the week of 20 March 1998 and a copy of the draft report and the meeting minutes were given to the board for review and comment.

Dembo and Parkinson stressed the significant revisions that have occurred to the project, and plans now call for a funding proposal to be submitted by 17 April 1998 for a National Leadership Grant through the Institute for Museum Library Sciences (IMLS). Further plans call for providing digitalization demonstrations to prospective participants, a publicity campaign, attending the Ohio Library Council conference to build awareness, and a web site devoted to the Ohio Bicentennial Scrapbook.

The board turned its attention to the Dayton Art Institute proposal, which was recently rejected by the NHPRC. The board discussed what could be done to assist the Dayton Art Institute should they decide to re-submit the proposal. Barbara Floyd offered to contact Kristine Sullivan of the Institute and arrange a meeting with her and Julie McMaster from the Toledo Art Museum. McMaster had earlier submitted a successful grant for the Toledo Museum to the NHPRC, and her assistance could prove invaluable. The board accepted Floyd's offer. The board also requested copies of the "blind" peer reviews of the proposal for the June meeting.

Parkinson then presented to the board the Certificate of Service to be awarded to former board member Dennis Harrison, recognizing his twenty years of service on the board.

The board heard from Parkinson on the Ohio Historical Society Archives Library grant proposal, an idea that would update the Society's Early Ohio Political Leaders. The Early Ohio Political Leaders project began in 1974 when the State Library of Ohio agreed to loan the manuscript collections of Ethan Allen Brown, Samuel Huntington, Return J. Meigs, Jr., Arthur St. Clair, Miciah T. Williams and Thomas Worthington to the Society for

conservation and preparation of an inventory and microfilm guide. The State Library material was combined with the Society's collections for these individuals as well as the holdings of seven other political leaders, and the Northwest Territory Transcripts, the Letters from the Executive of Ohio, and Ohio Governor's Letters. The project resulted in 68 rolls of microfilm and a published guide.

Focusing on new accessions related to the original project but found in other collections, this proposal will concentrate not on updating the printed version of Early Ohio Political Leaders, but rather providing electronic versions of the new materials.

Arp addressed the board on the revision of the Local Government Records plan. The plan calls for statewide funding of the eight Local Government Records Centers located around the state, establish a re-grant program, provide for staffing, and establish guidelines and standards. The plan calls for this funding to come from a statewide surcharge at the county level. This revenue will be divided up, with 50% staying in the county, 25% going to fund the program, and 25% for the re-grants. Arp has been presenting the plan to various groups statewide, and so far, overall response has been enthusiastic. Arp and the Local Government Records committee stress that this program will help fund an "unfunded mandate" of the state that called for the establishment of the Local Government Records Centers. Arp said that the money will not meet all the current needs, but will correct the glaring weak points of the State Archives program.

Calling the proposal "exciting," the board suggested that Arp should gain the support of Ohio genealogists as well as the support of county and state officials. Baumann suggested contacting archivists involved with the New York Local Records Program for advice. A motion to support the proposal passed, unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

George Parkinson

Deputy Coordinator

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