

4 December 1998

From OHRAB

Minutes, Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting, 4 December 1998, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus

Board members present: Gary Ness, George Parkinson, Roland Baumann, Keith Corman, Jonathan Dembo, Lynn Jacobs, Michael Lucas, Jim Oda, Carol Tomer

Board members not present: Alice Cornell, Barbara Floyd

Staff present: Charles Arp, Matthew Benz, Laurie Gemmill, Richard Hite, Elizabeth Nelson, Jim Orbin, Andy Verhoff, Judy Walker

Guests present: George Bain, Dave Larson

State Coordinator Gary Ness called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed the board and the day's guests.

The board then reviewed and adopted as written the minutes of the 5 June 1998 meeting.

Ness addressed the status of the Capitol Bill, which was recently passed by the Ohio House and Senate. As of 4 December, the bill awaits the signature of the Governor.

Members of the board then reported on current events and projects from their institutions and regions. James Oda, Director of the Piqua Historical Society, informed the board that the Montgomery County Historical Society recently acquired the National Cash Register (NCR) archives. Composed of photographs and business papers, this collection is one of the premier business archives available in the state. NCR may contribute funds to process the collection, and proposals call for a new facility to be built to house the NCR Archives.

Michael Lucas, State Librarian, reported on a recent meeting of 300 librarians from around the state, both public and school librarians. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Statewide Resource Sharing Project, an on-line system that will enable schools to "talk" with public libraries around the state. One of the goals of the project is to allow for children in school to borrow materials from public libraries via the World Wide Web, thus creating a statewide delivery system.

Roland Baumann, Archivist of Oberlin College, told the board of his involvement in archival consulting and exhibition work, as well as an electronic records workshop, held at the college, that was designed to devise a strategy to set guidelines for employees involved in the use of machine readable records. Baumann also outlined for the board a proposal he is involved in for the creation of new space for the Oberlin College Archives.

Lynn Jacobs, Assistant Lucas County Prosecutor, informed the board of a multi-million dollar renovation project for the main Lucas County Library. She also described her involvement in public record issues as Assistant Prosecutor.

Jonathan Dembo, Archivist for the Cincinnati Museum Center, noted the opening of the Children's Museum in November. Attendance so far has exceeded all expectations. He also reported that Richard Glover, Cincinnati Museum Center President, has announced his resignation after over two years in that position. Glover feels that he has met all the goals he set out to accomplish. Finally, Dembo has been named to the Ohio Academy of History, where he will serve a term as Chairman of the Public History Committee.

Keith Corman, Hamilton County Court Bailiff, reported on his recent contacts with the Hamilton County Recorder who is looking into turning over the records there to a suitable archival facility, such as the Cincinnati Historical Society. The board recommended that Corman contact a Local Records Specialist at the Ohio Historical Society, and Jonathan Dembo offered his assistance as well.

Dave Larson, State Records Administrator, reported on a state government review of the handling of the records of Ohio's elected representatives, in light of media requests for data, as well as the upcoming term limit restrictions. A discussion about the ramifications of the archiving of Governor Vionovich's Papers at Ohio University followed, with the board expressing concern over the current system for handling the records of state officials.

Carol Tomer, archivist for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, discussed three major on-going building projects at the Clinic, one of which, the Learner Research Institute will be opening in May of 1999. Tomer is involved in the transfer of records to this new space. She also told the board that the MAC/MIRMAC Conference would be held in Cleveland in the fall of 2000.

George Parkinson, Deputy State Coordinator, reported that the Archives Library continues to fulfill the goals of The Ohio 2003 Plan. With development of the Ohio GILS and an electronic records program, and installation of the Horizon library automation system several goals of the plan are being met. The Western Reserve Historical Society and the Ohio Historical Society have both selected this system, working together to customize its application to archives, library, and museum collections. Participation of the Cincinnati Historical Society in this joint effort remains doubtful but would be welcome. Parkinson also reported on the steady rise of research contacts, due in large part to the Ohio Historical Society website [www.ohiohistory.org] A recent acquisition of collection of Thomas Worthington papers was noted.

Elizabeth Nelson reported on the "Ohio Memory Project". She explained that the grant proposal to the IMLS was turned down for funding because IMLS decided not to fund planning grants. Otherwise, the planning continues, with the proposal set to be on the Ohio Bicentennial Commission's agenda for their March meeting. The current goal of the project is to "...undertake a statewide cooperative effort that will digitize significant local historical documents, catalog and organize them for direct subject access, and make them readily available on the World Wide Web for use by students, scholars, and the general public as Ohio celebrates its Bicentennial in 2003. In addition, this project will provide direct assistance to selected local historical societies, will develop curriculum-related bicentennial related materials which can be used in...Ohio's classrooms, and will produce a print publication which documents Ohio's two hundred years of statehood."

The board turned its attention to the Dayton Art Institute grant proposal. Resubmitted against the November deadline, this marks the Institute's second attempt at receiving grant funding through the NHPRC. OHRAB supported the proposal, and board reviews were returned to NHPRC accordingly. Overall, the board's comments were favorable, although new board members stressed that they felt uncomfortable with the review process. The board discussed ways to address this issue.

While discussing the DAI proposal, it was noted that the general lack of grant proposals in Ohio must be addressed. It was suggested that a full-time staff person involved in NHPRC matters would greatly assist the board in such matters, as will the proposed larger role for the board in local government issues. The board also discussed

the many problems involved in grant writing and submission. These problems include rising expenses, the lack of interest on the national level of funding processing proposals, and less government money available for funding proposals. It was suggested that perhaps institutions are hesitant to commit money and staff time to a proposal when they know the proposal might not recoup their investment. Also discussed was the feeling that new proposals need to be more in keeping with the kind of proposals that are currently being funded by the NHPRC.

Matthew Benz provided a brief update on the current status of the HRRS Survey. As of early December, the final printed version of the report has yet to be received. According to Victoria Walch, Project Coordinator, the final report is due by the first of the year.

Meeting dates for 1999 were discussed. The board agreed to the following tentative dates:

March 19th: Ashland College Archives

August 6th: Campus Martius, Marietta

December 3rd: Ohio Historical Center Archives Library

Following lunch, the board reconvened to hear reports from guests and various OHS staff regarding on-going projects. Richard Hite gave a brief presentation on the upcoming NAGARA 1999 meeting, which will be held in Columbus, July 14th-17th. OHS is handling fundraising as well as local arrangements for the meeting, and events planned so far include a reception at the State Capitol building, a Barbecue in the Ohio Village, workshops and speakers. The board asked that it be provided information on attending the meeting when it becomes available.

Charles Arp and Laurie Gemmell reported on the Library of Congress/Ameritech grant, The African American Experience in Ohio, 1850 -1920, which will be completed in February of 1999.

Andrew Verhoff of the Local History Office reported that the office is currently updating the Local History guide, Historical Organizations in Ohio. It will be available in mid January. Verhoff also reported that the Local History Office has regional meetings scheduled for March and April of 1999. Verhoff closed with a brief report on The Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums (OAHSM) annual meeting, which was held at the Ohio Historical Society in November.

George Bain, Archivist for Ohio University, briefed the board on Archives Week. Called for in the Ohio 2003 Plan, Archives Week has been celebrated annually since 1993. Bain said that there will be an Archives Week presence at NAGARA this summer, and that plans are moving forward to establish a website that will celebrate "a day in the life of Ohio," concentrating on various communities throughout the state. Bain also emphasized that much of the planning for Archives Week celebration and education relies upon local community efforts. Lynn Jacobs offered to assist in organizing efforts on behalf of Archives Week in the Toledo area.

The meeting closed with demonstrations by OHS staff of the Ohio Government Information Locator Service (GILS), which is in the developmental stages, and the new Online Public Access Catalog, which will be available for public use in 1999.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10.

Respectfully submitted,

George Parkinson

Deputy Coordinator

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