

**California Historical Records Advisory Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 18, 2007**

Location: Hoover Institution, Stanford University

Members Present: Gary Brutsch, Gabriele Carey, Wendy Franklin, Jim Hofer, Nancy Lenoil, Waverly Lowell, Laren Metzger, Charles Palm, Chuck Wilson, Jennifer Martinez Wormser

Members Absent: Christine Figueroa, Jim Henley, Gary Kurutz

The meeting was called to order by State Coordinator Nancy Lenoil at 10:00 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Gary and seconded by Charles to approve the minutes of June 11, 2007. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made by Gabriele and seconded by Jennifer to pass the minutes of June 12, 2007. The motion passed unanimously.

**Board Grants**

Laren provided a summary of the Regrant Project. Regrant project repositories are generally on schedule with their work. All have submitted interim narrative reports. Two more basic archives workshops will be offered before the end of the year, one in conjunction with the annual meeting of the California Council for the Promotion of History on October 25<sup>th</sup>, and the other in the City of South San Francisco on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Laren suggested that it would be useful to ask NHPRC for an extension of the Regrant Project to afford all awardees an opportunity to complete their project work.

Laren submitted a request to NHPRC for administrative support for the board's meetings and other work for calendar year 2008. The request was for \$7720, which is slightly higher than past administrative support grants. Laren indicated that about \$500-700 would remain from the current administrative grant funds. This money will need to be expended by December 31, 2007. Optionally, the board may ask for an extension to the project with remaining funds to be used to defray the costs of the board's February 2008 meeting. Laren asked the members to provide any comments to him as soon as possible on how best to expend the projected remaining funds.

*Action Item: Members will send comments to Laren regarding the expenditure of remaining administrative support funds.*

Laren offered an overview of a new NHPRC grant program that will be of interest to the board. The State and National Archives Partnership Grants will provide fifty-six awards to state boards for a variety of purposes, including projects to reactivate a state board (\$5,000), projects for implementation of state board strategic plans (up to \$20,000), and projects for regrant or collaborative activities (up to \$50,000). Since the board is currently carrying out a regrant

project, the strategic plan category would seem to align most closely with the board's needs at this time. The deadline for submitting applications for this program is March 3, 2008. Laren asked the members to send him any ideas for the proposal in the near future.

*Action Item: Members will send comments to Laren concerning an NHPRC grant application for the implementation of the board's strategic plan.*

## **Review of NHPRC Grants**

### **1. Orange County Archives**

The consensus of the board was that this application is poorly written and organized. The existing staff, which includes three full-time positions, has limited professional training and experience. The director has attended the Western Archives Institute, but the archivist and assistant archivist have no professional training. As a consequence, it is hard to justify an expenditure of federal funds to support a project archivist to process their collections. The plan of work lacks details, including basic information about volume of holdings, and specific information on how the processing would be accomplished. In addition, there is a question about the commitment to processing collections in the future once the project work has been completed. In short, what the county archives really needs is a professionally trained and experienced archivist

Charles made a motion, seconded by Chuck, to recommend that the applicant resubmit this proposal at the October 2008 grant cycle with revisions that address the issues noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

This led to a discussion about the need for guidelines on how to prepare a good grant application and the role of the board in providing this information. It was suggested that members should submit their comments on this topic to Laren and Nancy so web-based guidelines can be developed in the near future.

*Action Item: Members will send ideas to Nancy and Laren about the creation of web-based guidelines that will provide good grant writing information to potential applicants.*

### **2. San Jose State University**

The board determined that this is really more of a survey project than a processing proposal. It might be useful for the applicant to ask for funding to first carry out the surveying of the collections, after which funding for processing work would make more sense. In addition, this plan of work lacks details and quantification.

A motion was made by Charles and seconded by Chuck to recommend that the applicant resubmit the proposal at the October 2008 grant cycle with revisions that address the issues noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

### 3. Regents of the University of California

It was noted by several members that the project staff are inexperienced and unqualified to carry out the plan of work. There is a pressing need to have a professional archivist working on this project. In addition, there is a concern whether there is sufficient time to accomplish all the project objectives and the lack of details in the work plan. Moreover, while the scrapbooks are worth keeping, not all the color prints and negatives should be retained.

A motion was made by Jennifer and seconded by Gary to recommend that the applicant resubmit the proposal at the October 2008 grant cycle with revisions that address the issues noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

### 4. Orange County Great Park Corporation

Gabriele recused herself from a consideration of this proposal.

It was suggested that there might be some overlap with the records encompassed by this proposal and materials maintained at the Orange County Archives and elsewhere. Certain portions of the project, such as the development of a funding plan and the acquisition and retrofitting of a building to house the collections, are beyond the scope of NHPRC and are therefore inappropriate for the board to consider. The costs for storage are probably too low as well. In addition, the board was troubled by the apparent lack of commitment to hire a professional archivist once the project has been completed. Moreover, the corporation appears to have substantial funding available. The project timeline is too brief.

A motion was made by Charles and seconded by Gary to recommend that the applicant resubmit the proposal at the October 2008 grant cycle with revisions that address the issues noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Report of the State Archivist**

Nancy offered a summary of the report, which was sent to members in advance. The board went into an executive session and the tape recording was stopped at 11:43 a.m.

The board adjourned for lunch at 11:50 a.m.

The executive session ended and the tape recording resumed at 1:25 p.m.

### **Strategic Plan Review**

Nancy led a discussion about the board's strategic plan, in particular, a review of objectives relating directly to the board itself. A summary of these objectives had been sent to the members in advance of the meeting.

### 1. Resources for Record-Keepers

This objective has been met through the board's current Regrant Project. While there was a consensus that the Regrant Project has been beneficial, the members expressed an interest in seeking additional funding for regrant activities in the future. In addition, it was suggested that tools and guidelines for grant applicants would be useful.

### 2. Preservation of Records

The members liked the idea of legislation to require the use of acid-free paper for state records, but questioned whether this should be for all records or only those that have enduring value. Laren and Nancy described past efforts along this line that failed to pass the legislature. The board wondered whether the issue could attract enough attention to be worthwhile and that the board's priorities might be better focused elsewhere. In the end, this is an issue for the Secretary of State and State Archives to pursue.

### 3. Adequacy of Documentation

It was noted that the California Historical Records Conference initiative had similar goals and interests. Some members questioned the role of the board in this area and noted that the objective lacked sufficient detail. The board could be supportive on this issue, but lacked staff to act independently without the inclusion of other organizations. Waverly indicated the need for training in the collecting and preserving of digital records and expressed the thought that the board should be involved in this area. There was a general agreement that a new objective should be added to the strategic plan along these lines.

### 4. Records Management

There was a consensus that legislation requiring the creation of a records management program for cities and counties was a good idea, but faced stiff challenges. The real key here is to convince local government officials, elected and otherwise, to understand the business case for records management. To that end, the members agreed that they should take on an advocacy role to promote this concept by participating in meetings of the League of California Cities, the County Clerks-Recorders Association and related organizations.

Nancy reported on efforts to unify the records management and archives functions within state government. The board went into an executive session and the tape recording was stopped at 2:00. The executive session ended and the recording was started at 2:19.

### 5. Collaboration among Organizations

Charles noted that collaboration, by itself, was not always beneficial, and suggested that the objective be reworded. Other members noted that this objective was rather vague and wondered how the board could effect collaboration and coordination among organizations. There was a consensus that this objective needed work and was not a priority for the board.

## 6. Leadership for the Historical Records Community

There was a general agreement that reviving the County Historical Records Commissions could be valuable. In addition, Waverly suggested that a new objective could be created that would provide descriptive and technical standards for digitizing records, drawing upon standards available from the State Library and OCLC. After further discussion, the members decided this new objective should be created under Issue 1: Resources for Record-Keepers.

### **Replevin Law**

Laren and Chuck provided an overview of previous work done on the draft replevin legislation. Charles suggested that the definition of records should be expanded to encompass legislative and judicial organizations and that “agencies” should be changed to “entities”. Chuck noted that the current draft might engender a conflict of interest charge against the State Archivist when state records were involved. After further discussion, it was agreed that Secretary of State should be used in place of State Archivist in all sections except those that involved the transfer or receipt of records.

A motion was made by Chuck and seconded by Charles to revise the draft as noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

Further discussion led to a further amendment, namely, that the words, “in consultation with the State Archivist” should be inserted after “Secretary of State” in the first subsection. A motion was made by Waverly and seconded by Gary to adopt this amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Archivist Award of Excellence**

Waverly summarized the work she had done on this issue, focusing on the outline that she had distributed prior to the meeting. Chuck provided some background about the information that Christine had prepared. Chuck noted that SCA already provides a separate award honoring the contributions of organizations. He also questioned the need to reduce the period of consideration from five to three years.

After further discussion, it was agreed that the award should be renamed the “Award of Archival Excellence”, that it is an honor for individuals only, and that the period of consideration should remain five years.

Waverly asked that members send their top three selections from the lists prepared by her and Christine and she would put together a new outline.

*Action Item: Members will send their top three picks to Waverly as soon as possible.*

## **Archives Month**

Nancy reported that Archives Month events at the State Archives went well. Jennifer was recognized for her efforts at creating the board's web site.

## **Reports from Other Repositories**

Wendy noted that the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has an opening for an Archivist II, replacing Victoria Yturalde who has transferred to another unit in the agency. The search is still on to replace Walt Gray as the chief of the Archaeology, History, and Museums Division. Along with the California Preservation Program, the California Association of Museums, and History Monterey, DPR has received an IMLS grant, "Connecting to Collections", that will enhance use of the materials. The agency is considering the unification of its archives and central records office functions.

Gabriele indicated that the Society of California Archivists is looking into a new award that would provide funding for attendance at professional meetings.

## **Other Business**

Nancy noted that four members have terms expiring at the end of December: Charles, Christine, Wendy, and Jennifer. She will solicit whether these members have a continuing interest in serving on the board. If so, she will either send letters to the appointing authority asking for a reappointment (Wendy, Jennifer) or make a reappointment herself (Charles, Christine). In addition to the existing list of potential appointees, Nancy asked the members to send her names of new potential board members.

*Action Item: Members will send Nancy names of potential board members.*

## **Next Meeting**

Charles indicated that the Nixon Library might be available for the board's next meeting in February 2008. Jennifer noted that the library is undergoing some construction. It was suggested that Nancy approach Christine about meeting at the Getty.

It was agreed that the next board meeting would be February 20, 2008 at a site yet to be determined.

On behalf of the board, Nancy offered thanks to Charles for making all the arrangements for the meeting.

Chuck made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Gary. The motion passed unanimously.