

Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting

June 20, 2012

Michigan Historical Center, Lansing, Michigan

The Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on June 20, 2012.

In attendance were Sandra Clark, Director of the Michigan Historical Center, Mark Harvey, State Archivist, Erik Nordberg, University Archivist at Michigan Technological University (via Skype), Tawny Ryan Nelb, Director, Post Street Archives, and Patrice Merritt, Executive Director, Friends of Detroit Public Library and Mary Jo Remensnyder.

Minutes Approval

Patrice Merritt motioned for approval of the minutes of January 23, 2012 with two changes. All in favor. The minutes were approved.

Term Limits

We discussed the term limits. Tawny Ryan Nelb is on her second term, which expires at the end of 2013. Erik Nordberg's term expires in 2014. Francis Blouin and Patrice Merritt's terms are expiring at the end of 2012. The Office of the Great Seal will be checking on it. Frank Boles assumed his appointment was expired. Sandra Clark said his appointment will be continued until a new appointment is made.

Erik Nordberg's and Tawny Ryan Nelb's appointments were done by the previous administration. Letters were sent in the Spring of 2010. Erik Nordberg said he has a letter with an expiration date of 2014. Mark Harvey said we have to follow up on Frank Boles limit, as we have one down and two expiring. Tawny Ryan Nelb asked if someone can only serve two terms? Would Governor Snyder extend limits beyond two terms?

Patrice Merritt asked if we need some new names of possible new Board members.

Federal Financial Report

Mark Harvey received an extension for Frank Boles for \$37,310 total and we have seen staff changes and administrative disruptions.

Statewide Archival Catalog

OCLC offers free services and specialized cataloguing at the collection level. Erik Nordberg said in addition to providing leadership by xx agencies can create xx records. Mark Harvey said he wants to determine future goals. Void of tools, workshops at state level are being filled by Historical Society of Michigan personnel who sometimes are untrained in Archival procedures.

Mark Harvey reported that he has talked to the Michigan Archival Association (MAA) before on how we could coordinate a partnership, and would like to attend their next Board meeting. Erik Nordberg reported he is active in MAA. Patrice Merritt said MAA was always a good go-to resource.

Patrice Merritt said that Archival tool kit training is problematic. There was no place to go to anymore, and MAA was not offering training, even the Burton Historical Library employees don't know where to go for training and help.

SNAP Grant

Mark Harvey has a narrative and will circulate that. The SNAP grant applications are due in late September 2012.

Board Priorities

We need to have a web page created for Clearinghouse Organizations.

Mark Harvey said AASLH (American Association for State and Local History) is still offering basic on-line archival solutions. Mark Harvey said an all day workshop is provided for people that don't have any information to get started. Patrice Merritt said that she is having trouble finding someone to come on-site to give information and share knowledge on Archival procedures. Mark Harvey asked is there really a niche' for this topic? Tawny Ryan Nelb said that the Historical Society of Michigan is trying to provide professional level services, but that the HSM does not have the expertise to do this on their own.

Mark Harvey said he is concerned about the local records issue because there have been problems. (Ten years ago, white paper) xx. Jessica Miller of the State Archives staff has a new task of working with the local records, but this will take more of her time away from Research duties. Mark Harvey reported that we still need county clerks' meetings to be scheduled.

Archives' Updates

Mark Harvey said some counties are floundering. A staff person at Ingham County Clerk's offices accidentally deleted all of their electronic records. They had the paper copy back-up.

Kent County is the best example on how to run a program. The elected officials main job is to coordinate records and yet some have no qualifications to do this. Patrice Merritt asked if these people attended meetings to provide direction (?) Sandra Clark asked if MTA (xx) provides training? Mark Harvey said they do, but it has been hit-or-miss at best. The problem is preserving (power point slides) and it was not effective. Tawny Ryan Nelb asked if we could put together a (imaging) standard program training. Sandra Clark said we can but we would need a list of compliant or qualified sites.

Tawny Ryan Nelb said clerks have to provide Archival material (are legally responsible) to us and we should have some hold over them. Mark Harvey said should we advocate on the local records? Tawny Ryan Nelb said no one else will step forward to do it.

Sandra Clark reported that at AASLH that one person was assigned to local governments and one for local historical societies, and both were full time jobs. They had established that people needed training.

Mark Harvey said that officials don't have a point of contact for help to go to.

Tawny Ryan Nelb said that the Midland county clerks – the judges appointed personnel who does not know how to perform clerk duties.

Erik Nordberg asked what could we do to establish what used to be done by one person in State Archives'. Can the board do too much? Local record groups archivists sometimes do not have the archival tool kits that they need. We should have a summit with a twelve month goal, combining groups such as the Historical Society of Michigan and the Michigan Humanities Council.

Sandra Clark passed around a booklet from the Michigan Museum Association, their April 2012 report "Planning Grant Survey Results." Mark Harvey said we should start to partner with these groups to find out common interests, overlaps, and needs.

Tawny Ryan Nelb said that State Archivist roles have changed over time and some archivists have "tunnel vision" when it comes to state records. People do not have information on other things we are doing now.

Erik Nordberg said we could start and consider a facilitator, a professional archivist but not someone from Michigan. (Laura?) Roberts from Massachusetts was a good facilitator and cultural history person. County clerks and township clerks could be involved too.

Patrice Merritt said we need to hold people accountable.

Sandra Clark said it would be interesting to have someone come back with an implementation.

Patrice Merritt said we could have homework projects and a three year plan.

Erik Nordberg said we should not overreach what we think we can do. Elections are county clerk's big business. The size of the projects are large: processing collections, transferring to digital.

Sandra Clark said we need to get a good facilitator. We need to decide the goals of a summit. Needs, end issues, solutions? Do we need a summit to know what these needs are? We could send out a training grant manual to xxxxxx and ask for comments. What about written standard policies?

Erik Nordberg suggested the Local History Conference, Historical Society of Michigan workshops, they are different venues to explore this.

Snap Grant

The Snap Grant is due in late September. Mark Harvey said he wants to get the framework for this grant to xxxxx steps, and incorporate the summit idea.

Mark Harvey said the Ionia County archives their records within the records retention schedule. Records were created of any historical document of what was there and what we have here in the Archives in Lansing. A county could take 80 hours to do this for each county, or lesser time depending on the size of the county.

Final Reports

Mark Harvey said Ionia County was a success and we can start with this one and go forward.

Regional depository – what if someone could be recruited to work with the regional depository?

Erik Nordberg asked what would the alternative be? We could connect with county clerks, direct connection and give them information on how to preserve records. Houghton County did not want to transfer their records so far.

Local Records

Mark Harvey said the most valued service we can provide are one-day seminars about records and to provide help to decide what can be thrown away? Some counties are not aware of what can and what cannot be thrown away.

Sandra Clark said we can work with regional depositories where help is needed most. Could summer graduate assistants help with this? We could also partner with University of Michigan P.E.T. (?) -credit programs.

Erik Nordberg said that graduate students need to be prepared to deal with some of the problems involved with the archiving.

Sandra Clark noted that the smaller counties may be better to start with. Could we possibly get match (50/50) to pay graduate students from regional depositories?

Summits

Mark Harvey asked if two summits are too much? We could do the two separate summits for separate audiences.

Erik Nordberg said that as long as records are professionally handled is the main concern and to have county clerks and local heritage individuals at the same meetings. Sandra Clark said this will take some money to plan for the summit and for food costs involved.

We will plan to have a workshop on grant writing as our next meeting on August 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We will send out an Email to confirm.

We need to prepare a list on when each grant is due.

Library of Michigan Family History Collection Transfer

Mark Harvey reported that a press release went out on XXXXXXXX that explains the Family History Collection (40,000 volumes) and 21,000 reels of film being transferred from the Library of Michigan to the Archives of Michigan Reference Collections (Lansing.) Robert Garrett will send a link to you for the DNR gov.delivery site.

New Collections

Mark Harvey reported that the City of Detroit Planning Office has approved and is transferring to the Archives of Michigan architectural drawings dating back to the 1940s. These have met retention schedules. These drawings were in a safe and protective environment.

Private movers will deliver these to us.

SeekingMichigan.gov

We are in the process of upgrading new servers for SeekingMichigan.gov. This should be complete in two weeks. New themes are being used.

Former Mayor Coleman Young

Patrice Merritt reported that \$90,000 was cleared and approved to process former City of Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's mayoral records. Three letters of support were written for this.

Patrice Merritt also reported that Wayne County's death certificates (from 1940 to 196x) are on-line, and through the Burton Historical Library, one can purchase a certificate for \$15.00. Mark Harvey said that this really is violating a state law.

Michigan Historical Commission

Sandra Clark reported that the Michigan Historical Commission will celebrate one-hundred years in 2013. There is a major statewide planning effort going on for this event.

The meeting was concluded at 12:00 p.m. and broke for lunch.