

**Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting**  
**September 13, 2018**  
**Michigan History Center**  
**MHC Commission Room, 5th Floor**  
**10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Board members present: Marian Matyn, Jim Cameron, Kevin Graffagnino, Mark Harvey, Sandra Clark, Cynthia Ghering, Katheryn Kelly

Staff and visitors: Jessica Harden, Tim Gleisner

**Call to order** at 10:10 am followed by introductions.

**Approval of Minutes from 1/11/2018**

- There was no quorum for the May meeting, so it was a work session. Mark will note that on the website.
- Kevin moved to approve, Jim seconded. Motion passed.

**Save Michigan History Grantee Update and Assessment Logistics**

- The current grant cycle is off because of budgetary uncertainty at the federal level.
- The current cycle is from June 2018-June 2019.
- A suggestion was made to set up a monthly Zoom meeting to keep track of project milestones going forward.
- This year the board needs to complete 20 assessments and offer 2 Basics of Archives workshops. In the past, organizations were pre-screened before having an assessment.
- MSHRAB is receiving questions about this grant cycle. Mark has fielded preliminary questions.
- Mark has set up the first workshop on November 1 as a partnership with the Historical Society of Michigan. Mark and Archives of Michigan staff will present but the opportunity needs to be promoted
- Marian suggested promoting through the Michigan Library Association and the MICH-LIB mailing list.
- The Library of Michigan administers MICH-LIB. Tim is giving a talk about the importance of local collections at the MLA conference on October 18. The conference includes all classes of libraries in the state. This might be an opportunity to promote the workshop and pre-qualification questionnaire. The board will send postcard-style handouts with Tim.
- Promotion ideas: Michigan Archival Association, Michigan Museums Association, MICH-LIB, Michigan Genealogical Council, Historical Society of Michigan, Mid-Michigan Digital Practitioners, GVSU Kutsche Center local history roundtable, MHC's GovDelivery mailing list, Michigan Radio segments. DNR has prosperity regions connected to local governments and is willing to help promote through that e-mail list.
- Creating a Facebook page for MSHRAB was discussed, but it was decided that pushing out an event through MHC's Facebook page would reach more people.
- There is a draft press release to use in creating promotional material. The board decided to do more social media promotion rather than sending out a formal press release.
- This grant cycle was supposed to start in January and we were awarded \$25,000 for one year. (The application asked for \$36,000.) The award was delayed until June. An application was

submitted in June for regrants during the 2019 grant cycle for organizations that completed assessments.

- In previous cycles, the board has had trouble finding volunteers to do assessments. Archives staff and board members have done most of the assessments in the last two rounds. This time around, the board is offering an honorarium (up to \$500 per assessment) to cover an archivist's time and travel. The idea is to build up to an itinerant archivist model in which an archivist would manage the project and report to the board.
- Collections in agencies requesting assessments must fit the definition of archival records. In the future, the board may promote this opportunity to local governments.
- Eventually and ideally, MSHRAB should be the clearing house for questions on how to care for collections.
- The questionnaire is designed to encourage organizations to gain understanding of archival practice before sending someone to do an assessment.
- The board reviewed the pre-assessment questionnaire. Suggestions included:
  - Asking if the institution has a professionally trained archivist on staff or whether staff have received relevant archival training.
  - Specify "archival collections" more often throughout because museum and library procedures don't always transfer.
  - Remove requests for attachments. If an institution receives an assessment, the assessor can ask for policy/procedure documents. The questionnaire will include a note that the board will ask for the material if an assessment is set up.
  - Ask who the decision-making authority (board, executive director, president, etc.) is.
  - List oral histories or ledgers/volumes in collections question #3.
  - Delete question 4.
  - Change 5 to "Are collections cataloged...".
  - Leave out second question under #6.
  - Leave out additional questions under #7.
  - Leave out additional questions under #8.
  - Include a cover letter indicating that the board is here to help and name a contact person.
  - Add open-ended question: "Is there anything else we should know about your organization?"
  - Add a sentence that specifies that the program is open to any organization that holds archival material and defines what archival material is.
  - Make it friendlier—change references to "the institution" to "your institution," etc.
- Mark will make changes and post a new draft in Basecamp.
- Cynthia suggested making sure that the marketing this year makes clear that the program is focused on training (free workshops) and assessments (free one-on-one with professional archivist) for this cycle. Sandra suggested promoting the value of spending time with an archival professional to get an understanding of how to better care for collections. Kevin noticed that assessments can also be good tools for organizations to use in appeals for funding to make improvements.
- An informational webinar was suggested.
- The program as it stands now has several moving parts—routing organizations to training or assessments, recruiting and training assessing archivists (Tawny Nelb offered to share a

boilerplate report template to use in training), coordinating organizations that completed assessments to attend pre-grant webinar for regrant program.

- In marketing material, use “visit” instead of assessment and explain that it’s a conversation with a professional archivist about an organization’s specific collections. Organizations will get a written report with recommended next steps. Reports can be used in applications for future grants or strategic planning. Include information about how to attend training if an organization is not ready for a visit.
- Kevin and Marian volunteered to do assessments.
- Next steps: Archives of Michigan will finalize the look and feel of the questionnaire, draft promotional handout, draft text for promotion through venues listed above, and coordinate with MHC’s Director of Engagement and DNR’s marketing team.
- Cynthia will reach out to potential assessing archivists.

#### **NHPRC/MSHRAB Update: Overview of SAA Session**

- NHPRC had a town hall meeting with SHRAB representatives at SAA this year. Many states have similar issues. Larger states are pushing for NHPRC to go back to boilerplate funding/block grants. States would still have to be accountable for the funds to continue to receive them.
- NHPRC received a funding increase.
- Christopher Eck is the new executive director of NHPRC.

#### **Web Update**

- The Archives now has a graduate student who will be helping MSHRAB to keep the website updated. First steps are to reconcile minutes and update project listings. Material related to this year’s SMH grant will go up as it’s created.

#### **Board Member Updates**

- Jim talked about the Michigan Oral History Association newsletter and encouraged board members to join and participate in MOHA activities.
- Sandra talked about the Michigan History Center’s Real Story Lab, which is a high-end recording booth that is being used for doing oral histories and recording Michigan Radio segments. MHC has been talking to StoryCorps about establishing a partnership. The museum recently closed for a week due to cleanup of dust from a construction project.
- Tim talked about the Library of Michigan’s rebranding of the Center for the Book.
- Cynthia vacationed in the UP and visited numerous local historical societies. MSU has a new University Librarian (Joe Salem) and the Archives will start reporting up through the library. MSU has a new compliance office working with records management. MSU has a new associate provost for art collections and initiatives (Judith Stoddard).
- Kevin has set 12/31/2019 as his official retirement date. The Clements Library’s associate director is also retiring in June 2019. The Clements is continuing to collect.
- Mark discussed the Archives of Michigan’s migration of the back end of Seeking Michigan from CONTENTdm to Preservica. Spring 2019 is the goal for launch. The electronic records program is continuing to expand with the intercounty drains project and transfers from the corporations division in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. The Archives is working on forming a consortium with a number of universities to bring down the cost of Preservica for all institutions involved.
- Marian discussed CMU’s new president and university reorganization. CMU Libraries have a new dean and assistant dean. She is busy training new students and teaching classes. Marian has

cataloged a set of electronic records related to the Soo Locks. CMU has a dense collection related to Michigan maritime history and the online finding aid is now linked to the catalog record.

**New Business**

None.

**Adjourn**

Kevin motioned to adjourn, Marian seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:20.