



Maine Historical Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2024
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Location: Zoom

Board Members Present: Kat Stefko, Steve Bromage, Pat Dunn, Larissa Vigue Picard, Kevin Johnson, Earle Shettleworth, Jill Piekut Roy, Anna Faherty

Board Members Absent: Donald Soctomah, Howard Lowell

MSA Staff Members Present: Kate McBrien (ex-officio), Tammy Marks

Public Attendance: None

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm by Kate McBrien.

Welcome

Kate welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized a quorum.

MHRAB Funding

Kate verified that the MHRAB has allocated \$24,102 from the FY24 Biennial budget, which is being drawn down as needed. A \$40,000 grant awarded by NHPRC is being processed and is expected to arrive soon.

Grant Applications Update

The Board's project offers a program for collections or preservation assessments. Three applications have already been received, and other organizations have expressed interest and have a few questions. The application deadline is Friday, but the organization will only start reviewing them after the 15th of this month. The State Archives website has received several requests for consultants to update contact information, and the organization is working on gathering more information.

Once the grants are received, the Grant Application Review Subcommittee work will begin, with Earle, Pat, Larissa, and Howard reviewing the applications. The requested budgets are small, so the board is hopeful it will be able to award a few grants. The board will try to notify people of the grant awards by May 13th.

The Board suggested creating a subcommittee report to state the grant recipients. Earle believes that having a subcommittee allows full Board participation and a better understanding of the projects and needs. Steve Bromage agreed with Earle, stating that having a diverse group working on the grant application can help make informed decisions and ensure the process is a success.

Kate suggested sharing the applications on Google Drive and organizing a review meeting after the 15th to ensure the applications are awarded.

Subcommittee Assignments and Scope of Work

The Website Content Planning Subcommittee is discussing the creation of a MHRAB landing page on the Maine State Archives' website. They are focusing on the content, format, and frequency of updates for the page. The subcommittee plans to use Drupal, a user-friendly content management platform, to allow agencies to update information as needed. Drupal offers user training in May, which could affect content organization and presentation. Kate will share the timeline and suggest scheduling meetings and Zoom links. Tammy is acting as an administrative coordinator for this subcommittee. The subcommittee will work closely with the Secretary of State's office to ensure content accessibility.

The Board discussed the Roving Archivist program in Maine, which would involve research and planning. The Roving Archivist Research & Planning Subcommittee would need to consult with relevant individuals in Vermont and Massachusetts and the Council of State Archivist to determine who is familiar with these programs. Kate suggests that the subcommittee organize a planning meeting to discuss their work and the states they want to contact. She also mentions that Connecticut has a similar program.

Jill is interested in the work product and what would be most helpful to the Board with the idea of options and believes it would be an excellent way to determine what the program aims to create, and which options would be used for funding. The report would be discussed with the full Board, Anna, and Kat Stefko, who agree on cost-benefit analysis. Kat also mentioned the need for someone to represent the more remote parts of the state in planning. The proposal is based on other states' recommendations and the subcommittee's needs.

In the discussion, the Kate discussed the importance of having a rural perspective in the Roving Archivist program. The Board suggested contacting someone who can share their perspective and, if not, a call for volunteers. The subcommittees are not limited to board members but can include anyone with a different perspective. Kate will be responsible for dropping any recommendations into a grant application for funding. The discussion highlights the importance of collaboration in the field of archival research and planning.

Work Plan Discussion

The Board discussed the Strategic Plan, focusing on audience outreach, planning for an established program, and re-granting the Roving Archivist position. A yearly budget and regular

federal and state funding are needed. Kate suggested drafting an annual budget to help the Board achieve these goals. The Board has set a goal to complete the onboarding and training efforts and expand the diversity initiatives within the next two to three years. The Board discussed including these core programs in next year's plan. During the meeting, Anna asked if there was an official action plan to respond to these goals. Kate suggested it was being done unofficially through subcommittees, but they could put it in writing and vote on it as a Board. This year's action plan will focus on working on website content, planning for a Roving Archivist, and issuing the first round of grants.

Kat inquired about when the board committee's terms would expire. Kate and Earle discussed the appointment process. The Governor is primarily responsible for appointing the members and their terms. However, all members were appointed at the same time.

Earle suggested contacting the Governor's secretary. Typically, board members serve for 3, 4, or 5 years. The State Museum follows this practice. Moreover, Kate mentioned that there are no term limits for legislation requiring a 5-year term for historic preservation boards.

The Program and Services - Overview aims to provide individuals with training and mentoring. It also considers funding for the re-grant program and implements the website landing page for subcommittee work. The main objective is supporting, training, mentoring, networking, technical assistance, and collaborative opportunities. The program plans to extend its services until 2024 and 2026, specifically focusing on roving archivists. The strategic plan includes collaborations with archives and museums.

Public Awareness - The Board is developing an annual agenda or a calendar for public awareness activities and advocacy. Working closely with the State Archives leadership to be visible advocates. Additionally, the Board is considering making regular funding requests for their work in the next biennial budget. They also work on plans and programs for America250 and the website. As part of this effort, the Board prepares to participate in three statewide conversations about the America 250.

Anna Faherty suggested that the Board should participate in meetings like the Cultural Alliance of Maine conferences hosted by the Cultural Alliance. Kate agreed, saying the Board should join these meetings instead of hosting them.

Approval of January 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes

The Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the meeting minutes from January 10, 2024.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:56 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 8 at 3 pm.