

20 August 2004

From OHRAB

Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting Minutes, August 20, 2004 Ohio Historical Center, Columbus

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: William K. Laidlaw, Jr.; Laurie A. Gemmill; Charles Arp; Roland M. Baumann; Barbara Floyd; Raimund Goerler; James Oda; and Carol Tomer

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: John Fleming, Julie McMaster, Kermit Pike

OHS STAFF PRESENT: Rachel Tooker, James Strider, Betsy Butler

I. Call to Order

State Coordinator William K. Laidlaw, Jr. called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m., thanking those attending the meeting and expressing his commitment to helping the Board in its activities.

II. Approval of Minutes of June 18, 2004 Meeting

It was moved by Roland M. Baumann and seconded by Charles Arp that the minutes from the June 18, 2004 meeting be approved as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Resolutions

Laurie Gemmill introduced resolutions thanking the Ohio Historical Society's Board of Trustees for the opportunity to join them for their March 12, 2004 meeting and recognizing George Parkinson for his leadership and dedication to OHRAB. Mr. Laidlaw and Ms. Gemmill signed the Board of Trustees resolution, while all OHRAB members in attendance signed the resolution for Mr. Parkinson.

James Oda motioned to approve the resolutions; Raimund Goerler and Charles Arp seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

IV. OHRAB Strategic Plan

Raimund Goerler led a discussion of the board's proposed strategic plan. First, Mr. Goerler shared that Laurie Gemmill, Charles Arp and James Strider had joined him to review the draft plan, deciding to group the goals under three headings related to OHRAB's mission statement, which would also be included in the plan.

Mr. Goerler suggested that the plan should direct OHRAB's activities for three years, with the board rewriting the plan and evaluating it regularly. He also relayed that while the group had eliminated all objectives for which there were no actions, it was challenging for an advisory board to craft goals and objectives with measurable outcomes. Mr. Laidlaw responded by expressing interest in the board's input on what constitutes success in knowing when goals are achieved.

A significant addition that Mr. Goerler and his colleagues made to the strategic plan was a section dealing with actions to strengthen OHRAB and its own internal organization. Such a section had not been included in earlier drafts because internal organizational goals may not seem important to the public. However, the plan work team

considered them fundamental to the stated goal of strengthening OHRAB.

Mr. Laidlaw encouraged the board to determine the top three objectives that have the greatest impact and can be accomplished within the allotted time frame. Mr. Goerler expressed the importance of internal organization, Messrs. Arp and Baumann noted that increasing investment in Ohio's documentary heritage was most significant, and Mr. Strider mentioned the critical importance of developing funding for records activities. Ms. Gemmill stated that creating by-laws and a membership manual for OHRAB would constitute a goal that could be accomplished.

Mr. Oda suggested incorporating these objectives into a timeline, since some actions can be taken immediately and concurrently.

Significant discussion ensued regarding the portion of the plan that encourages increased public awareness and interest in Ohio's historical records.

After Mr. Baumann observed that the absence of a state records manager is a major point that should be addressed in the plan, the board devoted considerable time to discussion of this matter. As a result, the board agreed to include this point as a new objective in promoting the welfare of historical records programs in Ohio. Mr. Laidlaw summarized that the objective would express the importance of advocating to the state the improvement of state and local records management programs. Three measurable action steps would follow: advocating the appointment of a state records manager; urging increased support and improvement of local records management programs; and sponsoring a statewide meeting regarding the management and preservation of public records.

Mr. Goerler then highlighted new additions to the plan. These include creating programs for mentoring NHPRC grant applicants, increasing awareness of those grant opportunities, developing a web portal providing a directory of historical repositories in Ohio, and contributing support to records management conferences.

The board then discussed ways to format the document, such as consecutively numbering goals and including the most important elements at the beginning of the document.

To conclude discussion of the strategic plan, Mr. Laidlaw summarized the most important tasks that OHRAB should focus on immediately are:

- Exploring options for funding Ohio's public records activities
- Advocating the improvement of state and local records management programs
- Continuing to assess the needs of OHRAB constituents
- Clarifying OHRAB's organizational procedures and structure

Mr. Baumann motioned to approve the draft as edited during this meeting. Mr. Oda seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

After further discussion about how the document would be edited and circulated to board members, Mr. Arp moved and Mr. Goerler seconded that the plan be approved as edited. All unanimously approved the motion.

The board agreed that progress on the plan should be reviewed at every OHRAB meeting, with the four goals noted above serving as the board's main mission for the next six months. For clarification, Mr. Oda motioned that OHRAB should have an implementation plan. These four items will be the priority items for the next six months. Ms. Gemmill seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Discussion ensued regarding which board members would lead efforts in researching the pertinent issues for each of

these points, crafting an implementation plan, and recruiting fellow colleagues to join them in executing each of these topics. Mr. Goerler and Mr. Arp will explore options for funding Ohio's public records activities. Messrs. Oda and Strider will focus on clarifying OHRAB's organizational procedures and structure. Additional discussion resulted in the opinion that advocating the improvement of state and local records management programs would also fall under exploring options for funding Ohio's public records activities and so these two tasks would be combined. The group decided that continuing to assess the needs of OHRAB constituents would be deferred six months. It was also agreed to delay focus on assessing the needs of OHRAB constituents in order to focus on the other three priority items.

V. University of Toledo Grant Application

After a brief lunch break, Barbara Floyd presented an overview of the University of Toledo's NHPRC grant application to facilitate identification of materials pertaining to the history of the disabled in northern Ohio and their retrieval by people with mobility barriers.

After Ms. Floyd asked for questions and guidance from the board, she received inquiries about national legislation on this issue, collecting endorsements from organizations, the proposed statewide survey identifying collections, and the likelihood of the project's success. Board members then suggested contacts at other organizations in order to strengthen this model and encouraged Ms. Floyd to include additional language about how the program meets NHPRC goals.

VI. SOA Request

Ms. Gemmill briefed the board on plans for the Society of Ohio Archivists' Spring 2005 conference and its request for \$1,100 in OHRAB administrative funds to provide a grant-writing workshop at no charge to conference participants. OHRAB members encouraged a level of support that would not deplete unduly the anticipated OHRAB funding and that would encourage cost-sharing of the registration fee by workshop participants. Therefore, Mr. Arp suggested that it might be more appropriate to fund half of the workshop.

As a result, Mr. Arp moved to provide \$500 for this request. Rachel Tooker clarified that this would be contingent on OHRAB receiving its administrative funds. Mr. Goerler seconded the motion. While Mr. Baumann opposed the motion, all others expressed their approval of the motion, so the motion passed.

VII. NHPRC OHRAB Administrative Grant

Ms. Gemmill provided an overview of details normally included in the OHRAB administrative grant application, such as Board decisions to meet outside of Columbus, print copies of the strategic plan, and support educational opportunities and workshops. Discussion of these points followed. Since discussion was intended to provide the group with a sense of the costs expected to be incurred, no motion was necessary.

VIII. OHS Draft Open Records and Open Meetings Policies

Mr. Strider asked the board for input on the Ohio Historical Society's draft plans pertaining to open records and open meetings policies before they are presented to the Society's board of trustees for review and approval in September.

After some group discussion regarding these policies, Mr. Arp applauded the Society for creating these documents, citing their clarity and excellence. Mr. Oda agreed, commenting that they are proactive instead of reactive.

IX. Open Meetings Act — OHRAB

Mr. Strider then invited the group to consider whether OHRAB meetings should be conducted in ways similar to other open meetings of public bodies. After noting that OHRAB posts its meeting dates and minutes like other public bodies do, he called attention to ways in which some meeting practices would change if the group opted for full-fledged interpretation of this act.

Mr. Strider commented that Society staff members believed that since OHRAB members are appointed by the Governor, it should comply with state public records and public meetings law in a manner similar to the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board (OHSPAB). Discussion ensued; particularly relating to OHRAB's evaluations of grant proposals and ways OHRAB could utilize this opportunity to become more visible to its constituents. Ms. Floyd observed that OHRAB's bylaws could be modified to indicate that the group believes it is a public body under the guidelines of the Ohio Revised Code and will conduct its meetings accordingly.

Mr. Laidlaw said he would review these points with the Society's legal counsel and would report back to the board at its next meeting.

X. Public Records Audit

The public records audit conducted by the Ohio Newspaper Association in July 2004 prompted Ms. Gemmill to lead the Board in discussion regarding statewide public seminars and workshops on Sunshine Laws.

Since OHRAB's mission involves advocacy, several board members wrote letters on the public records audit to the editors of their local newspapers, but the letters were not published. Discussion ensued on ways board members can be more effective advocates for the accessibility of public records, particularly by inviting the Ohio Newspaper Association, its members, Attorney General Jim Petro, and state representatives to discuss this topic with the group.

Mr. Laidlaw invited the board to continue discussing this issue at its next meeting.

XI. Future Meeting Schedule

Mr. Laidlaw asked board members to approve the following list of upcoming meeting dates:

Friday, October 29, 2004 Friday, January 21, 2005 Friday, April 29, 2005 Friday, July 22, 2005

Ohio Historical Society staff will contact John Fleming to determine whether his invitation to convene in Cincinnati was still available. If so, Mr. Baumann asked whether it would be possible to tour the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in conjunction with the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Oda moved to approve these dates and to for OHS staff to work directly with John Fleming on Cincinnati meeting details. Mr. Goerler seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Then, Mr. Laidlaw previewed items to appear on the next meeting agenda. Reports to be made include:

- Charles Arp and Raimund Goerler's progress report on the OHRAB Strategic Plan initiative to work to increase state funding for Ohio's documentary heritage and advocate the improvement of state and local records management programs.
- James Oda and James Strider's progress report on the OHRAB Strategic Plan initiative to improve OHRAB's effectiveness
- The Open Meetings Act and its relevance to OHRAB

- Public records actions
- Final proposals for grant applications from the University of Toledo and the Jewish American Archives

Mr. Laidlaw concluded by thanking Laurie Gemmill and James Strider for their efforts in coordinating this meeting. He asked for the board's suggestions for improving dissemination of information for these meetings, mentioning that future agendas will provide more context information for use by board members in considering agenda items.

James Oda motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 p.m., seconded by Barbara Floyd. The motion was passed unanimously.

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