

COUNCIL OF  
STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADMINISTRATORS  
MEETING  
Holiday Inn Select  
Decatur, Georgia  
April 30, 2000

Minutes (Unofficial)

1. The meeting was called to order by Steering Committee Chairman Guy Rocha (Nevada) at 8:30 a.m. Steering Committee Secretary. H.T. Holmes (Mississippi) called the roll of states and territories. Forty states and territories reported present:

Alabama (Edwin C. Bridges)  
Alaska (John Stewart)  
American Samoa (James B. Himphill)  
Arizona (David H. Hooper)  
California (Walter P. Gray)  
Delaware (Howard P. Lowell)  
Georgia (Bob White)  
Hawaii (Luella Kurkjian)  
Idaho (Steve Walker)  
Indiana (F. Gerald Handfield)  
Iowa (Gordon Hendrickson)  
Kansas (David A. Haury)  
Kentucky (Richard Belding)  
Maine (James Henderson)  
Massachusetts (Jack Warner)  
Michigan (Sandra Clark)  
Minnesota (Robert Horton)  
Mississippi (H.T. Holmes)  
Missouri (Laura Wilson)  
Montana (Kathryn Otto)  
Nebraska (Andrea I. Faling)  
Nevada (Guy Louis Rocha)  
New Hampshire (Frank C. Myers)  
New Mexico (L. Elaine Olah)  
New York (Kathleen Roe)  
North Carolina (Cathy J. Morris)  
North Dakota ((Gerald G. Newborg)  
Ohio (George Parkinson)  
Pennsylvania (Diane Smith Wallace)  
Rhode Island (R. Gwenn Stearn)  
South Carolina (Roy H. Tryon)  
Tennessee (William Moss)  
Texas (Chris LaPlante)  
Utah (Jeffery Johnson)  
Vermont (Christopher Burns)  
Virginia (Conley Edwards)  
Washington (Philip Coombs)  
West Virginia (Frederick H. Armstrong)  
Wisconsin (Peter Gottlieb)  
Wyoming (Tony Adams)

Rocha (Nevada) reviewed the proposed agenda for the meeting which was accepted without change.

1. Call to Order  
Roll Call of the States and Territories  
Review Agenda
  2. Approve COSHRC minutes from January 30, 1999 (Rosslyn, Virginia) and July 17, 1999 (Columbus, Ohio)
  3. Elections
  4. COSHRC Archives
  5. COSHRC Self-Study
  6. Status Report on Current NFACE Grants
  7. Proposed COCHRC Administrative Grant
  8. Presentation/Discussion of "A Strategic Vision for the NHPRC"
  9. NFACE Follow-Up/Action Agenda
  10. Meeting Place and Dates for 2001 Meeting
  11. Other Business
2. Minutes for the January 30, 1999, COSHRC meeting in Rosslyn, Virginia, were presented. Sandra Clark (Michigan) moved adoption, seconded by Jack Warner (Massachusetts). Without objection, the minutes were approved.
- Minutes for the July 17, 1999, COSHRC meeting in Columbus, Ohio, were presented. Howard Lowell (Delaware) moved adoption, seconded by Gerald Newborg (North Dakota). Without objection, the minutes were approved.
3. Richard Belding (Kentucky) presented a report from the Nominating Committee, composed of the three immediate past presidents. Two district elections will be held by mail before the COSRHC meeting in conjunction with NAGARA. The committee reported nominees for
- |           |                           |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| Region I  | Walter Gray (California)  |
| Region IV | H.T. Holmes (Mississippi) |
- There were no nominations from the floor. Belding reminded the Council that write-in-candidates were allowed in the voting process.
4. Holmes (Mississippi) presented a report on the status of establishing a COSHRC archives. A telephone survey of some past Steering Committee Chairs indicated that sufficient records do exist to form an archives, but that several issues need further discussion. Vicki Walch, COSHRC consultant for several projects, retains the largest number of records and has expressed the desire to remove them from her custody to that of COSHRC. Walsh reported that migration problems may exist for some of the electronic records. Gordon Hendrickson (Iowa) suggested a college and university setting for COSHRC archives, perhaps an institution holding records of other archives groups. Hendrickson agreed to receive the Walch material on a temporary basis until the COSHRC archives are established and house. Gerald Handfield (Indiana) suggested that the outgoing Steering Committee

chair draft records disposition schedules for the COSHRC records created during his tenure. After vocal protest from the outgoing chair, Handfield withdrew the motion.

5. James Henderson (Maine) presented a draft for the COSHRC self-study, to which the Council obligated it self in NHPRC Grant# 99-025.

COSHRC Self Study 2000  
Assessment for an Action Agenda

The Charge

In 1999 COSHRC submitted a grant application to NHPRC for several activities including a "self-study evaluation" of the Council. The NHPRC has designated a performance objective for this portion of the grant suggesting the general contents of the study, the results of which are due to NHPRC by **March 31, 2001**.

This Assessment contains a brief background on the Council and the evaluation requirements. Each member of the Council should review the sample assessment elements and add/delete/modify at will. *These ARE samples to stimulate thought. Edit within the document, if possible, clearly noting changes.*

Return this document, annotated, to james.henderson@state.me.us by June 2, 2000. Responses will be compiled into a draft report for Council review and for final Steering Committee approval.

NHPRC Grant Proposal

Under the heading "Evaluation Of The Project/Ongoing Efforts," COSHRC'S proposal to NHPRC stated the following:

During the grant project, the Council will devote some time to self-study, exploring how it might more fully institutionalize operations, bringing greater effectiveness to its administrative efforts, and clarifying its future work with the NHPRC. Specifically, this means evaluating the structure of its regional representation, creating greater bureaucratic guidelines to support transitory leadership (including the development of an institutional archives); creating an organizational web-site, and analyzing COSHRC's relationship with the NHPRC with the object of fashioning a new cooperative agreement between the two.

NHPRC Performance Objective

While "additions or modifications" are permitted, the performance objective for this portion of Grant # 99-025 is to Prepare and distribute to Council membership and Commission a Council self-study evaluating the Council's organizational structure and the nature of its future relationship to NHPRC.

What Does COSHRC Want to Achieve with this Assessment?

Presumably, the Coordinators want an organization that can deliver on their expectations for collective action and for outcomes that improve their own state programs. With a clear vision of those expectations ("mission," "vision") and a plan to support them, Coordinators will soon know whether the financial and organizational resources are realistically available or not. In either event, the Council and its members can assess the degree to which it can perform a useful role given the time and other commitments of the Coordinators.

### The Approach

A strategic planning model provides the structure and elements that organize this evaluation. Before focusing on the Council's organizational structure, we will identify the key outcomes or "vision of success" that the Council is seeking, then determine what organizational structure is needed to support them.

Our "Vision of Success" might include circumstances in which

- NHPRC grant priorities reflect the Council's recommendations
- Re-grants to states continue and are expanded
- An increasing and measurable portion of America's historical records are preserved, accessible, and used each year
- The Council conducts joint projects of general interest to Council members
- NHPRC has adequate funding for Council priorities

### The Process

The self-study requires clarifying our "Mission" and "Vision of Success," assessing our organizational strengths and weaknesses, considering external environmental factors, and developing a preferred strategy with associated objectives.

Without getting into the details of specific activities, which will change from year to year, the Council will revisit its "strengths and weaknesses" in order to recommend the resources and organizational changes, if any, that should be made to achieve its strategic objectives.

The "Assessment" section will be the vehicle for member comments and contributions. From these, a preliminary draft self-study report will be developed and submitted to the Council members via the COSHR-L listserve. Comments on the draft will be integrated into a final draft for Steering Committee revision and adoption.

All communications will be via e-mail. All comments and suggested revisions will be by edits to the circulated documents, with a preference for using the MS-Word "track changes" option that includes underlines for added text and strike-out for deleted text. (This is essential for an efficient, tightly managed process. Many thanks in advance!)

### A Schedule of Planning Activities

April 19	This Assessment plan sent by e-mail to all Coordinators
April 29	Brief discussion of the plan at COSHRC meeting in Decatur, Ga.; if time allows, consider whether agreement can be reached on the Mission Statement.
May 1	If necessary, distribute revised Assessment plan by e-mail to all Coordinators and former members of the Steering Committee
June 2	Deadline to receive substantive Assessment comments and contributions
June 15	Distribute preliminary draft Assessment to CHOHR-C-L listserve for comment
June 30	Deadline to receive comments on preliminary draft Assessment

July 12 Distribute draft self-study report to Steering Committee  
July 20 Steering Committee revises and adopts self-study report  
at NAGARA.

#### The Assessment

This section includes initial sample content and an organizational scheme for comments. The Mission, Vision, Environmental and Strategies sections develop the functions COSHRC wishes to perform. These imply the required resources and organizational changes in the section following the functional analysis.

#### Mission

The Council was created in 1989 with the following stated mission:

To promote the preservation and access of the documentary heritage of the United States through the development of strong, cooperative, public and private historical records programs in the states and territories of the united States in cooperation with the National Historical Publications and Records commission, through reciprocal support, advice, and collaboration.

Is this still sufficient as a general statement of our mission?  
If not, what specific changes do you recommend?

#### Vision of Success

The Vision should be a basic statement, consistent with the mission, of what we want to achieve in five years.

- NHPRC grant priorities reflect the Council's recommendations
- Re-grants to states continue and are expanded
- A substantial, measurable increase in the number of historical records preserved and provided access is well documented
- Council conducts joint projects of general interest to Council members
- NHPRC has adequate funding for Council priorities

#### Organizational Assessment

What are the current strengths and weaknesses of COSHRC as an organization that assist or inhibit its ability to accomplish its mission?

#### Strengths

- Broad representation
- Collective influence with NHPRC and other resource allocators

#### Weaknesses

- Weak institutional memory - no accessible archives
- No annual budget with dependable, predictable revenue
- No clear set of priorities, objectives
- No paid staff

#### Assessment of External Factors

What external factors assist or inhibit COSHRC's ability to accomplish its mission? What opportunities or threats to they pose?

- Professional demands on Coordinators' time
- Geographic separation of Coordinators

#### Strategies with associated Goals and Objectives

Given the scope of this study, COSHRC recognizes that it can propose strategies, but only briefly suggest goals and objectives realizing that they will require significant resources.

#### Definitions

Strategies are sets of goals and objectives supporting our mission.

Goals and Objectives directly support our mission. While goals may be somewhat general, objectives should be SMART: S-specific, M-easurable, R-ealistic, A-chievable, and T-ime based.

#### COSHRC Strategies with brief reference to Goals and Objectives

Provide organizations within the states with the knowledge and materials necessary to preserve and provide access to important historical records

- Continue Regrant program

Provide Coordinators with "best practices" tools for potential application in their states

- Create web site with rich resources in this area

- Continue special projects such as NFACE

Encourage use of historical records; demonstrate their importance, possibly with local "documentary editions."

Provide forums for communication among Coordinators

- Create web site with rich resources in this area

- Continue at least annual meetings among Coordinators and with NHPRC staff

Coordinate communication with the Administration and members of Congress

Clearly evaluate and communicate the effect of Regrant projects to NHPRC

- Create a mechanism to measure the increase in the number of historical records preserved and provided access through COSHRC and NHPRC initiatives in five year periods

- Insure annual reports of necessary statistics be received by October 1st and summarized by November 1st.

## Recommended Resources and Organizational Changes

Based on the functional assessment of COSHRC, what organizational changes and resources, if any, are necessary to achieve its strategic objectives?

### Organizational Changes

- Dissolve the Council and redirect resources to NAGARA
- Provide a stipend to Steering Committee Members
- Create a position of paid Executive Director

### Resources Needed

#### People

- Recruit an Executive Director

#### Property

#### Time

#### Money

- Establish an annual operating budget

#### Knowledge and Technology

- Create a web site with substantial reference resources for Coordinators
- Establish a physical location for the Council Archives and make key archival material available via a web site

### Action Plan

An action plan will be adopted by the Steering Committee before March 31, 2001 based on this assessment.

Henderson noted that the first two pages of the draft were process oriented and that it was the last pages that Council members needed to submit comments on according to the proposed schedule. Discussion that followed centered upon the common vision shared which, it was suggested, may become evident in the responses by the states to the instrument; identification of a process to successfully complete the study by the end of the summer; and opportunities for group discussion. The use of e-mail was proposed for group discussion, but the point was made that e-mail does not always provide an adequate forum for balancing opposing views. The suggestion was made that responses be posted as a way of opinion exchange. A consensus was reached to focus on the mission and vision components before the July 2000 NAGARA meeting and at NAGARA identify the next step to be taken.

Discussion then moved to consideration of specific roles in the process. The question was raised as to the role of NHPRC. Ann Newhall, NHPRC executive director, stated that NHPRC, while wanting to be aware of the process, had no role to play in the self-study. She further stated that NHPRC should be driven by the COSHRC vision, and not the reverse. Peter Gottlieb, Steering Committee Vice-Chair, suggested the Council has three options for the future:

1. Continue as for the past five-six years, holding two meetings per year, providing a networking environment, and sponsoring significant projects such as NFACE;

2. Stop sponsoring significant projects and continue the networking environment by meeting once a year; or
3. Transform to an organization with a national program.

After some discussion, a straw poll of the group was taken. Number 1 received 1 vote, Number 2 received 3 votes, Number 3 received twenty-something votes, and 1 vote was registered for "Other." Gottlieb suggested that before the July 2000 NAGARA meeting Council members provide e-mail feedback on pages 3-4 of the draft and further suggested that the responses be electronically posted. Henderson, who serves as COSHRC's electronic post-man, requested that responses be as brief as possible and that Council members try to adhere to the dates in the draft schedule. Henderson was requested to re-distribute the draft after modifications suggested in the discussion had been made.

6. Rocha (Nevada) briefly reported on the status of the two NFACE grants, that all was in order. He requested that meeting attendees submit their expenses statements by May 10 so that residual monies could be determined and plans for follow-up NFACE action could be made.
7. Gottlieb reported on the current status of proposal development for the next NHPRC administrative grant, which will cover Council activities through the year 2001. This grant will serve as a "bridge" grant while COSHRC completes its self-study and determines its future agenda. This bridge grant will address funding for two meetings as well as resources needed to maintain the NFACE website until COSHRC's new agenda is determined. Upon motion by Roy Tryon (Delaware), with a second by Steve Walker (Idaho), Gottlieb's grant proposal suggestions were endorsed without objection. Howard Lowell (Delaware) abstained.
8. Ann Newhall presented "A Strategic Vision for NHPRC."

Newhall reported that NHPRC had set aside \$600,000 for each of the next three years for proposals to broaden archivists' expertise with electronic records and up to \$300,000 to support research into software independent electronic records preservation at a scale that can be utilized by archival programs smaller than NARA.

Newhall informed the Council that updated guidelines are being printed and one copy will be sent to Council members in the following week and that new pamphlets are also available. Newhall reminded Council that new state board grant support up to \$10,000 is now available for administrative support.

The question of the value of COSHRC endorsement of the vision statement was posed. Newhall said that endorsement may not necessarily help but would not hurt and that NHPRC was soliciting feedback not endorsement. Lowell (Delaware), NAGARA representative on NHPRC, said that as a commissioner he was listening closely to the discussion. Newhall was reminded of NHPRC legislative mandate to report on planning of preservation of nation's records, which has been institutionalized process with reports every two years. The suggestion was offered that that report could be expanded in the strategic vision. The problem of implementing NHPRC initiatives in the states without funds for hiring staff to do so was discussed. A proposal was put forward to provide \$50,000 (sufficient for 1 staff member) for small states and \$100,000 (sufficient for 2 staff members) for large states. Newhall responded that current appropriation levels for NHPRC could not support such a proposal. The question was

raised of the possibility of raising additional funds beyond the congressional appropriation. Newhall responded that the position of the Archivist of the United States was that solicitation of such funds be carefully handled so that the level of congressional appropriations will not be reduced. She indicated that NHPRC may look at assisting their constituents in seeking additional funds for their projects. The state humanities councils and state historical preservation officers were proposed as good examples for NHPRC to consider when planning administrative support and that support of that kind would allow COSHRC to play the more significant role it needs to play. Newhall agreed that COSHRC needs to play a more significant role, but said that a formula for distribution of support funds would be difficult to devise. The idea was put forth that COSHRC support inclusion of state support in the next NHPRC reauthorization cycle, but that COSHRC needs to develop a consensus in order to be an effective advocate for such support. Newhall was reminded that NHPRC has asked the states to use their own resources to carry out NHPRC initiatives. Newhall agreed.

Philip Coombs (Washington) moved that COSHRC endorse the strategic vision as presented. Seconded by Kenneth Winn (Missouri), the motion passed without objection. Howard Lowell (Delaware) abstained. Gottlieb (Wisconsin) requested that the minutes "capture the stream" of the foregoing discussion of state support as an ongoing discussion.

9. Rocha (Nevada) thanked those persons responsible for the successful completion of NFACE, especially Kathleen Roe (New York) and project consultant Vicki Walch. Vice-Chair Gottlieb (Wisconsin) provided a summary of the previous afternoon's NFACE recapitulation and analysis activities. The NFACE program committee met for two hours and then met with the Steering Committee where they provided a summary of the priority actions coming out of NFACE. Roe (New York) presented to the Council a summary of the actions. She reported that a total of ninety priority actions were recommended by the forum, and that fifty of those ninety actions had commitments for follow-up activity. The program committee had selected from those ninety items only those actions that dealt with a national agenda. Walch presented the national agenda items.

Components of NFACE Action Agenda

1. Creation of a nationwide information clearinghouse
2. Creation of a standard curriculum for training grassroots/volunteer archivists
3. Encourage collaboration/coordination/information exchange on archival continuing education issues including information on the following specific areas:
  - a. Digital collections
  - b. Advocacy/public education
  - c. Preservation/conservation
  - d. Reference
4. Creating a diverse and well education next generation of archival leadership
5. Identifying short term and sustainable funding for collaborative archival education initiatives
6. Research and evaluation based on existing and on-going survey data to identify gaps in archival education
7. Base archival continuing education on adult learning practices
8. Utilize best practice methodology to identify and incorporate best practices in archival continuing education identification of range

of education offerings (beginner/grassroots, professional, so forth)

9. Support existing NHPRC initiative broadening the base and depth of electronic records training

Roe (New York) reported that continuing follow-up activities will include a meeting of the "big four" NFACE sponsors—AASLH, COSHRC, NAGARA, SAA—at the July 2000 NAGARA meeting, as well as a round table meeting of educational coordinators at NAGARA. On a motion by Roy Tryon (South Carolina), seconded by Gerry Handfield (Indiana), the Council expressed its thanks to all parties involved in the NFACE project. Without objection, the motion carried. Gottlieb said that a refined version of the NFACE agenda would be available at the July 2000 NARGARA meeting.

10. Gottlieb (Wisconsin) reported that plans for the 2001 COSHRC meetings are for a meeting in January 2001 in Rosslyn, Virginia, and in July 2001 in conjunction with the NAGARA annual meeting.

11. Gwenn Stearn (Rhode Island), on a point of information, spoke of the NEH initiative for regional humanities centers, the need for each coordinator to be involved in that planning in his region, and that COSHRC survey data should be available for the initiative. Council members were reminded of the May 10 deadline for submitting travel expenses and evaluations, as well as a June 2 deadline for submitting self-study comments to Henderson (Maine). Rocha (Nevada) expressed his thanks to Richard Cameron (NHPRC) and the COSHRC Steering Committee for their assistance to him during the previous months, and suggested that the Steering Committee continue the new practice of electing a vice-chair.

Chairman Rocha adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.