

**Maine Historical Advisory Board**

Meeting Minutes May 8, 2024

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm Location: Zoom

**Board Members Present:** Kat Stefko, Pat Dunn, Larissa Vigue Picard, Jill Peikut Roy, Anna Flaherty, Howard Lowell, Kevin Johnson

**Board Members Absent:** Donald Soctomah, Steve Bromage, Earle Shettleworth

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

# Public Attendance: Geoff Doyle

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 pm by Kate McBrien.

# Welcome

Kate welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized a quorum.

# Approval of March 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Anna Flaherty moved to accept the meeting minutes; Jill Piekut Roy seconded. Howard Lowell abstained from the vote. The six Board members voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes.

# MHRAB Funding

# Kate verified that the MHRAB currently has $24,000. We are awaiting the final financial approval notice of $40,000 from NHPRC.

# Subcommittee Assignment and Scope of Work

Jill and Kate discussed projects that were either rejected or partially funded and came up with a few suggestions. They proposed providing feedback to the applicants to help them improve their proposals before reapplying or opening the process to more applications. Kate suggested providing a small grant for supplies, while Pat proposed a second-round grant. The Board also discussed whether to fund another supply grant or a roving archivist program.

During the meeting, Kate provided an update on various matters including the grant round, the Archives Advisory Board, and the Maine Semi-quincentennial Commission. Kate also mentioned that she has been busy recruiting new staff members, such as a Judicial Archivist, a Digital Archivist, and an Imaging Specialist. In addition, they are currently looking to fill a second Imaging Specialist position and will soon be posting a job opening for a Photographer. Lastly, Sarah Hansen has been hired as the coordinator for the Maine Semi-quincentennial Commission.

Larissa discussed and noted that some applications were suitable while others had issues. Pat believed they had done their due diligence and did not want to waste money. Some applications were hastily put together to reach the maximum of $10,000. Pat agreed that the discussion was thoughtful. It was also pointed out that some applications needed better thought out and met the grant guidelines. However, some applications were poorly thought out and did not meet the grant guidelines. One organization appreciated the application process, as it helped them understand their collection and better comprehend their needs. They also agreed to fund one thoughtful organization that took time to consider their needs and resources.

Kate and Pat agreed that one of the organizations found the application process helpful, as it helped them gain more clarity about their collection and better understand their requirements. Kate will send the award notices to the selected organizations, who are expected to be overjoyed with the results.

Kate asked if the Board was good to vote and approve the subcommittee’s recommendations on the grant funding. Howard made a motion to approve, and Anna seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of approving the grant funding.

Kat expressed gratitude towards the Subcommittee and proposed organizing a grant writing workshop to address the lack of clarity in many grant applications. She also suggests offering open office hours for experienced grant writers to answer questions during application calls. Howard agrees with this proposal, as it will help them understand the purpose of a grant request. Kat agrees and believes that the board would benefit from such a service. The idea is supported by the Board's experience in grant writing.

The Website Content Planning Subcommittee held a meeting to discuss their progress. Anna took notes. During the discussion, the subcommittee had some questions, which Tammy and Kate addressed. One question was whether the minutes should be published on the website. While this is not a legal requirement, the minutes must be available for public request. Another question was whether the list of historical societies needs to be listed. Kate mentioned we could link to MAM who also keeps a list on their website. Also, MAM has a current list of consultants on their website that we could link to as well.

# Update on Board Re-Appointme nts

Kate contacted the Governor's Office to confirm reappointment interest. Donald Soctomah can't commit, but everyone else wants to be reappointed. The current appointment information does not mention serving until being replaced so Kate is trying to get reappointments done before June when they expire.

# Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:38 pm.

Kate mentioned putting out a calendar and getting some dates/times scheduled moving forward. The next meeting will be based on information Kate receives from the Board.