

MARAC

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

Delaware • District of Columbia • Maryland • New Jersey
New York • Pennsylvania • Virginia • West Virginia

MARAC Steering Committee

2023 January 27

Zoom

Attendance: Sara Borden (Chair), Jessica Webster (Vice-chair), Kevin Clair (Secretary), Amy Fitch (Treasurer), Matt Testa (Member-at-Large), Laura Christiansen (Member-at-Large), Christie Lutz (Member-at-Large and New Jersey Caucus proxy), Josette Schluter (Member-at-Large), Diane Bockrath (Delaware Caucus), Allison Fischbach (Maryland Caucus rep), Danielle Glynn (New York Caucus), Taylor Mason (Pennsylvania Caucus), Zachary Hottel (Virginia Caucus), Sara Predmore (Administrator), Arian Ravanbakhsh (Parliamentarian), Lauren Brown (Archives Coordinator/Historian), Jan Zastrow (NCH Representative), Brian Keough (Development), Michael Martin (Communications), Elliot McNally (Education), Vicki Russo (Membership), Sheridan Sayles (Nominations and Elections), Heather Perez (Web Team), A. Williams

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 9:04am.
 1. Introductions
 2. Approval of Agenda:
- II. **Approval of Steering Committee Minutes (5 min):** The minutes of the October 19, 2022 Steering Committee meeting were approved at 9:13am.
- III. **Officer's Reports (15 min):**
 1. **Chair's Report (Sara Borden):** Nothing to add to the report. Lauren asked a clarification question about the ad hoc committee on accessibility needs – it's in the Diversity and Inclusion Committee's hands now.
 2. **Administrator's Report (Sara Predmore):** Credits Sara B. with doing the work to assemble the org chart, will be very helpful for making the organization more accessible and understandable for people. Lauren thanks Sara P. for her continuing work.
 3. **Chair-Elect (Jessica Webster):** Nothing new to add.
 4. **Meetings Coordinator (Mary Mannix):** Mary was absent. There were no additions or questions.
 5. **Secretary (Kevin Clair):** No additions to the report.
 6. **Treasurer (Amy Fitch):** We are now halfway through FY23. The first report comes from the Q2 financials. Page 1 is accounts receivable/payable, page 2 is the specific individual or group that made the charges. We lost over \$86,000 this quarter, largely due to conference expenses (our profits came in during Q1). For the year we have a net loss of \$11,700 so far. Not ideal but the fall conference was expensive (albeit successful!). Interest rates are still low, even with our conservative portfolio, which contributes to losses. We are looking into alternative options for more successful investments. On a

positive note, we are beginning to receive income from vendors for the upcoming virtual meeting; this will continue throughout Q3.

The College Park report (5pp) is next. We had excellent turnout – 427 attendees. Fantastic program. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, kudos to everyone involved with putting it all together. We spent \$21,300 more than what we brought in. Many factors: the accessibility expenses, for which we did not budget (\$10K). The vendor lunches were also not built into the budget. We overestimated attendance for workshops and tours, as well. Higher turnout = higher expenses for food and drink. We planned to offset some of these losses from different revenue sources within the MARAC FY budget. This is documented in the Treasurer's Report.

Brown asked if this is a one-off situation due to the circumstances of the 50th anniversary meeting. Fitch anticipates that it is – Saratoga will have many fewer receptions and associated costs compared with CP. We were also able to absorb a loss like this because our financial situation is strong – however, we don't want to spend our reserves on events all the time. In future we may consider higher conference registration rates for larger and more complex events like this, if we have them.

Members of Steering expressed appreciation for the work Amy and the Finance Committee are doing, and continue to do.

7. **Parliamentarian (Arian Ravanbakhsh):** Reporting for duty!

IV. Advisory Positions (15 min):

1. **Historian (Lauren Brown):** A few activities are continuing after the 50th anniversary. One is a MARAC oral history program – hoping to encourage the state caucus reps to continue the work that the New Jersey Caucus did there, and to bring some of those oral histories into the MARAC Archives. Also looking into continuing virtual tours, possibly as a program within the communications committee. Gauging interest in continuing the virtual tours. The committee isn't sure how many people are watching the tours – statistics? Lutz mentions that there may be some more virtual tours planned in conjunction with the virtual conference in the spring. There was some interest in preparing a few more.

How much work was it to prepare the tours for the 50th? Taylor says about 15 people submitted interest in tours, but not everyone put one together. Taylor herself didn't take long to put theirs together, but it depends on how much time people invest in their videos (some people showed a lot).

There was also some interest in a virtual exhibit of the things MARAC had displayed in person from the archives at College Park. No time to build it though, so far: more to come soon. Also looking into preservation of awards history over the last few years.

Updates on CafePress MARAC merchandise – the communications committee is looking into how this is working as well.

Fitch reports that the Finance Committee has approved having transcriptions made of the NJ Caucus oral histories. Those will be part of whatever is preserved.

2. **Archivist (Joni Floyd):** Joni was absent. There were no additions to report.
3. **Development Coordinator (Brian Keough):** Not much to report that's new. Met with previous development coordinator on January 18 to transition responsibilities, learn about the different programs MARAC sponsors within development. Thinking about future fundraising opportunities. Onboarding as ex officio member of the Finance Committee as well. Looking forward to serving.

Question for Sara Predmore from Fitch: How is the 50 For The Future campaign going? The silent auction brought in about \$3000. We're at about \$11000 overall.

4. **Web Team (Laura Montgomery/Heather Perez):** No additions. Reminder to groups to look at their Web pages and let the Web Team know if changes are needed.
5. **Regional Archival Association Consortium (Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz):** Andrew was absent. There were no additions to the report.
6. **National Coalition for History (Jan Zastrow):** The MARAC spring virtual conference is listed on NCH's upcoming events. Jan will send a link so people can see ours (and other events).

Ravanbakhsh reports that the AOTUS nomination was re-submitted by the White House when the new Congress was convened. The latest news is that NARA is hopeful that the Senate will address the nomination in a couple of months.

V. Old Business (30 min) [9:39am]:

1. NARA Advocacy Letters (Sara Borden): No movement on this yet. There are drafts of letters that Arian and Josette have provided feedback on; that's been helpful.
2. Strategic Planning (Sara Borden): No movement on this yet. Kicking off in February, hoping for a substantial update at the spring meeting.
3. Merchandising/Café Press (Sara Borden): In the hands of communications committee.

VI. New Business (30 min) [9:41am]:

1. Ex-Officio Positions on Committees (Sheridan Sayles): It took a while, but we did get a full slate of candidates for elections this year. The slate of candidates this year is pretty new, so it could be helpful to have ex officio roles on some of the committees to help with transitions for new members who do not necessarily know their way around the organization yet.

Borden says this isn't a new problem, and is part of the reason why we're re-organizing the Google Drive (so that docs are more accessible). Hard to encourage ex officio appts. because people tend to want to rotate completely off when their terms are up.

Are we mis-using the term ex officio here? In practice it means roles someone takes on as part of the duties of another position. Would another term be better? Past [x], non-voting member.

Predmore notes that nominations and elections is hard because it's only a one-year appointment. We do have a lot of new people running for office – one candidate has only been in MARAC for a month. Hard to know who to approach with questions for new people, which makes onboarding challenging.

In the chat there was a discussion about potential position names – member emeritus, past member, etc., and also talk of specifically making committee chair positions a two-year commitment with the second year devoted to mentoring or advising the new chair when they are elected.

Would it be appropriate to place limitations on the number of positions an individual can be nominated or self-nominated for? This is separate new business. Consensus among the group is that a limit of 2-3 committees would be appropriate, to prevent overwork and burnout and to help determine what role an individual would be best suited for. Webster also recommended striving to find a balance in committee composition between new members and institutional memory and knowledge.

What would be required to make these changes? Do we need a vote? Official proposal for changes to bylaws? Ravanbakhsh looked into Article V of the by-laws, which only states that NEC will create a slate of members in good standing for all open positions. We would need to have a conversation around what's in Article V – changes would need to be brought to membership for a vote. But the way Article V is written now grants NEC a lot of latitude in creating the slate of candidates. Document it in the operations manual as NEC procedure? Recommendations, not formal declarations. Predmore suggests job descriptions for positions in MARAC – specifically call for “experienced members” to run for certain positions where institutional knowledge is helpful / necessary.

Webster suggests documenting which positions / roles put you on Steering and which don't, what the duties of different roles are, how one becomes a committee chair, and so forth. This will help members (particularly new members) identify the best fit for them before nomination. Mason asked if it would make sense to require a particular amount of previous time in, and/or service to, MARAC for particular positions? Or just indicating in the description of roles that experience with MARAC is important for doing them.

Action item: Sayles will prepare a formal list of recommendations for changes to NEC procedures for assembling a slate of candidates for the next Steering Committee meeting in April.

2. Standard Presentation Slides Template (Sara Borden): Presenters would like to have a slide deck template for MARAC presentations. Borden would like to charge Communications with building this. Martin agreed to do so. Communications will discuss this at their next meeting in February. Make sure to check in with Diversity/Inclusion/Equity about accessibility of the slide deck. Amanda May may have

already started along this route for the Saratoga conference.

Fischbach asked about being able to get past presentations and notes after the fact – people don't always upload slides to DRUM. (Sara B. has noted that timely upload to DRUM has been a long-term problem. It's voluntary on the part of the presenter, we don't require it.) Is there a way we can incentivize people to upload their slides and presentation notes to DRUM, so that attendees can reference them later? Need a way to at least easily reach out to speakers after the conference to remind them of the DRUM submission process. Would go through the Program Coordinator for each meeting. Is there a way we can change PC communication procedures so that recommendations and instructions for deposit to DRUM are always part of the messages to presenters? Matt T. states that from a presenter's perspective it can be challenging – the process is complicated especially if you're not affiliated with U Maryland.

3. Membership Renewal Deadline (Sara Borden/Sara Predmore): Not a problem, just something nice to have. Our standard policy is that anyone who pays their dues in Q4 of a fiscal year gets membership for the entire following fiscal year. Typically we open registration in February, but for the virtual meeting we're targeting March 8 for opening of registration. Predmore would like to suggest that people who become members in order to get the member rate for the spring meeting be granted membership for the entirety of FY24. This would be a one-off benefit because of how late registration will be opening for this meeting. No objections to this plan, Predmore will move forward with it.
4. Committee Obligation Time Estimates - Convening of Task Force (Sara Borden/Sara Predmore): Predmore asked to convene a task force to determine time estimates for committee obligations, and to document these time obligations in the Operations Manual and on committee websites. It's been a while since these things have been updated, and we want to make sure all the different places where this information is published fit together in a way that's easy to navigate for members. Vital work for MARAC business continuity.

Discussion: Schluter asked what the time commitment would be for this? E.g. if someone is rotating off this year, would it make sense to volunteer for this work. Borden says this is a Q4 task (starts March 1, hopefully ends by June 30.) This mostly involves reaching out to committee chairs to gather information. Borden will send an e-mail to the Members At Large with details of the task force charge and to invite participation.

5. Using Google Drive (Sara Borden/Sara Predmore/Kevin Clair): We are pushing forward with getting all of our MARAC documentation in order, for business continuity, transparency, and aiding in getting new members of committees onboarded. Clair is looking into organizing the Drive more carefully, in collaboration with Predmore. The three of us will be happy to help caucuses, committees, and other members to get their documentation into the MARAC drive. We have a February 17 deadline for reporting back on this.

6. Next Meeting Date (Sara Borden/Sara Predmore): The next meeting will be part of the spring conference. Usually the steering committee meeting is the Friday before the conference. Recommended April 21. Fitch concurs because it will provide some extra time to assemble Q3 financial reports. Members should consult their calendars but otherwise consider April 21 to be the date of the next meeting.

VII. Standing and Operational Committees (15 min) [10:20am]:

1. Awards (Angela Rodgers-Koukoui): Angela not present, no additions to report.
2. Communications (Michael Martin/Molly Tighe): Nothing to add. Lots of work coming up!
3. Distinguished Service (Tara Wink): Tara absent, no report.
4. Diversity & Inclusion (Rayna Andrews): Rayna absent, no report.
5. Education (Elliot McNally): Nothing to add. Lots of documentation to share soon.
6. Membership (Vicki Russo): Nothing to add. Thanks to Sara Predmore for putting together membership information on the website.
7. Nominations and Elections (Sheridan Sayles): Nothing to add to the report.

VIII. State Caucus New Business and Updates (15 min) [10:22am]:

1. Delaware (Diane Bockrath): Nothing to add.
2. District of Columbia (Christopher Anglim): Christopher absent, nothing to report.
3. Maryland (Allison Fischbach): Nothing to add.
4. New Jersey (Tara Maharjan): Nothing to add.
5. New York (Danielle Glynn): Nothing to add.
6. Pennsylvania (Taylor Mason): Nothing to add.
7. Virginia (Zachary Hottel): Nothing to add.
8. West Virginia (Lori Hostuttler): Lori absent, nothing to report.

- IX. Other announcements [10:25am]:** Predmore reports that there will be some changes for this virtual meeting. Instead of a single Zoom meeting with lots of links and Sched calendars, we'll be using Zoom Events this time. There will be no Sched this time. Everyone will need to have a Zoom account; you'll get a ticket for the event, and it will take you to the Zoom Lobby where you'll be able to see the schedule of events and make your way around from there. This change happened after the budget approved; there are a few adjustments we needed to make, but it shouldn't affect our financial projections for the meeting. It should be very good for both presenters and conference planners. Fitch expressed optimism that this could save us money as well.

In about 15 minutes the election will start. Everyone can expect an e-mail about it. Vote early!

Keough reports that progress toward the Saratoga Springs meeting is going well. The budget estimates are proceeding with assistance from Fitch; they expect to be able to present a budget to Steering Committee for approval in April. Hotel is set up, reception location has been identified. The Program Committee has a theme identified – "Navigating the Turn: Re-appraising the archival career." Schluter invites presentation topics.

Brown asked if we wish to vote on service awards for LAC and PC members from College Park at this time. There had been some discussion about only doing distinguished service awards at in-person meetings, so we plan to wait until Saratoga Springs for this. Just for the DSAs.

X. **Adjournment [10:30am]:** Clair moved to adjourn. Predmore seconds. Meeting adjourned at 10:30am.



KEVIN M. CLAIR

5/18/2023