

MARAC

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

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

MARAC Steering Committee

2024 April 5

Zoom

In attendance: Jessica Webster (Chair), Ali Zawoyski (Chair-elect), Mary Mannix (Meetings Coordinator), Kevin Clair (Secretary), Amy Fitch (Treasurer), Carley Altenburger (Member-at-Large), Dyani Feige (Member-at-Large), Amanda Koss May (Member-at-Large), Deb Schiff (Member-at-Large), Diane Bockrath (Delaware Caucus), Allison Fischbach (Maryland Caucus), Tara Maharjan (New Jersey Caucus), Danielle Glynn (New York Caucus), Taylor Mason (Pennsylvania Caucus), Zachary Hottel (Virginia Caucus), Lori Hostuttler (West Virginia Caucus), Sara Predmore (MARAC Administrator), Arian Ravanbakhsh (Parliamentarian), Lauren Brown (MARAC Historian), Jan Zastrow (NCH representative), Kira Dietz (Awards Chair), Michael Martin (Communications co-chair), Missy Nerino (Communications co-chair), Vicki Russo (Membership chair), Jennifer Mitchell (Nominations and Elections chair), Laura Montgomery (Web Team co-chair), Heather Perez (Web Team co-chair)

Regrets: Christopher Anglim (DC Caucus), Brian Keough (Development Coordinator), Joni Floyd (MARAC Archivist), Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz (RAAC representative), Rayna Andrews (Diversity and Inclusion chair), Colleen Bradley-Sanders (Education chair)

I. Call to Order (5 min)

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am. We held a round of introductions for the benefit of incoming Steering Committee members who were attending as guests. Amy moved to approve the agenda; Tara seconded. The agenda was approved at 9:17am.

II. **Approval of Steering Committee Minutes (5 min):** Arian moved to approve the minutes from the February 2, 2024 Steering Committee meeting. Deb seconded. The minutes were approved at 9:19am.

III. Officer's Reports (15 min)

a. Chair

- i. Chair's Report (Jessica Webster): Nothing to add.
 - ii. Administrator's Report (Sara Predmore): 84 registered attendees for the Symposium on Monday.
- b. Chair-Elect (Ali Zawoyski): Nothing to add.
- c. Meetings Coordinator (Mary Mannix): Taylor Mason reports that the reception will be at the Whitaker Center in Harrisburg (behind / connected to the Hilton).
- d. Secretary (Kevin Clair): Nothing to add.
- e. Treasurer (Amy Fitch): Q3 2024 ended on Sunday, March 31. (The quarterly report was not circulated to Steering until Wednesday for this reason.) Net gain for the FY of \$8,149. There is a good amount of miscellaneous income from a Virginia caucus event coming up. We are taking advantage of good investment rates to increase our income. Requesting a vote from Steering Committee to increase our money in our current CD to \$50,000 from \$40,000. Steering Committee approved this measure.

Finance requests a vote to approve the proposed budget for the fall meeting. This includes an adjusted student registration rate of \$10, in addition to a member rate of \$30 and non-member rate of \$50. In previous years with free student registration, we had many registrants who didn't attend; this posed problems for our Zoom events because we had a waitlist of people who were unable to attend because we had hit our registration cap. Steering approved the budget unanimously.

Later this month Amy will begin to draft the budget for FY 2025. She needs to wait until after the business meeting (to see if the dues increase is approved by membership). In the meantime, committee chairs and caucuses who think they will need a budget adjustment should get in touch with Amy.

- f. Parliamentarian (Arian Ravanbakhsh): Nothing to add.

IV. Advisory Positions (15 min)

- a. Historian (Lauren Brown): Nothing to add.
- b. Archivist (Joni Floyd): Absent.
- c. Development Coordinator (Brian Keough): Absent (nothing to add to his report).
- d. Web Team (Laura Montgomery/Heather Perez): Nothing to add.
- e. Regional Archival Association Consortium (Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz): Absent.

- f. National Coalition for History (Jan Zastrow): No report because there was no legislative action in the LAM space this quarter. Congress passed a budget; people can feel free to get in touch with Jan if they have questions about it. There was a Senate hearing on March 20 about reforming records management policies, but there were no action items that came out of it.

V. Old Business (30 min)

- a. Results of Strategic Plan vote (Jessica Webster): The Strategic Plan passed the membership vote and has been adopted. We will find a way to share the document on our website in its final form so that people can review it.

Sara asked if we should send out a message on the listserv when it's published online, or just mention it at the Business Meeting? We should do both. A message will go out to membership reminding them of the business meeting on Wednesday; we'll add the strategic plan to it.

Missy asks: Should *Mid-Atlantic Archivist* take the lead on gathering committee reports for publication, or will there be guidance from Steering? Jessica says having MAA take the lead would be good. If there are hiccups they can get in touch with Steering with any questions.

- b. Brief report on membership dues change (Jessica Webster and Amy Fitch): Amy held an open information session on March 19 about the membership dues change proposal. 28 people attended, and there were only two or three questions. Amy's sense is that everyone understood the reasons for the dues change and was supportive. They appreciated our transparency.
- c. Proposal for new award and discussion of awards workflow (Kira Dietz and Tara Maharjan): Kira and Tara have met a few times since the last meeting to talk about the Ron Becker Award. They have written a draft proposal outlining what the award is, the eligibility and qualifications, and the award criteria. (This information is available in the combined report, in the Awards Committee report.) Because it's been a long time since a new award has been created in MARAC, we've had to do a bit of legwork to remember the process.

Questions: Are the criteria that Kira and Tara have drafted sufficient for an award? Tara has identified some sources of financial support for the award; what is the process to make those prospective sources official?

The criteria for the award includes a stipulation that the awardee have 5 years or less of archival experience. Tara says this was done because many

professional development awards of this type are specifically for students; there is a gap in financial support for early-career archivists, particularly those who may not be in full-time positions.

Jessica asks what the evaluation criteria are. Tara indicated that she wanted to leave the eligibility criteria broad, so that individuals who completed an MLS degree but didn't enter the field right away, or who otherwise didn't take a traditional path into archives, would feel encouraged to apply. Jessica suggested including some language in the proposal encouraging applicants to write more about what their professional objectives are and how the Becker Award will help them pursue those goals.

Amy said that we need to make sure to call this an "award" instead of a "scholarship" because the words mean different things for tax purposes. This proposal hasn't gone to Finance Committee yet because it's still in development, but Amy would recommend funding the award from the Archival Education Fund.

What is meant by a "commitment" to the award? Would sponsors donate directly to the AEF? Sara said there are two forms for donations on the website: one for members and one general. There is a comment form where people can indicate where they would like their donation to be directed. Can we solicit a pledge letter from a donor indicating that they are supporting the Becker Award with their donation to MARAC? We would like to try to get enough of a financial commitment to support the award for 2-3 years so that it has a solid financial footing. Amy said getting such a pledge letter would be ideal.

Sara asked if it's possible to move award money that we don't use for virtual conferences to the Becker Award funding pool? Amy said all of the named/endowed awards pull from the Archival Education Fund, they don't have separate funding pools.

Who will decide who receives the Ron Becker Award? The current travel award committee already reviews applicants for three different awards; a fourth may be too much to ask. A new standing committee for award review would require a by-laws change. Are there other solutions we haven't considered? Right now the thinking is to create a Ron Becker Award sub-committee within Awards. If we frame the Becker Award as a "professional development" award, does that build a structure for supporting any future

professional development awards we may want to sponsor? We will of course need additional volunteers for this.

Lauren talked about the history of the Awards Committee, which was initially formed to provide oversight for all the different awards groups that existed. He feels we have liberty to decide to divide the Awards Committee up if the scale of awards grows to the point that managing it all is too much work for one group. Logistically he doesn't feel like a by-laws change is onerous, just requires awareness of the schedule and checklist of events.

MARAC hasn't typically had trouble getting volunteers for reviewing award applicants. Not much worry about that among Steering.

Sara suggests: would we consider renaming the scholarship committee to the Professional Development committee, and assigning the work of reviewing Becker Award applicants to that group? It would be an additional responsibility but not a significant additional investment of time.

Steering discussed staggering scholarship work so that they could potentially be reviewing Becker Award applications during times when they are not deciding on MARAC meeting scholarships (because the meeting is virtual). A wrinkle is that we are having in-person conferences in spring for 2025 and 2026. Kira, Tara, and others will continue to think about this. Kira will be talking to the current scholarship sub-committee chair to get their sense on workload and timing questions.

Next steps: Tara will solicit commitment letters from potential award sponsors. She and Kira will keep Brian apprised of this and get his feedback when needed. Does Steering need to approve the creation of a new committee? We do not if we are going to support Becker through the scholarship committee. We do need a vote of Steering to approve the award, when that is ready to happen. For next Steering is it feasible to have a Ron Becker Award proposal prepared that Steering can vote on? Kira thinks we can.

VI. New Business (30 min)

- a. Updates on the forthcoming quarter (all): Ali reported that caucus chairs and committees are working on streamlining events to reduce competition among MARAC membership for attendees to events that are scheduled at the same time. Ali will also be convening caucus chair hand-off meetings soon.

Sara reminds Membership that if the dues increase is approved we will need updated brochures and literature. We also need to pin down the fall 2024 virtual meeting dates so we can announce it at the business meeting. (The current recommendation is for November 13-15.) We should make sure that people are available to present awards at the business meeting – Amy, Kira, any others from the awards or scholarship committees.

Jessica will be putting the business meeting agenda and slides together on Monday. Amy will have business meeting slides available by Tuesday.

There was discussion of ways to ensure that the Distinguished Service Award recipient will be in attendance at the business meeting on April 10. Lauren said we subtly reach out to them to let them know they should attend. Sara and Amy will do that on Monday.

Different people have presented this award over the years – sometimes the nominator does it, sometimes the Awards Committee chair, sometimes the distinguished service award chair. Kira volunteered to do it.

- b. Next Meeting Date (Jessica Webster/Sara Predmore): We have chosen Friday, August 2 for the next meeting. Same time, 9am-12pm.

VII. **Standing and Operational Committees (15 min)**

- a. Awards (Kira Dietz): Nothing to add.
- b. Communications (Michael Martin/Missy Nerino): Nothing to add.
- c. Diversity & Inclusion (Rayna Andrews): Absent
- d. Education (Colleen Bradley-Sanders): Absent
- e. Membership (Vicki Russo): Nothing to add.
- f. Nominations and Elections (Jennifer Mitchell): Nothing to add.

VIII. **State Caucus New Business and Updates (15 min)**

- a. Delaware (Diane Bockrath): Nothing to add.
- b. District of Columbia (Christopher Anglim): Absent.
- c. Maryland (Allison Fischbach): Nothing to add.
- d. New Jersey (Tara Maharjan): Nothing to add formally. Thanks to Diane Biunno for taking over as incoming New Jersey caucus chair.
- e. New York (Danielle Glynn): Nothing to add.
- f. Pennsylvania (Taylor Mason): Nothing to add.
- g. Virginia (Zachary Hottel): Nothing to add. Virginia caucus event coming up.
- h. West Virginia (Lori Hostuttler): Nothing to add.

- IX. **Adjournment:** Tara moved to adjourn the meeting; Zachary seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:29am.

Kevin M. Clair

10/28/2024