

MARAC

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

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

MARAC Steering Committee

2024 August 2

Virtual (Zoom)

Attendance: Ali Zawoyski (Chair), Zachary Hottel (Chair-elect), Mary K. Mannix (Meetings Coordinator), Kevin Clair (Secretary), Amy Fitch (Treasurer/Finance Committee chair), Carley Altenburger (Member at large), Amanda May (Member at large), Deb Schiff (Member at large), Diane Bockrath (Delaware Caucus), Jason Speck (District of Columbia Caucus), Jen Gathings (Maryland Caucus), Diane Biunno (New Jersey Caucus), Melissa McMullen (New York Caucus), Isaac Alexander (Pennsylvania Caucus), Steven Bookman (Virginia Caucus), Grace Musgrave (West Virginia Caucus), Sara Predmore (MARAC Administrator), Arian Ravanbakhsh (Parliamentarian), Lauren Brown (Archives Coordinator/Historian), Jan Zastrow (NCH Representative), Kira Dietz (Awards chair), Missy Nerino (Communications co-chair), Tara Wink (Diversity & Inclusion chair), Jen Pulsney (Membership co-chair), Tiffany Cole (Nominations & Elections chair), Jasmine Smith (Web Team co-chair), Tara Maharjan (past New Jersey Caucus)

Regrets: Dyani Feige (Member at large), Joni Floyd (MARAC Archivist), Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz (RAAC representative), Lisa Zakharova (Membership co-chair), Colleen Bradley-Sanders (Education chair), Heather Perez (Web Team co-chair)

The meeting was called to order at 9:33am.

Introductions were held.

Fitch moved to approve the agenda, Mannix seconded. The agenda was approved.

Fitch moved to approve the 4/5 minutes. Hottel seconded. The minutes were approved.

Wink moved to approve the 6/11 minutes, Hottel seconded. The minutes were approved.

Officer's Reports:

- Chair's Report (Ali Zawoyski): nothing to add

- Administrator's Report (Sara Predmore): 522 active members, typical for this time of year (lots of recent summer renewals). 20 bridge members.
- Chair-Elect (Zach Hottel): nothing to add
- Meetings Coordinator (Mary Mannix): nothing to add
- Secretary (Kevin Clair): nothing to add
- Treasurer (Amy Fitch): Finances are doing well. Details about the end of year reports. Page 1: what the money was spent on, Page 2: who did the spending. 9588 dollar loss for Q4, 1351 net gain overall for the year. Mostly this was due to educational programs (workshops) that occurred near the end of the year. There is a lot going on under “miscellaneous” expenses, due to a couple of unbudgeted line items that happened close to the end of the year – VA Caucus event, DEI event in April.

Spring DEI symposium numbers are also attached to the report. We lost 1931 on the event. We reimbursed trainer fees from the Archival Education Fund to cover losses (this was discussed and approved by Steering) -- we will not make a habit of this, but wanted to do so this time to support different programs.

The D&I committee wanted to support new program formats, hence the second virtual program at the end of April. We filed this under “miscellaneous” because it came about after the budget for the year had been approved.

Neither of our last two in-person events made money. If they had, we would be discussing moving that money into our savings accounts.

- Parliamentarian (Arian Ravanbakhsh): nothing to add

Advisory Positions:

- Historian (Lauren Brown): Sorry to report the passing of Adele Lerner. A nice memory of her was in *Archival Outlook*, he would also like to write something up for *Mid-Atlantic Archivist*. Recommends service awards for Jessica Webster (for past chair service) and Rayna Andrews (for being D&I Coordinator and spearheading the programming for the DEI symposium in Philadelphia).

Sara asked about sending out certificates for new awardees. We also still need to send out awards for LAC and PC for Saratoga Springs; will do that and recognize them in Harrisburg.

- Archivist (Joni Floyd): Absent, nothing to add.

- Web Team (Heather Perez/Jasmine Smith): nothing to add.
- Regional Archival Association Consortium (Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz): absent
- National Coalition for History (Jan Zastrow): nothing to add

Old Business (30 min):

Ronald L. Becker Award Draft Proposal (Kira Dietz/Tara Maharjan). Kira gave a quick summary of the work to set up the Becker Award so far. The goal is to develop a professional development award for new professionals in the region in honor of Ron Becker, a longtime NJ caucus rep. Over the last few months there had been meetings with various members of MARAC leadership to hash out details. A draft proposal was made available in the meeting packet. They plan to pass the proposal along to the Scholarship Committee if it is approved today.

We would call for nominations for the Becker Award in January, anticipating that people would plan their professional development for summer. The award is for general professional development and does not necessarily need to be used for MARAC events.

Tara reported that \$2280 has been donated to MARAC for this award already, with another \$1050 pledged (people who have promised funding but want to wait to ensure the award will move forward before donating). Suspects that when the award is officially approved, we may be able to gain more financial support for it from donors.

This award is taxable, we will need to make that information known to awardees.

New Business (30 min):

MARAC table at SAA (Missy Nerino): We have a table at SAA in Chicago once again. Last year's was very popular. Anyone attending SAA is welcome to stop by; also, if you have time to sit at the table for an hour or so, that would be great. [Sign up here](#). We will have some flyers about MAA, MARAC, and other things.

Development Coordinator Search (Amy Fitch): We are still searching for a replacement for Brian Keough (the new New York State Archivist!) as Development Coordinator. Fundraising is an important role in MARAC and something that supports the Treasurer's work in key ways. The job description will be shared soon. Please circulate it with networks: it's a good way to develop professional skills, especially around fundraising and donor engagement.

(here we took a break from 10:12am to 10:22am)

Ad-hoc Committee: Investigate Advocacy Options (Amy Fitch/Ali Zawoyski):

Discussing how we use our advocacy budget going forward. We have \$1800 set aside for

advocacy this year, same as last year. We usually spend this money on our NCH membership dues. Jan Zastrow is our longtime representative for NCH and has served us well on that group. We are paid up through September. This year we are asked to spend \$2070 on institutional membership. (Jan thinks this increase may be a recommendation, and that we could sustain our membership at \$1800 if we decide to do that.) There has been discussion in NCH about redefining its mission in a way that may make us reconsider NCH as an advocacy option, and to consider other options.

Zach Hottel will be chairing the ad-hoc committee we are assembling to look at options for the budget. Deb Schiff and Grace Musgrave volunteered to serve. We discussed options. Jan said that NCH has been the only game in town for a long time when it comes to advocacy for archives (and for NARA in particular), and has done very good work for a long time. Lee White, its current director, appears close to retirement and it is unclear what will happen with the organization in his absence.

Amy suggested focusing advocacy activities at the regional level rather than at the national level. Zach concurred. Lauren suggested aligning ourselves with advocacy activities that SAA is undertaking.

When do we need to know whether to renew our NCH membership? This affects the timeline of the ad hoc committee. Amy wasn't sure and will look into it.

Does the committee need to report back to Steering by a particular time? Who executes its recommendations? Steering would need to approve the committee's recommendations. The January steering committee meeting may be a good time to vote on the recommendations, although we may be able to advise on whether or not (and at what level) to pay the NCH membership invoice at the November meeting.

Upcoming Conference Formats (Mary Mannix): Fall 2024 virtual, Spring 2025 Harrisburg, Spring 2026 in Richmond. Our in-person conferences have not been making money, and having them in far-flung locations doesn't help, so we're hoping a larger city will help with that.

Fall 2025 is a question: do we have virtual again, or do we hold a symposium as we did this spring? The in-person meetings are good for getting together and networking, however, Philadelphia lost money (although it's possible that was because we brought in an outside trainer, which is an unusual expense for us). We may also be able to save money by holding the event at a lower-cost venue, such as a university (this also saves on hotel costs).

Mary shared symposium feedback in her report, including ideas for future programs. Sustainability was an idea that came up multiple times; we could focus on that, if

Education isn't already planning programs about it. We discussed some names of potential speakers around sustainability. We also discussed feedback around having two in-person MARAC events per year, and the challenges that presents for attendance; many people with limited travel budgets must choose between one meeting or the other in years where we host a fall and spring in-person meeting. On the other hand, virtual meetings do not draw as many volunteers for PC and LAC.

We talked about potential hosts for an in-person symposium, such as Baltimore or the Chesapeake Bay area in general. We will also consider a virtual symposium if costs prohibit an in-person meeting.

Arian reminded the group that the spring meeting is set aside in the MARAC by-laws as the one where we conduct organizational business and should be the one we focus on for in-person events (whether conferences or symposia). Spring is also better for awards.

Upcoming Meeting Dates (Ali Zawoyski/Sara Predmore)

- Fall Steering: Friday, Nov 8, 9:30-12 (virtual)
- Fall Business: Thursday, Nov 14, 12:00-1:00 (virtual) - tentative
- Winter Steering: Friday, January 31, 9:30-12 (virtual)
- Spring Steering: Thursday, May 1, in Harrisburg
- Spring Business: Saturday, May 3, in Harrisburg

These events are all on the events calendar on the MARAC website.

Amy will attempt to have a draft budget for FY 2026 ready for the May 1 Steering meeting, but may not be able to do so in time. Can we still have a June budget meeting? Steering indicated that will be fine.

Standing and Operational Committees:

- Awards (Kira Dietz): The only call coming out between now and the November Steering meeting will be for graduate student scholarships, announced in late summer/early fall. Encourage grad students you know to apply!
- Communications (Missy Nerino): Nothing to add.
- Diversity & Inclusion (Tara Wink): We briefly discussed scholarships for POC and under-represented groups, but we have had trouble getting people to apply for the diversity awards for the conference and other organizations have had trouble getting nominations for similar scholarships. It is also difficult for us to raise funds right now without a development coordinator. Right now is not the best time for us to focus on this with the attention that it deserves.

Becky Collier raised the possibility of this scholarship to Tara (and Rayna before her); could we see how much of a proposal she has written for this scholarship? We have also discussed reaching out to HBCUs to get interest in our existing scholarships.

- Education (Colleen Bradley-Sanders): Absent. Sara is excited about the lunch and learn opportunities and collaborations with the caucuses that Education is putting on this year, kudos to Education Committee and the caucus reps.
- Membership (Liza Zakharova/Jen Pulsney): We will have a meet and greet at the spring meeting.
- Nominations and Elections (Tiffany Cole): If you are staffing the MARAC table, please encourage MARAC members who stop by to nominate or self-nominate for Steering Committee positions!

State Caucus New Business and Updates:

- Delaware (Diane Bockrath): Nothing to add.
- District of Columbia (Jason Speck): Nothing to add.
- Maryland (Jen Eidson): Nothing to add.
- New Jersey (Diane Biunno): Nothing to add.
- New York (Melissa McMullen): Nothing to add.
- Pennsylvania (Isaac Alexander): Nothing to add.
- Virginia (Steven Bookman): Nothing to add.
- West Virginia (Grace Musgrave): Nothing to add.

Hottel moved to adjourn the meeting, Musgrave seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:13am.