MARAC
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

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

MARAC Steering Meeting
2026 April 30, 6:30pm
Richmond, Virginia

In attendance: Zach Hottel (Chair), Deb Schiff (Chair-elect), Mary K. Mannix (Meetings Coordinator), Kevin Clair (Secretary), Amy Fitch (Treasurer/Finance Committee chair), Carley Altenburger (Member-at-large), Sheridan Sayles (Member-at-large), Jessica Webster (Member-at-large), Diane Bockrath (Delaware Caucus chair), Jason Speck (DC Caucus chair), Jen Gathings (Maryland Caucus chair), Diane Biunno (New Jersey Caucus chair), Melissa McMullen (New York Caucus chair), Steven Bookman (Virginia Caucus chair), Grace Musgrave (West Virginia Caucus chair), Sara Predmore (MARAC Administrator), Arian Ravanbakhsh (Parliamentarian), Lauren Brown (Archives Coordinator/Historian), Elizabeth Surles (Development Coordinator), Kira Dietz (Awards Chair), Missy Nerino (Communications co-chair), Tara Wink (Diversity & Inclusion chair), Elizabeth Wilkinson (Education chair), Liza Zakharova (Membership Committee co-chair), Jen Pulsney (Membership Committee co-chair), Dustin Frohlich (Nominations & Elections chair), Jasmine Smith (Web Team co-chair), Vin Novara (incoming Chair-elect), Kery Lawson (incoming Delaware Caucus chair), Chris Hartten (incoming DC Caucus chair), Jenny Kinniff (incoming Maryland Caucus chair), Beth Zak-Cohen (incoming New Jersey Caucus chair), Amanda Murray (incoming New York Caucus chair), Ali Zawoyski (incoming Pennsylvania Caucus chair), Mattie Clear (incoming Virginia Caucus chair), Dana Niemeyer (incoming Nominations and Elections chair), Kim Hoffman (Climate Change working group), Amy Poe (Records Retention working group), Scott Keefer, Amy Wickner

Regrets: Katy Rawdon (Member-at-Large), Isaac Alexander (Pennsylvania Caucus chair), Joni Floyd (MARAC Archivist), Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz (RAAC representative), Diana Reed (Web Team co-chair)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:45pm. There was a round of introductions.

Fitch moved to approve the agenda, Smith seconded. The agenda approved at 6:56pm.

II. Approval of Minutes

Smith moved to approve the minutes, Webster seconded. The minutes were approved at 6:57pm.

III. Officer’s Reports

Chair (Hottel): Nothing to add beyond what’s in Old Business.

Administrator (Predmore): Nothing to add

Chair-elect (Schiff): Thanks to LAC and PC as well as MCC for putting together an amazing conference, to Sara P., and to all of our volunteers, especially those rotating off this year.

Meetings Coordinator (Mannix): Virtual Conference dates are set (Oct 28-30) and they are looking for volunteers. Still planning the schedule but likely half-days all three days, with fewer sessions than last time.

Secretary (Clair): Nothing to add

Treasurer (Fitch): 3Q ended March 31. Similar to last year we had a net gain of 60731, for the FY a gain of nearly 83000. Strong dues revenue as well as revenue from the spring conference. High registration from both attendees and vendors. CDs are doing well, rates haven't dropped much; earning 300/mo from them. We also got $231 from a class-action lawsuit settlement. Q4 is when we will have lots of expenses to pay for the conference.

Webster: Do we still predict a gain for the year? Unsure at this time.

As of today we have 366 registrants. Only ten fewer than Harrisburg last year. 24 vendors + 12 sponsors. Anticipating a modest surplus for this conference, potentially on course to make money on conferences for the year.

<u>Action item:</u> Need to vote on the fall 26 meeting budget. Raising registration rates for all attendees (40 / 55) except students, to purchase new meeting technology. Vote passed unanimously.

<u>Action item:</u> MARAC is registered in Delaware. We need to update our registered agent to comply with state regulations. Diane Bockrath has volunteered to serve in this capacity; Steering voted on approving her role. The vote passed unanimously.

Fitch and Finance will be updating the budgets for next year. Caucuses and committees should let her know if they need their line items adjusted.

Steering will hold a special meeting on June 3 at 12:00pm EDT to discuss the 26/27 budget.

We have been fortunate to receive several generous donations, particularly for the Bell Award. Finance has been having discussions about careful ways to invest these gifts when we do not have a dedicated financial manager. Fitch will report out on these discussions as they take place.

Parliamentarian (Ravanbakhsh): Nothing to add.

IV. Advisory Positions

Historian (Brown): This is the fifth decade in a row that MARAC has come to Richmond for a conference.

Archivist (Floyd): Absent, nothing to add.

Web Team (Smith): Nothing to add to the report. Recommendations at the end for Steering to consider regarding accessibility. Web Team conducted an accessibility audit of the MARAC website (to be conducted annually). In reviewing the violations flagged by the tools they used (Microsoft and IBM), they could not find some of the violations that the tool described. Some of the things that it flagged are inherent to the MemberClicks platform and are out of MARAC's control. A small number of issues that *were* under our control were fixed. MemberClicks recommended an overlay tool called Userway that other MemberClicks clients use.

Web Team recommends checking every 2-3 years instead of annually, due to the small number of issues flagged by the audit. Exceptions can be made if MemberClicks makes significant changes to their platform.

More details about the tools: They used both, but the IBM tool gave more actionable feedback and not just a list of outputs like the Microsoft tool.

Hottel asked how much the overlay tool would cost. MemberClicks didn't say. Wink said that some visually impaired users she works with advise caution with overlay tools as they don't always work as advertised.

Steering agreed that asking MemberClicks for a quote would be prudent. More information to be provided to Fitch when we know.

Steering agreed to Web Team's recommendation to reduce the frequency of accessibility audits.

RAAC (Cassidy-Amstutz): Andrew absent. Hottel is working with ACA in his transition to the partner liaison role. RAAC is also becoming more active in coordinating with the member organizations. Andrew put together a list of regional organizations and their current contacts to assist with this. RAAC is beginning to plan virtual meetings among the member organizations for information sharing and to build connections.

Development Coordinator (Surles): No additions. More updates on our "amazing" contributions to scholarships at the Membership Meeting. Reminder to bid at the silent auction.

V. Old Business

Disaster Relief: Schiff reported. Work is complete on that effort; thinking now about how that work will be maintained over time, considering roles of Members-at-Large in periodically reviewing the content. Sara has updated the website with more information about the fund and evaluation rubric.

LB: Is there a new upper limit on the amount of money an institution can receive? No, still $2000 max.

ZH: Can Deb talk more about what an annual review would look like? A: Reviewing the rubric, determining if it's still relevant for current situations or applications to the fund that have come in. Seeing if requirements need to be changed. Be available for questions should a disaster strike and institutions have questions about how to use the fund.

Handbook needs to be updated? The Members-at-Large consider applications as and when they come in, it's not a standing committee. DS volunteered to add something about it to the M-a-L section of the handbook. Periodic reviews should only need to take place every few years.

NAGARA: NAGARA will have a table at the conference. Next year we should see benefits from this arrangement as we begin attending their conference and they attend ours.

Danna Bell Scholarship: Kira Dietz provided updates. It's possible we will have five years of scholarship funding banked by the end of this conference. Governing this scholarship will be the responsibility of the Scholarship Committee, contingent upon their approval (Kira Dietz will discuss with them at this conference). We could award the first scholarship as soon as this fall. Caucus reps: Promote it to your membership when the call goes out.

We may not have the exact total for the silent auction by the Membership Meeting on Saturday morning, but we'll report it out if we do.

Climate Change Working Group: Pursuing two lines of research: disaster preparedness and archival impacts to climate. Determining who in the organization would do what tasks, and what financial resources might be needed.

Hoping to bring a set of proposals for the October meeting indicating maximum, medium, and minimum viability of projects based on current resources.

Records Retention Ad-Hoc Committee: Thanks to all members who contributed. Examining the ways that MARAC preserves and makes accessible its records. Report and recommendations are available in the meeting report. Identified needs and made recommendations on how to meet them.

Recommended appointing a records manager for MARAC and establishing a records retention schedule. Developed a decision matrix and lifecycle for maintaining records of the organization. Discussed with JF the current agreement between MARAC and U. Maryland for stewarding the MARAC records. Agreement was signed in 2009 so it has been in place for a long time.

First recommendation would be to vote on the approval of a new Records Manager position. This would be done with or without a records management committee; concern was raised about creating new volunteer roles and subsequent difficulty in filling them. The possibility of having a Member-at-Large assume the Records Manager role was raised.

Fitch: What would be the time commitment? A: Unsure at this time. Potentially high at first, as the program is established; beyond the first year it's hoped that the workload will reduce as the tasks become more routine. The working group did a lot of research and prepared the documentation in a way that will hopefully help reduce the work.

Webster: Is it important that the Records Manager be proximate to Maryland since that's where the archives are? Or would this be part of re-examining the agreement? A: Part of the role of the RM would be the interface with the archives at UMD. For example, right now there isn't a set schedule for transferring records to UMD; the Records Manager should initiate the schedule for this.

Could the Archivist and Records Manager be the same position? The Archivist is the point person between MARAC and the UMD libraries, but does not have responsibility for transferring records themselves. She also doesn't participate in prioritizing processing of records. Currently it's not practical to do so because records management and processing responsibilities aren't part of the agreement between MARAC and the UMD archives. There is a processing backlog with the MARAC records that JF isn't in a position to address.

LB: In previous decades the curators were responsible for all aspects of collection management. In 2011 UMD Special Collections was reorganized so that staff were dedicated only to accessioning, arrangement and description, and ingest of digital resources. In light of this repositioning of duties a MARAC records manager might be better positioned to work with the staff at UMD who perform technical services.

TW: Should the role of the MARAC Archivist be updated in light of the changes Lauren talked about? The role of the Archivist in general was much less than the RM group realized. The working group didn't attempt to redefine the role of the MARAC archivist because it's a grey area as to whether they work primarily for MARAC or for Maryland. We have a $1000 expense each year that we pay to Maryland for "maintenance" of the archives. More discussion of the agreement with Maryland needing to be revisited, perhaps more so than the records management role. Fitch: One of the records manager's first responsibilities may be to look at the agreement and renegotiate it as needed.

There are content policies that need to be reviewed as well – videos posted to YouTube, handbook updates on Google Drive, and so on.

Should there be a stipend for this role? Fitch: MARAC doesn't give money to members for services rendered because then we have to report it to the IRS. How, then, do we make this very large project attractive for a potential volunteer to sign up to do it? This is why the Member-at-Large option was considered. Other options included a graduate student (under close mentorship of someone with records management experience).

CH: This sounds like a multiple-person project. Would it make sense to have, if not a committee, at least a subsequent working group charged with getting the program off the ground?

Thanks to Amy Poe for her leadership of the working group; a tremendous amount of work.

Initial recommendation is to approve the establishment of the MARAC records management program and charge the Members-at-Large with getting the program off the ground.

MN: The working group learned more about Google for Non-Profits in this process and would recommend that the group charged with implementing the records management program give it serious consideration as a tool.

<u>Action item:</u> Poe moves to establish the creation of a records management program for MARAC. Sayles seconded. Poe moves to assign the work of implementing the program to the Members-at-Large. Sayles seconded. Schiff proposed adding a time frame for assessing and reporting out on progress. Carolyn Friedrich developed a draft policy based on recommendations from NEA that will hopefully be helpful.

Wink asked if it's possible to have a working group member assist the Members-at-Large with implementing the program. Poe volunteered for this; Brown offered to assist in interfacing with the University of Maryland.

The motion passed. Thanks again to the ad hoc working group for all of their work in putting these recommendations together.

VI. New Business

Hottel mentioned that at Exec this week we discussed reviewing how we manage operations, and called for caucuses and committees to review their documentation and the way that work is done across the organization to determine what processes still make sense and what needs to be changed. With another year of strategic planning coming up, this will hopefully be in alignment.

VII. Standing Committee Reports

Awards (Dietz): Nothing to add.

Communications (Nerino): Nothing to add.

Diversity and Inclusion (Wink): Please attend Session 4, the Diversity Scholarship award winner.

Education (Wilkinson): Nothing to add to the report. Almost done with this cycle of Caucus Conversations. How are people feeling about the program in general? Thoughts and feedback welcome. Sara P. says the response to these being casual gatherings has been fantastic. Consider stepping back from registration, to encourage even broader attendance at the conversations; any handouts from the event can be sent out to MARAC membership. Need to prevent Zoom-bombing somehow (Sara does this by sending it to MARAC membership only).

Membership (Zakharova/Pulsney): Nothing to add.

Nominations and Elections (Frohlich): Nothing to add.

VIII. State Caucus Business and Updates

Delaware (Bockrath): Nothing to add.

District of Columbia (Speck): Nothing to add.

Maryland (Gathings): Nothing to add.

New Jersey (Biunno): Nothing to add.

New York (McMullen): Nothing to add.

Pennsylvania (Alexander): Absent, nothing to add.

Virginia (Bookman): Nothing to add.

West Virginia (Musgrave): Nothing to add.

The next regular quarterly Steering Committee meeting will be on Friday, July 24 at 9:30am.

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.