

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Friday, January 27, 2017**

University of Maryland Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library, Piano Room

**College Park, MD**

In Attendance: Danna Bell, Sharmila Bhatia, Lauren Brown, Liz Caringola, Adriana Cuervo, Rachel Donahue, Dyani Feige, Jim Gerencser, Brian Keough, Lindsey Loeper, Vincent Novara, Sara Predmore, Katy Rawdon, Jason Speck, and Jan Zastrow

Phone Attendees: Sara Borden, Ken Cleary, Sarah Denison, Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh, Danielle Emerling, Christine Anne George, Katie Hall, Laura Poll, Laurie Sather, and John Zarillo

### I. Call to Order -The meeting was called to order at 10:17 am.

A. Welcome from Stephen Henry, Head of the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library

B. Introductions

C. Approval of Agenda

a. Mentoring proposal that Chair Elect will discuss added under new business – Chair Elect.

b. Discussion of challenge grant added to Development Coordinator's report – Development Coordinator.

**c. Approved with additions.**

### II. Approval of Steering Committee Minutes

A. Fall 2016 Minutes

a. Ken Cleary's name should be added to attendance.

b. New National Coalition for History position term is two years, not one year.

**c. Approved with corrections.**

### III. Officers' Reports

A. Chair (Keough) – report submitted

a. Bell has volunteered to help him coordinate updating the Operations Manual. Hopes to have a full draft to send out in advance of next Steering Committee meeting; Steering Committee members should be prepared to review and edit the draft.

b. Administrator (Predmore/Gerencser) – report submitted.

i. Membership numbers in report are as of January 15; since then MARAC has received six new regular members and two new student members.

- ii. As of January 26, 207 MARAC members responded to the election ballot electronically.
- iii. Predmore briefly introduces herself.

B. Chair Elect (V. Novara) – report submitted.

C. Meetings Coordinator (Mannix) – report submitted directly to Keough.

- a. Currently in the midst of contract negotiations for the Fall 2018 meeting at the Hotel DuPont in Wilmington.

D. Secretary (Feige) – no report.

E. Treasurer (Rawdon) – report submitted.

- a. PNC banking fees related to deposits from credit card sales seem to have increased significantly. Rawdon is working on following up with the bank, as well as doing research to see at what rate the fees have increased in the past, and hopes to have more to report before the next Steering Committee meeting. Gerencser has been researching past bank statements as well to confirm that fee rate has not been the same with each transaction, ranging between 2.5-6%, but agrees that they seem to be considerably higher now than previously.
- b. Final financial report for Annapolis meeting is not complete yet as there has been a minor delay with some numbers, but most of the income is done. Rawdon is finishing expenses and will submit to Steering as soon as she's able.
- c. At the last Steering Committee meeting, Steering approved a motion to change how MARAC deals with profits from Fall and Spring meetings. The concept of changing the process was approved but no language was then written articulating exactly how it would be handled. Rawdon subsequently wrote language which was approved by the Finance Committee and MARAC Officers. Profits will be either directed to operating funds or used to further some part of MARAC's educational mission; can be split among multiple uses within those categories. When relevant, Finance Committee will make a recommendation as to how profits are used, and the Steering Committee will consider and approve recommendations at Summer Steering Committee meetings. – **Approved by Steering.**
- d. A check for registration at the Annapolis meeting bounced, and MARAC was charged a fee by its bank. Could not ask member to pay that fee since there is no language written anywhere that we will do so. Rawdon would like to include language on Finance Committee's page saying if a check is returned, member needs to resubmit a check for the original amount plus the finance charge, or risk having membership terminated. Could be linked in registration form, or a brief statement on the form. Her proposed language has been approved by the Finance Committee. Keough will contact Mannix so the Meeting Coordinating Committee can consider where this will be included with registration information. – **Approved by Steering.**

F. Parliamentarian (Bell) – no report.

#### IV. Advisory Positions

- A. MARAC Historian (Brown) – report submitted.
- B. MARAC Archivist (E. Novara) – report submitted.
- C. National Coalition of History (Zastrow) – report submitted.
  - a. MARAC is now a NCH member through RAAC, in a much more powerful position than previously. She phoned into their annual meeting, and will also be involved with the Congressional History Caucus.
  - b. RAAC should get two announcements a year on the NCH website for events
  - c. Taking effect in January 2018, oral history and journalism will be exempt from Institutional Review Board requirements.
- D. Web Team (Gerencser) – report submitted.
  - a. Will have its own webpage on the MARAC website which will outline what the team is responsible for. Can always email them at [maracwebteam@gmail.com](mailto:maracwebteam@gmail.com).
  - b. Now that new Administrator is in place, can move forward with new website template. This will only entail migrating and updating the website's backend; public will not notice any change.
  - c. Still need to confirm that MemberClicks rate quoted to Hoffman is still valid.
  - d. Brief discussion of new logo. New logo design is on hold; Keough suggests that designing a new logo after MARAC has migrated to the new system might be more effective anyway.
  - e. Keough recommends developing a MARAC style guide, which would be appropriate in tandem with the updated operations manual.
  - f. About 6 months ago, MemberClicks quoted a window of 1-2 years for the entire migration to take place. Query as to whether MemberClicks would expedite migration for a fee. Caringola will check.
- E. Regional Archival Association Consortium (LeGloahec) – no report.
  - a. When RAAC was originally created, intention was that the MARAC Chair would be RAAC representative. He is now MARAC representative to RAAC (as MARAC Chair), and is on the RAAC Education Committee. MARAC Representative to RAAC will transition to Novara in a few months.
- F. Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion (Loeper) – report submitted.
  - a. Compiled all of the research they've been doing – looking at other organizations, feedback from member survey, publications, one on one conversations with members, etc. – and consolidated their findings into a spreadsheet and report.
  - b. Has proposed revisions to MARAC's definition of diversity, position statement, and code of conduct. These written materials on their own, however, are weak without the work to back it up. Hopefully the taskforce's recommendations and work of the committee will support and strengthen those statements.
  - c. The bulk of the report consists of initiative recommendations. Taskforce recommends incorporating this work throughout the work of MARAC, not isolating

it into a single committee, making it a part of the overall mission of MARAC, active within all the different committees. The report is organized by the different relevant committees they'll be working with.

d. Discussion of Coordinator role.

- i. Taskforce recommends having a Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator as a voting officer serving on the Steering Committee. Instead, one new officer would be the ex-officio Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Within the Committee, each member would serve as a liaison to certain other committees (Communications, Membership, Meetings and Education). This would enable the new Committee to draw in the expertise and work of other committees, not isolating initiatives of diversity and inclusion within its own separate committee.
- ii. Discussion of how this will be executed and how success will be measured – what is MARAC trying to change and what will the organization do to change it? Loeper suggests that if objectives for the Committee are developed, the Coordinator could meet with different committees and establish goals. One example might be increasing award nominations to encompass a more diverse population – looking at where awards are being promoted and trying to increase outreach in new paths to new communities.
- iii. Loeper points out that the larger field of archival professionals overall is largely white women, even current graduate students. What impact does this have on the profession itself and how work is undertaken?
- iv. Cleary hopes that MARAC approving the recommended definitions, statement, and code of conduct would signal to membership and the profession the organization's seriousness about the issue.
- v. George initially thought the Coordinator role should be split into two separate officer positions; the taskforce initially focused so much on diversity to the detriment of inclusion. In five years, would like to evidence that MARAC is welcoming to anyone who needs particular accommodations at meetings, training events, etc. and that the organization is also making an effort to diversify the archival profession and archival collections.
- vi. Bell disagrees that it the Coordinator should be an elected position; that would require amending the bylaws, so necessarily would extend time the time needed to get the process started. Concerned with some aspects of the way the conversation is progressing, and thinks MARAC needs to be more thoughtful about what the organization wants and feels like it needs to do. Does not want to see this effort stall like SAA's work on diversity and inclusion has. If MARAC is hoping to deepen the diversity and inclusion of the archival profession, could work with potential employers to make sure there are positions open. Also concerned that economic trends and national political issues are not being addressed in this conversation. She strongly supports increasing diversity throughout MARAC and the profession but does not want the Committee to just provide a framework, interested in real action.
- vii. Discussion of how diversity and inclusion is approached by other regional archival associations. NEA has a Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator that is not elected, but selected by an executive committee and appointed. A lot of what this Task Force proposes is modeled on NEA.
- viii. Bhatia has concerns about economic aspect of being an archivist. Is the cohort

of new archivists entering the profession not diverse simply because there aren't enough job opportunities?

- ix. Concern that one reason for updating the bylaws was to reduce the number of voting Steering Committee members because the Committee was felt to be too top-heavy at one point. Novara thinks that having someone on the Steering Committee representing these issues that is non-voting would weaken the work they're going to do; if diversity and inclusion is important to MARAC, Task Force thinks it is important there is a voting voice with Steering. Members with voting privileges need to be elected.
- x. Bell elaborates on some of the obstacles that SAA faced. There was not much interaction with graduate schools; only one person was bringing in students (from Spellman), and this was the only interaction she saw in terms of reaching into different communities. Also thought the focus became on numbers rather than actions. As SAA President, she wanted to appoint more people from diverse communities and she couldn't, because people applying to appointed positions primarily employed by colleges and universities and were primarily white. Economics – it is very hard for people from historical societies, state institutions, some of the other groups we want to support to get funding to even attend MARAC meetings, take time off work to attend Steering Committee meetings, maybe even join MARAC at all. MARAC needs to think deeply about these and also needs to be willing to put our money where our mouth is. A number of years ago, SAA Executive Director was asked by people running HBCU archival institute to get a discount on SAA journals, to get a room at the Birmingham SAA meeting to meet and talk, and was given no support. Diverse populations include race, religion, color, as well as solo archivists, people at tiny historical societies with very limited funding and resources.
- xi. Cleary agrees that Coordinator should have voting rights; this would help legitimize and empower the position. Many of Bell's concerns were reported by the groups they surveyed. Creating a new committee and one or two new positions indicates that MARAC is taking this seriously. Committee and position(s) can explore how to engage in more outreach at various levels. Hopefully MARAC could be an example to other regional organizations.
- xii. Bell points out that in MARAC's strategic plan, vision statement, and core values, diversity is an "objective" but not a "core value." In rebuilding the strategic plan, highlighting diversity should be a very important first step. Even if there is an officer and committee, need to make sure MARAC as an organization overall is serious about committing to this, not just looking at these issues in one committee.
- xiii. Donahue thinks it's unnecessary to separate diversity and inclusion. "Diversity" is more descriptive, "inclusion" suggests action. Having two separate officers might dilute impact of either. One officer should be able to delegate certain primary responsibilities to the Committee. This would also help the Committee Chair not get burned out. Could also do a fundraising campaign in advance of the Newark meeting to fund registration for one new attendee.
- xiv. Cuervo asks about whether it would be possible for MARAC to shoulder free registration to several people living within 100 miles of the meeting location; Loeper points out that this is supported by the Karen Stewart scholarship.

Cuervo emphasizes that it will be important for the Committee to propose specifics in terms of budget, objective, etc. Coordinator should be an agent to keep the work going between the Steering, caucuses, etc. to ensure initiatives are carried out and can make a broader and more immediate impact rather than keeping the conversation at the policy level. For example, some potential meeting attendees may not be able to attend MARAC events or meetings because there is no infrastructure for providing childcare.

- xv. Keough reviews the discussion. The charge of the taskforce was to gather information and make general recommendations about how institutionally MARAC can create infrastructure and take a top-down approach to addressing issues of diversity and inclusion. Today, Steering Committee needs to decide whether to create an advisory position or an officer; this will determine whether membership needs to vote or not.
- xvi. Zastrow suggests appointing a Member at Large to take these duties on. Keough points out that there are problems with that arrangement: Members at Large rotate off the Steering Committee, and there may be a conflict of interest in terms of voting in the interest of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee rather than MARAC membership overall. He would prefer to appoint a Member at Large to that eventual committee.
- e. Loeper requests Steering Committee members to send her additional feedback to her report as submitted. The Task Force will incorporate changes into Coordinator position description; she will email the updated description to Steering members who can participate in an email vote about whether to create an interim advisory position now, then at the Spring meeting can vote on whether, going forward, it will be advisory or officer. Taskforce will also make a recommendation on who might take the interim position.

Break – 11:53 am.

Reconvened – 12:35 pm.

## VII. Standing Committees

### A. Development Coordinator (Bhatia) – report submitted.

- a. Slight change to report – the anonymous donation of \$500 for a scholarship (to a graduate student living or attending school in the MARAC region, for tuition funds) is a challenge grant. The donor has specified that the match must be raised through donations; if MARAC doesn't raise it he/she will pull donation. Bhatia will prepare guidelines for the scholarship, with suggestions and documentation from other organizations with similar scholarships. She will write a proposal for the Spring meeting. Hopes MARAC can provide this scholarship before the Fall 2017 semester, which would mean having funds distributed by July 31.
  - i. Could hold a fundraising drive at the Newark meeting, as previous fundraising drives have been successful.
  - ii. Donor's hope is that eventually MARAC would offer scholarships at each meeting for each caucus (that is not being proposed now, and he/she will not

- fund that – his/her hope is to inspire people to embrace the concept).
- iii. MARAC's education endowment has over \$120,000 – part of it from past conference profits. Donor suggested starting to use interest earned on endowment to put back into scholarships. There is no policy against using money from the endowment principle.
- iv. Bhatia would propose also giving recipient free membership to MARAC for a year.
- v. No reason fundraising would have to stop at \$500, could have a “stretch” goal to continue scholarship into the future or pay toward recipient to come to MARAC meeting,
- vi. Rawdon would suggest doing this for the fall, then looking further to see if we want to do it again in the future.
- vii. Discussions of how this aligns with MARAC's longterm granting strategy. Is tuition assistance where the organization wants to fund in a shrinking job market, where funds could make the most impact? It's a good gesture, but \$1000 is not much toward tuition. Might be able to use it in a more helpful way – travel, professional development, etc. MARAC could reach out to graduate students to see what would be the most helpful to them. MAC and SSA both give similar sized awards for tuition or books.
- viii. Bhatia points out that MARAC primarily does things for its own members; as a nonprofit, this would be a way to reach out to the broader community.
- ix. Keough suggests pursuing this fundraiser now and then revisiting in the Fall. Points out that MARAC used to budget operationally for the MAI scholarship, but since MAI is no longer happening, there is some room in the operational budget. Asks Scholarship Committee to develop more ideas about how MARAC could move forward with this. Will have to proceed on parallel paths – plan for raising the funds while simultaneously talk to the Scholarship Committee as if the funds have already been raised.
- b. Proposal for mentoring program
  - i. Suggests MARAC implement a mentoring program aimed at graduate students and new professionals. Central idea should involve affinity and proximity – lining up mentors in one part of the profession with mentees interested in that field, but also with geographic proximity to one another. Ideally mentor and mentee would not be at the same institution so that the perspective would be broadened. Requiring geographic proximity might exclude people working in rural institutions; requirements could be worded so that geographic proximity is “strongly recommended” rather than required.
  - ii. Keough asks Novara to develop a formal proposal for this with a charge. Incoming Membership Development Chair should be involved.
  - iii. NEA has a mentoring program. SAA does too but it's vague.
  - iv. Loeper mentions that the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force suggested working within the SAA mentorship program framework, attending mentorship training programs or viewing webinars, and/or asking for help from SAA in getting it started, in order to foster a successful relationship.
  - v. Zarillo has been part of a mentorship program at a local archives group and comments that such a program should have more structure beyond just connecting two people.

- B. Awards (Cuervo) – no report.
  - a. Distinguished Service Award nominations are due January 31.
  - b. Committee is developing a master calendar and guide to awards that will be circulated for Steering comments in anticipation of the April meeting.
  - c. Keough confirms that going forward, Subcommittee Chairs are expected to either give out their respective awards at meetings, or let overall Committee know so that there is someone at the meeting hand out the award.
- C. Communications (Citak, Scott) – report submitted.
  - a. Committee is developing communication guidelines to have consistency when MARAC writes emails, blogs, *Mid-Atlantic Archivist*, etc.
- D. Education (Sather) – report submitted.
  - a. Does not have any leads on potential replacements as Committee Chair; she was hoping someone would be appointed before July 1 so she could work with them to transition leadership.
- E. Membership (Borden) – report submitted.
- F. Nominations and Elections (Hall) – report submitted.
  - a. Please vote! Voting ends February 22. She will be sending out a reminder email and another link in a few weeks.

## VIII. State Caucus New Business and Updates

- A. Delaware (Denison) – report submitted.
- B. District of Columbia (Donahue) – report submitted.
- C. Maryland (Speck) – report submitted.
  - a. Reached out to lapsed members and got several positive responses, people renewed.
  - b. Keough reminds State Caucus Representatives that it is important for them to communicate all the things discussed during Steering Meetings with state membership to keep the line of communication open.
- D. New Jersey (Poll) – report submitted.
  - a. Program for Newark has been finalized and should be live soon.
- E. New York (Zarrillo) – report submitted.
  - a. Did not get much response from lapsed members, but he tried.
  - b. Gerencser confirms that there is no such thing as an institutional MARAC membership.
- F. Pennsylvania (Grove-Rohrbaugh) – report submitted.
  - a. Novara points out that what MARAC is doing with the Pennsylvania Historical Association is excellent. There might be similar opportunities for collaborative



relationships in other regions as well.

G. Virginia (Morris) – report submitted.

H. West Virginia (Emerling) – report submitted.

IX. Other Announcements – none.

X. Adjournment – meeting adjourned at 1:19 pm.