

MINUTES
TEXAS HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD
February 10, 2017

The Texas Historical Records Advisory Board meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. on February 10, 2017, in the Commission meeting room at the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building, 1201 Brazos Street, Austin, Texas.

Members Present: Jelain Chubb, coordinator, Linda Barrett, Monte Monroe, Malinda Cowen, Nelson Balido, Linda Reynolds, Kristy Sorensen, and Teri Flack.

Members Absent: John Slate

Staff Support: Ashley Stevens, principal assistant

Also Present: Mark Smith, director and state librarian, Gloria Meraz, assistant state librarian, Laura Saegert, assistant director of archives, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; Stephen Cure, Texas State Historical Association.

1. Welcome, introductions and general announcements

Jelain Chubb thanked the board members present for attending. Chubb introduced Linda Barrett and Linda Reynolds. Chubb stated Barrett and Reynolds replace John Slate and Jonathan Gerland. Chubb added that Slate is remaining on the board to replace Thomas Oduor who resigned from the board in January 2017. Chubb stated Slate's term is for one year. Chubb noted that Slate is absent due to a family obligation. Chubb thanked Mark Smith for approving the new members and assisting the process. Chubb stated that she and Nelson Balido are awaiting reappointment from Governor Greg Abbott as they are two of three gubernatorial appointments on the board. Chubb added that her appointment is in statute. Balido added that any changes would likely occur after the legislative session. Chubb invited the board members and those present to introduce themselves.

Ashley Stevens provided information on travel-related and administrative documentation, specifically completion of the cost-share form and turning in travel receipts.

2. Approve minutes of October 7, 2016 meeting

Monte Monroe moved to approve the minutes. Teri Flack seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes with non-substantive changes.

3. Public comment

Chubb opened the floor to public comments. No comments received.

4. Consideration of resolutions and certificates of appreciation

Chubb stated that there are no resolutions. Chubb stated the board has two certificates of appreciation for Gerland and Oduor. Balido moved to approve. Flack seconded.

5. Texas State Historical Association – Representatives will provide information on upcoming activities

Chubb introduced Stephen Cure of the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA). Cure thanked the board for the invitation to present. Cure stated that TSHA has returned to Austin after over 10 years in Denton, Texas. Cure also thanked the board regarding the special award for the Texas History Day. Cure provided an overview of Texas History Day, a program geared toward teaching students critical thinking and research skills, especially the use of primary sources. Cure stated there are five categories: exhibits, performance, documentaries, websites, and papers; within each category, with the exception of paper, projects could be done individually or in a group. Cure noted that TSHA manages the state level of the competition. Cure directed the board members to the TSHA pamphlet on National History Day. Cure noted the work of TSHA and the Society of American Archivists (SAA) on the creation of an Archives Toolkit about National History Day to help archivists understand National History Day. Chubb interjected that THRAB will put a link to the toolkit on their website. Cure stated TSHA and THRAB could do a lot to assist teachers and students.

Balido sought clarification on training for teachers, specifically learning research methodology. Cure stated that, generally, teachers are not required to be taught historical research methods but are expected to teach their students. Cure added that research methodology is listed in the state social studies standards. Cure emphasized that THRAB and TSHA can greatly assist in this area. Flack concurred with Cure regarding the importance of assisting teachers. Adding to the discussion, Cure noted that more archives and libraries are shifting to offsite storage, which makes immediate access difficult. Cure stated this creates unintentional barriers as researchers, educators, and students are less likely to use them as this requires planning.

Cure added there are fellowship opportunities for institutions. Cure noted that TSLAC will have a fellowship.

Regarding the Handbook of Texas, Cure stated that TSHA is interested in linking to archival collections from institutions on the site. Cure stated the site gets a lot of traffic, it's free, and available. Cure noted that TSHA will launch a project focused on women's history. Cure emphasized that if there are archival collections related to women's history he would be interested in talking with those institutions.

Chubb stated that the NHPRC grant, which funds THRAB, includes a special award for junior and senior division for Texas History Day of \$250 each. Chubb noted that, this year, THRAB and TSHA would collaborate on a *Teaching with Primary Sources* one-day workshop for up to 25 teachers in summer or fall. Chubb added TSLAC would host.

Cowen commented on the amazing quality of the student projects at Texas History Day. Cowen encouraged board members to consider participating either at the regional or state level.

Monroe invited Cure to speak at the TSHA Archives Committee about possible collaborative projects. Monroe noted that students in college are required to take library research methodology but not archival research methodology. Monroe added that students are required to take Texas history. Monroe, directed to Balido, suggested reaching out to a legislator amenable to emboldening the current education act, which

requires Texas history, to require research methodology. Balido suggested the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Chubb stressed the importance of evaluating online resources and how to teach people to differentiate between authoritative and opinion pieces. Balido asked if the board would consider drafting a proposal to present to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Monroe stated THRAB should consider it in collaboration with TSLAC and TSHA. Monroe noted it would not be possible for this legislative session but perhaps in the next one. Balido stated the board meets quarterly every year so they are not connected to the legislative cycle. Balido asked whether such a proposal requires the approval of the Legislature or if the board can approve it.

Flack stated that she knows people on the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Flack stated that they are in the process of reevaluating the education requirements. Monroe emphasized the importance of teaching students to use archival collections, critical thinking & research skills, and evaluating viable sources. Reynolds stated there are three types of research methodology: scientific, historical, and general. Reynolds emphasized that colleges and universities are trying to decrease the number of core courses that students need to graduate. Reynolds asked if Monroe was looking to add a required course. Monroe stated yes. Reynolds noted that one class would have to go from the core course for a college or university to be amendable to adding an archival research methodology course.

Flack stressed the pressure teachers are under to teach history in accordance to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Chubb interjected that history education is important but the larger question is how can TSHA, TSLAC, and THRAB work together to assist teachers and promote it. Reynolds added that National History Day and Junior Historian programs require teachers who are willing to participate on their own time. Reynolds stated this is problematic given how overworked teachers are. Reynolds asked how THRAB or any archives could help. Cure stated that TSHA can only provide outreach to the teachers. Cure provided two clarifying points: TEKS is very fact-driven rather than process-driven and he emphasized difficulty in going to the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Cure suggested, regarding the Coordinating Board, that changing teacher certification is the path of least resistance versus changing curriculum. Cure concurred on Chubb's point regarding collaboration between the organizations. Chubb stated there is a way to provide it online through webinars or live-streaming, etc. Cure concluded by thanking the board for their time.

Mark Smith interjected that the Friends of Libraries and Archives of Texas (FLAT) will establish a scholar-in-residence program. Smith noted that FLAT received a private grant to fund a position. Smith thanked TSHA for its help in establishing the program. Smith stated the amount is for \$2,000. Chubb stated the program would be announced at the TSHA annual meeting in March.

Cure added that Texas History Day will occur on Saturday, April 29.

The board recessed at 11:11 am. The board reconvened at 11:20 am.

6. Discussion of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's 2018-2019 Legislative Appropriation Request

Chubb invited Smith and Gloria Meraz to speak to the board. Smith addressed the budget and the hiring freeze; all agencies were asked to submit a 4% reduction to their

budget. Smith stated that TSLAC's budget request is at 96% of current levels. Smith stated that TSLAC went before the Senate Committee on Finance regarding the budget on Monday, February 6 and will likely go before the House Committee on Finance next week. Smith directed the board to the 2018-2019 LAR Exceptional Item List handout. Smith stated the list is a summary of what TSLAC is asking for this legislative session. Referencing the previous legislative session, Smith stated TSLAC sought funding for the Texas Digital Archive. Smith thanked Monroe and Flack for their efforts advocating to members of the legislature. Smith stated that, this year, TSLAC is not requesting additional funding for the TDA. Smith thanked Chubb and her staff for their careful budgeting and strategic planning. Smith provided a recap of the exception item list: cyber security, e-resources such as TexShare and TexQuest, employee salaries, six analysts for State and Local Records Management (SLRM) division, and broadband access for public libraries. Smith referred back to the analyst positions and noted that this is the second legislative session where TSLAC has made this request. Smith stated he believes this request has gained little traction with the legislature due to a lack of understanding on their part of the positions and the need. Smith stated that TSLAC had devised a way to fund 2 FTE positions with assistance from Chubb's Archives and Information Services (ARIS) division. Smith stated the state hiring freeze has impacted their ability to hire or advertise the positions.

Meraz added that they are monitoring what is happening on the state-level but also the federal level. Smith stated that state dollars amount to 50% of TSLAC's budget and federal dollars amount to 30%. Flack noted that people often do not realize how federal dollars provide invaluable sources to Texans and communities. Flack thanked Smith and Meraz for their hard work with the legislature.

The board recessed at 11:46 am. The board reconvened at 11:55 am.

7. Discussion of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Sunset Review

Chubb directed the board members to the handouts. Meraz provided an overview of the Sunset Review process. Meraz stated that TSLAC is up for review in 2019 but the self-evaluation process has already started. Meraz stated the process includes asking questions of stakeholders and TSLAC staff about the services and programs offered at TSLAC. Meraz noted that a critical component is the Regional Historical Resources Depository (RHRD) program, specifically assessing the needs of RHRDs.

Chubb noted the program started in the 1970s in an attempt to ensure the preservation of local government records and keep them in the region where they were created. Chubb stated TSLAC received legal custody of the records but the RHRDs maintain physical custody. Chubb stated that early on TSLAC provided funding and staffing for the program but that ceased in the 1980s and TSLAC now has a cursory relationship with the RHRDs. Chubb stated that over the years three RHRDs have withdrawn from the program and those records were brought to TSLAC. Chubb stated that some counties now have the ability to house and store archival records and request that records be returned to their county of origin. Chubb cited Lavaca County as a recent example. Reynolds asked that if a county wants records back, which are housed at an RHRD, should that RHRD give those records back. Chubb stated that the TSLAC is considering the following: what does the future of that program look like and what are the potential challenges. Flack asked the board to consider what responsibilities do the RHRDs have to make people aware of what collections they maintain. Kristy Sorensen

asked if there is any information out there about the collections at the county level. Reynolds stated not likely as there is a high-turnover rate at the county level.

Chubb introduced Laura Saegert, Assistant Director of Archives, who is the principal contact with the RHRDs. Saegert stated that TSLAC is trying to determine what the needs of the RHRDs are and how TSLAC can meet those needs. That information will help determine: if the records should go back to the county or if TSLAC asks the Legislature to provide additional funding for an archivist to go to the RHRDs on a semi-regular basis. Monroe asked if the counties are rural or urban. Saegert stated RHRDs are in mostly rural counties. Monroe stated he was not aware that rural counties had funding to manage their records. Saegert clarified that some rural counties are receiving additional funding. Saegert stated TSLAC had a conference call with 18 RHRDs last year to address the program. Saegert added she sent out a follow up survey. From the survey, Saegert stated she will create a fact sheet about each RHRD. Saegert stated she is particularly interested in access to these collections, specifically whether RHRDs have finding aids, inventory lists, etc. Chubb referenced a recent example of an official requesting a volume be digitized. Chubb stated this example touches on rising preservation and digitization needs. Chubb also noted that there are also Public Information Act issues that need to be addressed.

Meraz stated that there is a need for immediate solutions with an eye toward developing a long-term solution. Chubb stated the larger question is whether the program should have more TSLAC involvement (i.e. funding, staff) or less TSLAC involvement (i.e. removing the state from the process). Directed at TSLAC representatives (Meraz, Chubb, Saegert), Monroe asked if they have reached a consensus on what direction they would like to take with the RHRDs. Monroe noted it is possible to provide information online or through webinars to strengthen the RHRD program. Chubb stated they are collecting feedback rather than impose their decision on the RHRDs. Sorensen asked if any of the RHRDs have been particularly successful. Reynolds (representing Stephen F. Austin State University) and Monroe (representing Texas Tech University) stated they believe their RHRDs have been successful. Monroe clarified to those present that the program includes county and state records. Monroe stated his support for the review process for the RHRDs. Sorensen asked if having a good model from among the RHRDs would help with a revamped education component. The board agreed. Monroe emphasized the things to be considered: what's best for the records and cost. Monroe stated TSLAC could bolster their connection with the RHRDs through education.

The topic of space issues came up. Chubb stated that space is an issue in El Paso. Discussion ensued with examples of counties handing over records, poor storage, and a lack of knowledge about taking care of records. Flack stated her hesitation to give records back to the counties. Sorensen asked what is the best way to let communities know what is at the RHRDs. Flack stated a finding aid either on a website or through the Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO). Sorensen followed up by asking whether genealogical societies have reached out to the RHRDs to assist with their collections such as processing records, promotion, etc. Chubb asked Reynolds to comment given that she works as an RHRD. Reynolds concurred with Monroe on the education component. Reynolds stated that at SFASU they periodically go out to the counties to speak with the county clerks.

Chubb noted that RHRDs are limited in what they can do to the records such as apply for a grant. Chubb asked: if TSLAC transferred the legal custody of records to the

RHRDS but continued to provide resource and training support, would RHRDs find that an attractive offer. Reynolds stated yes, especially in the case of applying for grants. Monroe agreed. Monroe asked if doing such an action would require legislative support. Meraz stated yes. Flack noted that the assessment of the RHRD program could be added to the sunset review process.

Smith interjected that, in reviewing the RHRDs, there is an unevenness where some are thriving and others are not. Meraz summarized one need from RHRDs is the authority to accept records. Monroe concurred and added that TSLAC should provide oversight. Chubb posed whether the State needs to be involved in the preservation and storage of local records. Reynolds asked if TSLAC has considered creating additional RHRDs to lessen the number of counties each RHRD is responsible for. Meraz stated all the options are on the table for discussion. Monroe strongly favored the option of transferring legal custody to RHRDs. Chubb expressed concerns for TSLAC being audited regarding the RHRDs.

Chubb stated that at the next THRAB meeting she will provide a summary of the information collected from the survey. Chubb thanked Smith and Meraz for their attendance.

The board recessed at 1:06 pm. The board reconvened at 1:13 pm.

8. Review final report on the 2016 State Board Programming Grant

Chubb stated that the final report is not finished. Chubb stated that the board was successful in their programming. Stevens provided a list of the workshops and webinars completed in 2016. Chubb summarized their activities with the archival awards of Excellence, participation at the Austin Archives Bazaar, and the special award for Texas History Day.

Chubb stated that before the next meeting she will provide the board with the final report.

9. Discussion of 2017 State Board Programming Grant activities

Chubb directed the board members to the Performance Objectives handout and the NHPRC award letter. Chubb stated the board received a grant for \$30,954 which is \$5,000 less than requested and eliminates one DAS workshop. Chubb noted that TSLAC reduced its cost share to \$31,032. Chubb summarized the grant activities: three meetings (February, June, and October), two DAS workshops, one DAS webinar (including DAS exam fee for 18 people), three one-day grant writing workshops (Rio Grande Valley, West Texas, and East Texas), the Archives Month poster, the Archival Awards, the special award for Texas History Day, and one *Teaching with Primary Sources* workshop. Stevens stated she would work on locking in locations and dates as soon as possible.

Flack discussed the proposal to switch from a physical poster to an electronic version of the Archives Month Poster to lessen cost and expand reach, especially to groups that do not have a physical building to hang a poster. Stevens stated that each Archives Month poster includes a letter discussing the theme of the poster. Stevens suggested letting recipients of the poster know about the upcoming change in the letter. At that time,

Stevens stated recipients would have the option to provide an email address for the electronic poster. Stevens stated THRAB would still produce print copies but a significantly lower amount. Monroe asked about the 2017 poster theme. Stevens stated it would center on World War I. Discussion ensued about images for the poster. Stevens stated her intent is to show potential photos for the poster at the June 2017 meeting.

Chubb noted the need for volunteers for Texas History Day and the Archival Awards. Cowen volunteered for the upcoming Texas History Day.

Flack announced that the American Association on State and Local History (AASLH) would have its annual meeting in September in Austin.

Monroe sought clarification on the NHPRC grant review process, specifically whether reviews were going through THRAB. Sorensen stated that she is currently reviewing four grants. Chubb stated that NHPRC is trying a new review process and that grant applications are sent out to reviewers. Flack asked if NHPRC reviews outside of the board count toward THRAB hours. Chubb stated yes.

Chubb announced that the Society of American Archivists' annual meeting in 2019 will be in Austin. Chubb suggested THRAB consider proposing a session for other SHRAB boards.

10. Adjournment

The board adjourned at 1:40 pm.

Approved, October 6, 2017