

**MINUTES**  
TEXAS HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD  
October 6, 2017

The Texas Historical Records Advisory Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on October 6, 2017, in Room 2.108 at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, 2300 Red River St., Austin, Texas.

**Members Present:** Jelain Chubb, coordinator; Monte Monroe, Kristy Sorensen, Linda Barrett, Linda Reynolds, Malinda Cowen, and John Slate. **Members Absent:** Bob Glenn, and Teri Flack. **Staff Support:** Pamela Fuentes.

**1. Welcome and General Announcements**

Jelain Chubb welcomed those present. She advised the board that Pamela Fuentes would be filling in as interim THRAB assistant given Ashley Stevens' departure. Chubb advised that Stephanie Malmros, the new Director of Research and Collections at the Briscoe Center, would be giving the board a tour of the Center at the end of the meeting. Following up on the board's interest in the Daughters of the Republic of Texas library collection and their new facility, the next THRAB meeting will be in San Antonio in either January or February. Chubb advised that John Slate would be terming off the board on February 1, 2018 and has served as a THRAB member since May 1, 2005. Chubb added that Slate, and his co-author Kaye Lanning Minchew, recently received a prestigious award from ARMA International in recognition of their book *Managing Local Government Archives*. Chubb advised members to fill in the Board Cost Share forms. Monroe asked if reviewing NHPRC grants are counted and Chubb advised it was. Cowen asked if the Texas History Day should be added to hers. Chubb advised she thought Cowen already reported it but asked Cowen to note it again and she would check.

**2. Approve minutes of February 10, 2017 meeting**

Monte Monroe moved to approve the minutes. John Slate seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

**3. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present.

**4. Consideration of Resolutions and Certificates of Appreciation**

Chubb stated that there are no resolutions or certificates of appreciation for this meeting. She advised there would be a certificate of appreciation for the next meeting as Slate is terming off the board. Chubb asked if there are any other resolutions or certificates that should be considered for the next meeting and none are offered.

**5. Archival Awards of Excellence**

Chubb stated that advertising for the Archival Awards of Excellence started in July, which was around the same time as last year. Chubb advised that there were two worthy recipients and asked Kristy Sorensen to brief the board.

Sorensen advised the board that there are two Archival Awards of Excellence awarded: one for an individual and one for an institution. She stated the individual award was going to Susan Smith Dorsey from the General Land Office (GLO). Ms. Dorsey has a rich career spanning 50 years and a strong application. Sorensen added that Ms. Dorsey has performed important archival work in several different areas for GLO and her scope of work during her career has included microfilming projects, digitization projects, several projects on access, and working with the public and researchers. The institutional award was going to the Austin History Center; its application was centered around its various projects that focused on its architectural archive records. The Center held exhibits and tours not only at the Center but at local architectural venues by partnering with the Austin Architecture Association. Sorensen added that an adult craft night, which was part of an exhibit, was quite successful and looked fun. In addition, the Center had a large processing project to provide greater access to its records, conducted oral histories, and digitized parts of its collections. Chubb advised the Center touched on every aspect of the award and did some advocacy work as well. Chubb advised the board that if there were no objections then the awards were to go to these recipients.

Monte Monroe moved to award the Archival Award of Excellence to Susan Smith Dorsey and the Austin History Center. Malinda Cowen seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve. Chubb stated that she would present the recipients with their awards.

Chubb reminded the board to be mindful of potential nominees and to promote the Archival Award of Excellence among colleagues.

**6. Update on the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's budget, Sunset Review, and Regional Historical Resource Depository program**

Budget - Chubb advised that the agency came through relatively unscathed in the last budget cycle. One million in appropriated funds was received for facilities improvements at the Sam Houston Center. The State and Local Records Management division (SLRM) received approval for two additional Government Information Analysts positions; funding will come from \$140,000 the State Archives pays for storage of archival records at the State Records Center. Chubb anticipates that TSLAC will ask for funding in the next biennium for additional storage facilities for the state archives. Chubb advised that the storage issue is in the self-evaluation report that goes to the Sunset Review Commission.

Sunset Review - TSLAC is up for review in 2019. TSLAC's self-evaluation report, which included a first round of feedback from stakeholder groups and looking internally at TSLAC's operations. Chubb pointed a few pages that would be useful for the board to note. The Sunset Committee will begin its work in March 2018 and it should take a couple of months. The Committee will meet with stakeholders and come to any board meetings that occur during this time. In addition, the Committee may contact board members individually to ask question. Chubb advised it was important for board members to have a copy of the self-evaluation report, which is laid out according to the Sunset Commission's requirements. The report covers key functions and performance, history and major events, policymaking structure, funding, organization, then each

program is delineated, and it talks about the statutory authority and recent legislation and any impacts they have, and any issues. The report also required TSLAC to identify its different types of contracts and provide agency comments.

Chubb pointed out the following items:

- pages 5 and 6, which provides information about the Archives and Information Services division; State and Local Records Management division is on page 6;
- page 8 section E, “Have you recommended changes to the Legislature in the past to improve your agency’s operations? If so, explain. Were the changes adopted?” and at the top of page 10 a section that says, “Public Accessibility and Preservation of State Archival Records.” Chubb noted the agency has recommended to minimize the closure of public records, ensure that all state records (including those of elected state officials) are transferred appropriately to the State Archives and protect state archival resources in perpetuity while facilitating public access now and for future generations. Chubb reminded the board that these two topics were addressed in a THRAB resolution several years ago showing its support of legislation in opening records after 75 years and that all state archival records are transferred to TSLAC and not to other entities. On page 10, Chubb also pointed out the section on facilities which explained how TSLAC continues to have ongoing needs for additional storage that will become more acute with each passing year.;
- page 11 section H: “What key obstacles impair your agency’s ability to achieve its objectives?” Chubb drew the board’s attention to the first two bullet points, which discuss funding constraints and the agency’s need for additional storage space. Members discussed the need for more archival storage. Section J “What are your agency’s biggest opportunities for improvement in the future?” Chubb noted the shifting focus to collecting electronic records from state agencies, which will help address a portion of the storage issues since more records will be in electronic form and not in paper.;
- page 12 detailing the table on the performance measures that TSLAC reported to the Legislative Budget Board;
- page 33 the Guide to Agency Programs. Chubb noted the two comments from agency stakeholders from the survey, which explained the importance of state archives as qualified custodian of state records and the importance of having access to materials;
- page 37, section G, notes that NHPRC provides federal funding for THRAB for its workshops and for its advisory board.
- page 40 section M, “What statutory changes could be made to assist this program in performing its functions?” Chubb noted that TSLAC would like statutory authority to market reproductions of select archival materials like the General Land Office (GLO), which keeps the proceeds to fund preservation and educational programming. Chubb noted TSLAC would also like to amend the statute relating to the RHRD program to allow the regional depositories more autonomy in managing local government records accepted through the program. This would position the depositories to take initiative to preserve those records. Chubb stated this

topic would probably be of great interest to several of the board members for discussion with the Sunset Committee.

Monroe asked Chubb if she could clarify what will happen with the legislative records and gubernatorial records already in the possession of the RHRDs. He asked if the records would stay at the RHRDs if they meet all the criteria or would they be transferred to TSLAC. Chubb stated she believed part of the legislative process would be to work this out with the RHRDs. Reynolds stated she wanted a better understanding as to why TSLAC would want to take on all the legislative records. Chubb advised that part of it was because these records are part of state government and legislative records need to be looked at in context with other materials. Chubb stated that it is hard when there are legislators who worked on the same committee or the same subject areas and their records are located in different parts of the state requiring researchers to travel to all those locations. It would be easier if researchers could look at those records at the state archives since the records would be all together and processed the same way with the same types of finding aids.

Slate asked if this was reflective of the change in definition of a state record because a lot of legislators have kept the papers as if the papers were their own personal records. Chubb advised that with gubernatorial records and records of legislators, there is sometimes an impression that these are papers about the office holder as opposed to the operation of state government.

Monroe advised he remembered extensive conversations with the THRAB board last year and with Mark Smith and stated there seemed to be some contradictions with what is recommended in the report. Monroe commented that more autonomy will be given to RHRDs but then it is talking about bringing some of these records back to TSLAC. Chubb stated some records are local government records, but some records are state records. Monroe asked if there would be more discussion with stakeholders, and Chubb advised there would be more discussions to work this out with the understanding of how to best manage state records. Chubb stated that complying with the state's Public Information Act (PIA) is a primary issue. Legislative materials have confidential information in them, such as driver's license numbers. She advised that college and university archives do not deal with the PIA on a regular basis, so identifying everything that should not be made public is problematic. Ultimately TSLAC is responsible for those records.

Chubb contended this is a complicated issue that will require all parties to work together towards a viable solution. Monroe stated that it seemed that TSLAC has internalized this process by taking some discussions held in the past and incorporating them into the self-evaluation report and that the agency has come to some realizations that things such as PIA issues are something that must be considered seriously. Monroe emphasized that he believed TSLAC would work with the RHRDs who are in possession of these records to develop an understanding of what is expected. He stated that initially it was thought that the state

archives would give more autonomy, as is mentioned in the report, but there has clearly been further thinking on this subject that the RHRD folks were not privy to. Chubb advised that the autonomy was always about the local records as that is the largest quantity of what is there, but the state records are a concern in terms of the PIA and the separation away from the government records and legislative materials that TSLAC holds. She advised state officials who have given their records to various institutions brings up the questions as to how this benefits researchers and how does TSLAC follow state laws regarding confidentiality. Chubb stated that TSLAC has a legal responsibility, but it is not in control of the situation. Most of TSLAC Memorandums of Understanding with the RHRDs were signed in the 1970s and have not been updated over time. These agreements pose a problem for some of the institutions as well as TSLAC and need to be reviewed. Chubb stated she sees opening the dialogue with the universities and colleges as an opportunity for them to tell us what they want and need, and some may decide to withdraw.

Monroe advised that bringing these records to TSLAC means it will need to have more resources to make this happen and the legislator that goes forward with this will have to understand these issues. Monroe stated that some of these institutions have spent a great deal of money to preserve and make accessible these records over long periods of time and then to take them away is problematic. Chubb stated this is a delicate situation that needs to be addressed. Monroe commented that now is the time to have another discussion with the RHRDs to give them an idea on where TSLAC is on this issue. Reynolds stated she was under the impression it was about local records and was not thinking about the legislative records. Monroe stated he understood it was about all records based off the previous discussions in the past because it is a problem and needs to be addressed. He stated TSLAC needs to figure out what to do about the RHRDs and that the Attorney General's office has had some input since then that they were not aware of before. Chubb agreed that the OAG's office will need to be more involved. Monroe reiterated this is an important issue and now is the time to get clarity. He advised that after RHRD meetings a lot of people have reached out to him as member of the THRAB board to share their perspective with some positive comments but also with some concerns about this issue. Chubb stated that this is why TSLAC is having the focus meeting and surveys. Monroe advised he would like the record to show that everybody's understandings of these issues related to RHRDs, and their positive comments or negative concerns about the situation with the RHRDs and state records in general is that they want the best for the state records; we all want the best for the state records.

- page 41 and the section explaining how the current statute allows legislators to close portions of their correspondence records permanently. Monroe stated this is another key issue this board has been talking about for many years. He advised the standard length is 75 years for access to some of these public records, with some of the agencies having them restricted back to the 1920s and even some to the 1800s. Monroe suggested that any entities that collaborate with THRAB on the betterment of the preservation of state historic records should be in total agreement on whatever we approach the legislators with in term of the number of

years. Chubb agreed and stated this is TSLAC's self-study where thoughts are provided to start the conversation with the Sunset Review Commission. Monroe stated he believed all state records should be opened after 75 years and that legislative records should be available to the public because the public pays taxes for these legislators to operate; therefore, these records should be available.

**Board recessed at 11:09 a.m.**

**Meeting resumed at 11:20 am.**

- page 59 of the report, which covers SLRM's cost recovery efforts and the need for more government information analysts to work with state and local government agencies;
- page 93 section IX on the major issues of the agency. TSLAC identified primarily archival and records management issues. Monroe stated that it would have been nice to have added contact information from some of the other historical institutions. He advised he could visit with the East Texas Historical Association Board next week and even the West Texas Historical Association Board and the Central Texas Historical Association Board as it would be helpful to have more than just the Texas State Historical Association listed in the report. Chubb stated that would be good as she does not have their contact information. Monroe agreed to go forward with it.

Chubb pointed out that there are a lot of attachments in the report, such as the ninety-page survey. The survey showed the state archives comes out very well in terms of the comments and the value placed on the state archives. Monroe advised he read every page including the printout of the comments, and he was very impressed in the comprehensive nature of this self-evaluation report, in the professionalism, and the thorough and thoughtful consideration given to each of these items delineated within the report. Monroe asked what else THRAB can do to assist TSLAC. Chubb advised that the Sunset Commission may contact THRAB members directly to get their thoughts. Chubb advised that Assistant State Librarian Gloria Meraz did the bulk of the work on this report, and she will pass on Monroe's compliments to her.

#### **7. Update on the National Historical Publications and Records Commission**

Chubb stated that NHPRC executive director Kathleen Williams has taken a job with the Smithsonian's National Gallery. Mary Stanhope, chief of staff for the Archivist of the United States David Ferrero, will serve as interim executive director.

Chubb advised that in May 2017, Rebecca Hankins from Texas A&M was sworn in as a member of the NHPRC, and she is representing the Society of American Archivists. Chubb will invite her to attend a future THRAB meeting.

Chubb shared NHPRC's annual report with board members. She advised the report highlights different projects from around the country.

Chubb discussed NHPRC's budget, which was six million dollars for the year and a million more than what they had previously. Chubb stated that NHPRC is still operating without authorizing legislation as they have been for the past several years, which puts NHPRC in a precarious situation. Chubb stated the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has updated its strategic plan; it does not mention NHPRC. Chubb noted that NHPRC still operating under the previous NARA's strategic plan; we will wait to see how NHPRC revises its plan in the next year or so.

**Board recessed at 11:50 a.m.**

**Meeting resumed at 11:57 a.m. for a working lunch.**

**8. Session sponsorship at the 2019 Texas State Historical Association Meeting**

Chubb stated Texas State Historical Association's (TSHA) Call for Session Proposals for the 2019 meeting, are due by February 1, 2018. Discussion ensued as to the type of session and possible partners and presenters. Monroe is chair of the Archives Committee for TSHA, so it would make sense to have a joint session with the TSHA Archives Committee. Monroe stated that the feedback he receives from historians is that they want to hear about records that are available, what's unique about those records, and what new topics are out there they can do research on from separate archives. Sorensen suggested something on the progress of TARO (Texas Archival Resources Online). Chubb stated maybe it could be hidden collections and how to find them. Chubb asked about focusing in on regional collections like what is being done at the Stephen F. Austin State University. Reynolds stated the work being done is on a statewide slave database and it's all online. Reynolds agreed to be on a panel. TSLAC will talk about the Texas Digital Archive. Chubb will ask Suzanne Campbell from the West Texas Collection at San Angelo University to speak as well. Chubb stated the topic would be "Hidden Collections and How to Find Them." She stated she would take the lead and start to draft out the session with Monroe. The session, "History in Plain Sight" will be on hidden collections, the types of information they have, and how to find them.

**9. Discussion of 2017 State Board Programming Grant Activities**

Chubb provided the members with a copy of the interim narrative report, which she sends to the NHPRC and briefly noted key items.

Chubb and Malinda Cowen were co-judges for the History Day awards. Cowen advised that last year there were six applications and this year there were more than 30 applications received from exhibits, papers, websites, and documentaries. Chubb stated the winners were Nora Rami on "Oveta Culp Hobby: From Media to Military" in the Individual Documentary Junior Division, and Rylee Hernandez and Bryson Ward on "Standing Firm in Pursuit of the American Dream" in the Group Documentary Senior Division category. Rylee Hernandez was a repeat winner from last year. The links to these documentaries are available online.

Chubb stated that one of the pending THRAB projects is the Teaching with Primary Sources workshop, which we hoped to do this summer with TSHA. Chubb stated that this workshop needed

to be scheduled when teachers could attend. She advised that because of this and Ashley's vacancy, as well as a few other things, the THRAB grant needed to be extended into next year. Chubb stated that originally this was a one-year grant that started in January 2017 and was supposed to end December 2017, and we have a lot of activities that THRAB needs to do. She advised the grant would be extended out to December 2018, but this does not give THRAB any more money -- only more time to do all of the pending projects. TSHA is looking at potential dates for this workshop. Chubb stated that the grant extension will require her to be more frugal in different places as THRAB will not be receiving additional funds, and we have two years of the archival awards, the history day awards, and travel to cover. Chubb stated that THRAB has had two meetings this year and based on the budget the next meeting can be held sometime in January or February and hopefully another meeting in the summer. She will attempt to schedule five meetings total if the budget allows, but for now four meetings are anticipated.

Slate advised that he needed to leave and asked members to pose for a group photo as this could potentially be his last meeting. Monroe asked the board to give a round of applause for Slate's service. He stated that Slate has been a great contributor to Texas history and preservation of Texas records and archives on a scale that no one else has done.

#### **10. Discussion of next State Board Programming Grant Application**

Chubb will submit the next grant application in June. She will share a draft of the application with the board at the next meeting. Chubb stated that the focus will remain on training as this has been well received and is an area where it's difficult for institutions to afford. Chubb advised that the board should continually look at what it is offering, and they may need to look at another revision of THRAB's strategic plan. What are the needs of Texas? She advised that she keeps hearing at conferences of the need for education and for professional development opportunities. Monroe suggested digital access and disaster preparedness are possible topics. Chubb agreed, but she believes that message has been received because the only place she heard had damaged records from flooding issues was the Houston City Clerk's office.

#### **11. Tour of Briscoe Center for American History**

At 1:00, Stephanie Malmros, Director of Research and Collections at the Briscoe Center, provided the board with a tour of the newly renovated exhibit and reading room space.

#### **12. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

*Approved, February 2, 2018.*