



Maryland State Archives

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2016, 12:00 noon

Electronic Classroom, Maryland State Archives

Agenda

Call to Order by Chair

Attendees The following members, designees, and representatives were in attendance:

The Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, *Chief Judge, Court of Appeals, and Chair of the Hall of Records Commission*

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, *President of the Senate*

Dr. Whitman H. Ridgway, *designee of Chancellor, University System of Maryland*

Ms. Ellen Robertson, *Department of General Services*

Special Guests

Ms. Pamela Q. Harris, *Maryland State Court Administrator*

Ms. Jean Russo, *President, Friends of the Maryland State Archives*

The Chair and Tim Baker welcomed the special guests to the meeting.

Reports & Minutes of Previous Meetings

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes, June 14, 2016

[http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrcminutesjune2016%20\(1\).pdf](http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrcminutesjune2016%20(1).pdf)

Special Meetings, Advisory Boards & Celebratory Events Held

June 22, 2016 Attorney Malcolm Gross discussed “The Trial of John Brown” at the Archives’ *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

June 29, 2016 Author Ross Kimmel spoke on “Freedom or Bondage: Slave Freedom Petitions in Colonial Maryland” at the Archives’ *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

July 1, 2016 Workshop Series - “Using Vital Records at the Maryland State Archives.”

August 10, 2016 Filmmaker Mark Hildebrand spoke and screened his film, “Brookeville” at the Archives’ *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

September 14, 2016 Filmmaker Mark Hildebrand spoke and screened his film, "Anthem" at the Archives' *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

September 21, 2016 Historian Susan Pearl spoke on "Steir-Peeters Painting Collection at Riversdale" at the Archives' *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

October 1, 2016 The Archives hosted its Third Annual Family History Festival.

October 12, 2016 Professor Nicholas Creary and Bowie State University student Sydney Lawson spoke on their study of lynching in Maryland at the Archives' *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

The Chair moved to approve the minutes as drafted and recognize the special meetings of the Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

Records Retention & Disposal

Kathryn Baringer reported that since the last meeting of the Hall of Records Commission the Archives has approved 62 retention schedules. This includes 36 schedules from state agencies and 26 from county agencies, with an extensive schedule covering the records of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). The Baltimore City Archives received two new schedules from Baltimore City agencies. The Archives received 153 disposal certificates, 80 of which were submitted electronically.

Mr. Baker noted that WSSC, lacking the requisite records management expertise to complete the schedule on its own, had hired a private contractor. This resulted in one of the best written schedules Mr. Baker had seen in his fifteen years at the Archives, and is a testament to utilizing expertise in the private sector when it doesn't exist in-house.

Retention Schedules:

http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrc_schedules_11-16-2016.pdf

Disposal Certificates:

[http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrc_disposal_11-16-2016\(1\).pdf](http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrc_disposal_11-16-2016(1).pdf)

The Chair moved to approve the Records Retention Schedules and Disposal Certificates as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

State Archivist's Report

Mr. Baker advised the members that the Archives will be undergoing a significant program of renovation and mold remediation for the next several months. Mr. Baker thanked Secretary Churchill and the Department of General Services for their quick and thorough response to the situation.

Chronology: staff activities since the last meeting

http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrc_chronology_fall_2016.pdf

Elaine Bachmann called the Commission's attention to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference held in Annapolis the prior week. Several Archives' staff members were closely involved in conference planning and

coordination and several staff participated as panelists. Ms. Bachmann thanked the Friends of the Maryland State Archives for their financial support of Archives' staff attendance at this important professional conference. Conference goers were also offered a tour of the Maryland State House.

Budget

Mr. Baker reported that the Archives biggest budget concern over the past several years has been to convert our contractual staff to permanent status while being mindful of the impact on the actual number of employees. There were 40.20 contractual employees in FY 2014, and by FY 2018 the Archives will have less than seven. In 2008 the Archives had 125 employees; it now has 75. Additionally, many senior staff are nearing retirement age. The Archives is working to ensure that junior staff have a career path here, with the seniority and experience they need to take over from departing managers.

Mr. Baker also reported that the Archives has received some General Fund support to pay for operational expenses at the Rolling Run warehouse. These expenses include gas, electric, maintenance contracts, pest control, and security, among others. He noted, however, that due to the warehouse's having been in a construction phase throughout the past year there is yet no certainty that the current \$3.00 per square foot budget will be sufficient to cover expenses once the facility is fully on-line.

Customer Service Initiatives

Kevin Swanson provided the Commission with background context on the Archives' current planning for the realities of reduced manning. He explained that at one time individual Archives staff had worn many hats, performing a wide variety of archival functions as needed. With the advent of digitization projects, such as mdlandrec and plats.net, staff by necessity became more specialized in their activities, creating "siloes" departments. Now the Archives anticipates a return to the earlier practice of making use of each staff member's skills and talents across departmental lines as needed. Both the Reference Department and the Appraisal & Description Department have already benefitted from the expertise of the skilled researchers of the Educational Outreach & Research Department, and we will continue to cross-train staff to fulfill a variety of core archival functions. This is in keeping with the Governor's Executive Order concerning customer service, as the Archives directs more resources to core functions and broadens and deepens the "Archives experience" by integrating staff activities across current departmental boundaries. Our high-level objectives are to better utilize static, and even decreasing, staff resources to fulfill core agency functions – the "getting back to basics" objectives formulated by the State Archivist and documented in our agency MFR. These include:

1. Enhancing customer service, patron access to our collections, and the delivery of reference and research services generally.
2. Strengthening our appraisal, description, and records transfer efforts the better to address the myriad new challenges of our increasingly digital records environment.

Of course, another motivation is to cross train staff to increase their knowledge and experience of all aspects of modern archives operations. This promotes staff members' professional development, adds variety to the workday, improves the agency's flexibility to assign staff as needs arise and shift, and trains up the next generation of archival managers.

Appraisal and Description

Records Management in County Public Schools and Throughout the State

2016 legislation (House Bill 1105, 2016 Laws of Maryland Ch. 132) directed the Public Access Ombudsman with the Office of the Attorney General to investigate and report on the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) handling of public records requests from July 1, 2012 through December 31, 2015. In undertaking this investigation, the Public Access Ombudsman, Lisa Kershner, necessarily had to investigate HCPSS's record management practices. An agency cannot effectively comply with public record requests unless that agency has a thorough understanding of the nature and location of its records and documentation on the disposal of records -- both key elements of an effective records management program. To provide context, Ms. Kershner also sought a better understanding of the record management practices of Maryland county schools in general.

Kathryn Baringer reported that the Archives assisted Ms. Kershner by providing a general overview of agency responsibilities for records management as defined in statute and regulation. The Archives also submitted a report on retention schedules for each county school system, a timeline of communications and meetings with HCPSS, and a review of notable interactions with other county schools.

Our findings showed that in most cases Maryland school systems are not meeting State records management requirements. Of the 24 school systems, the Archives found that 18 had no approved record retention schedule on file, four had old schedules, and only two had relatively contemporary schedules. Mr. Baker stated that this characterization of the school systems' compliance was perhaps too generous, as the two with more recent schedules had only targeted a very narrow scope of records and not the entire school system and the four with old schedules had very old schedules, dating back to the 1960s. Ms. Kershner's investigation suggests that the Maryland county school systems generally are in compliance with Federal requirements regarding student records.

Ms. Baringer stated that the Archives' report also showed that, despite numerous occasions between 2010 and 2016 in which HCPSS requested and the Archives provided guidance on creating a records retention and disposal schedule, HCPSS never submitted a draft schedule for review. Ms. Baringer invited the Commission to view the full report on records management in Maryland county school systems at [Appendix 1](#).

Ms. Baringer observed that, while this study focused on school systems, she believes that it is illustrative of the full spectrum of records management issues that bedevil many state and local government agencies in Maryland. The State Archives has long been aware of the challenges facing records management in Maryland, but this investigation shows these obstacles in stark relief. Some of what this exercise revealed:

- There is a lack of understanding on the part of many agencies that they have a responsibility to "have a program for the continual, economical, and efficient management of the records." As a result, this responsibility is often not met.
 - There is a general lack of documented agency records management procedures.
 - Where such procedures exist, they often have not been thoroughly vetted within the agency or properly reviewed and approved according to statute and regulation.

- Records management efforts are often further stymied by staff turn-over.
- Often, as in the case of Howard County Public School System, in spite of considerable expenditure of time and resources by Archives and agency staff, there is no effective follow-through on the part of the agency to create documented, approved procedures. No follow-through also means that years can go by with the records scheduling process never being fully completed.
- Most agencies do not have a comprehensive inventory of the records they create or of the legacy records in the custody of the agency.
- Neither the Records Management Division nor the Archives has the resources for an active outreach program to help agencies fill this void.
 - The role of the Records Management Division and the Archives is to provide guidance and to advise agencies when they request assistance.
 - Records management activities are often only undertaken when there is a problem, such as a lack of physical storage space.
 - Over the course of many years and for many reasons, the records management program in Maryland has become reactive rather than proactive.
- Further complicating matters, many records management processes are outdated and not suited to dealing with the volume and format of records created today.
- Electronic records are not always considered in records management processes.
- Information lifecycle management is often neglected in systems development.
- There is almost always a big disconnect between those who manage paper and staff who manage electronic records.
- Often there are very few staff at agencies who have a thorough understanding of the content and organizational framework of the records.
- There does not exist an established method of inventory for electronic records and, ergo, an established procedure for transferring records of enduring value.
- Open data initiatives often ignore the issue of long-term preservation.

The unsatisfactory state of records management in Maryland provided the impetus for the Maryland State Archives and the Department of General Services, Records Management Division to make a number of recommendations to address these issues, many of which were incorporated into our 2014 Joint Chairmen's report response and which we have noted in previous Hall of Records Commission meetings. A full report on our overview of the obstacles and recommendations for records management in Maryland is available in [Appendix 2](#).

Consistent with existing law, Ms. Baringer emphasized the importance of placing responsibility for records management in the hands of the agencies. Agencies that create records, rather than any centralized authority, are in the best position to know the nature of their records and their own administrative, fiscal, and legal requirements. For the Archives to fulfill its mission, it needs the agencies that create the records to provide sufficient information for the Archives to make educated recommendations on retention and exert intellectual control over records with permanent value that are transferred into the Archives custody.

Records Management Initiatives

As reported at the last Hall of Records Commission meeting, MSA and RMD have revitalized their relationship to address the challenges brought on by a general decline in the quality of records management practices

across the state. Ms. Baringer acknowledged Michael Swygert of the Record Management Division for his role in this enhanced collaborative effort. She noted that the first focus in this effort is a revision of the forms used in retention schedule creation, a key element of any records management program. These forms are used to identify and describe all records an agency creates. The forms must contain information sufficient to allow MSA and RMD to make appraisal decisions which will determine how long those records need to be retained.

Ms. Baringer reported that a new form has been drafted and that the Archives is now working on instructions and guidance. The Records Management Division is also looking into the internal procedures necessary to formally update the forms.

Mr. Baker noted the frustration of Archives staff who met with and advised agency representatives on records scheduling only to find themselves several years later answering the same questions for a new set of representatives, with no action on the part of the agencies in between. Mr. Baker also noted that it was difficult for Archives staff to make informed recommendations to the agencies when their own representatives had so little insight into the scope and importance of agency records.

Mr. Baker reported that the Archives has recommended that the legislature consider an initiative modeled after a recent change to the Public Information Act that would require agencies to designate an accountable staff person as liaison for the records management program. The Archives believes that establishing such a role will help to streamline the scheduling process, provide accountability and continuity, and improve the records management program overall.

Probate Processing Project

Mr. Baker briefed the Commission on the Archives' continuing joint partnership with the Comptroller of Maryland, the Registers of Wills, and FamilySearch (a nonprofit family history organization) to rebox into archival storage, index to the document level, and scan probate records dating from 1642 to 1940. This manpower-intensive work finds from ten to twenty volunteers at the Archives each day preparing and scanning the records. With the financial support of the Comptroller and the volunteer effort, this project will better preserve the original records and make the information more accessible to the public. We have recently completed work on Caroline County, which consisted of approximately 271 bound volumes and 170 cubic feet of loose papers.

Commission on Artistic Property

Welcome to New Staff

Ms. Bachmann introduced Catherine Rogers Arthur as the new Senior Curator and Director of Artistic Property. Ms. Arthur joined the Archives staff on October 19, after nearly 20 years at Homewood Museum on the campus of Johns Hopkins University, where she served as Director and Curator of Collections. Ms. Bachmann also noted the tremendous work done by the Associate Curator and Collections Manager Chris Kintzel during the two-year period in which the Archives had no Senior Curator, thanking him for "keeping the ship afloat."

Ms. Bachmann also acknowledged the vital role of a succession of curators, including her predecessor Mimi Calver, who have all strived to raise the standard of care, preservation, and interpretation of the State art collection. She thanked President Miller for his support of the program at the State House and Matt Lalumia,

chairman of the Commission on Artistic Property, for his leadership in bringing the care and management of the collection up to a museum-quality standard.

Portraits of Lords Baltimore Update

Ms. Arthur reported that the project is well on its way to its goal of having the first two portraits installed in the State House by Session. Presently, all six portraits as well as their frames are undergoing conservation in preparation for their installation. The canvases are being treated by David Olin of Olin Conservation Studios; and the frames are being treated at Gold Leaf Studios under the direction of Bill Adair. Planning is underway for the portraits of George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore and Cecil Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore, to be installed prior to the start of the Legislative Session in January 2017.

Ms. Arthur noted the contributions of consulting engineers experienced in historic preservation, most notably Matthew J. Daw from Keast & Hood Structural Engineers, who are examining the architectural structure of the State House prior to installation to ensure minimal impact on the supporting walls.

President Miller emphasized the need to hang the portraits as expeditiously as possible, as many school children visited the State House daily and were currently only able to view unsatisfactory representations of the portraits. He also noted that important decisions concerning the installation of statues of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman had yet to be made, but that the hanging of the portraits needed to be done first.

Education, Outreach & Research

Family History Festival

Emily Squires reported that the Archives has had a very busy six months. The Maryland State Archives hosted its 3rd Annual Family History Festival on Saturday, October 1, 2016, incorporating lessons learned from the first two festivals. Our keynote speaker for the event was Mr. Chris Haley who shared his reflections on the seminal work, *Roots*.

Mr. Haley, Director of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland, was invited as an honored guest and participant in the [International Roots Festival](#) in The Gambia, Africa, from May 6 through 13, 2016. During this trip, he had the opportunity to visit Juffureh, the homeland where his ancestor Kunta Kinte was captured and brought by the slave ship, *Lord Ligonier*, to Annapolis. He also visited Kunte Kinte Island, a pivotal site in the Africa / Europe slave trade, located in the Gambia River. Ms. Squires noted that the theme of the Festival was "Exploring Your Roots," which gave all participants the opportunity to reflect on their own family's journey.

Ms. Squires said that she was particularly proud of a new addition to Festival events, the presentation of youth National History Day projects. The Archives was pleased to welcome seven outstanding Maryland students who attended to present their projects live, plus five additional students who shared their exhibit displays in the public search room during the Festival.

The Archives would like to thank Festival sponsors, which include the Friends of the Maryland State Archives, The Crowley Company, Baltimore Tea and Coffee Company, Whole Foods, Ancestry, Hollinger Metal Edge, Systematic Filing, University Products, Grauls, Crab Town Curbs, and Wegmans.

Summer Internship Program

Ms. Squires reported on the work of the class of 2016 summer interns. This year's students once again successfully participated in archival work across departments, receiving direct mentoring from professional staff in all aspects of archival work including appraisal, records processing, digitization, collections management, reference services, electronic archives, conservation, and research. Ms. Squires highlighted a project done in partnership with Heritage Montgomery and Fairhaven Church, an historically African-American church, in which an intern assisted in the collection, description, and digitization of family records belonging to church and community members. The records were safely returned to their owners and the digitized records made available online.

Workshop Series

Ms. Squires highlighted a talk given by Professor Nicholas Creary and Bowie State University student Sydney Lawson on the history of lynching in Maryland. She emphasized the fact that the presentation was researched at the Maryland State Archives and that our knowledge of the past depends on the preservation of newspapers and other records. Workshops also included documentary film viewings followed by discussions with the filmmakers, as the Archives marshals all of its resources to reach and engage a wider audience.

Teacher Professional Development and Student Outreach

Ms. Squires reported that Archives' staff continue to work with the Anne Arundel County Public School System Social Studies Coordinator to provide consultation and materials for a statewide Maryland history course at the high school level. Most students do not study Maryland history beyond the 4th Grade, and the goal of this collaboration is a finished curriculum that can be shared statewide through the Maryland Department of Education. In addition, staff conducted numerous professional development opportunities for teachers including two sessions at the Reginald F. Lewis museum; the SEED school in Baltimore and, most recently, two sessions for Anne Arundel elementary school teachers. These programs are essential for assisting teachers with seamlessly utilizing primary source materials in the classroom, and is particularly important with the new Common Core standards in Maryland.

Baltimore City Archives

Dr. Robert Schoberlein reported that the Baltimore City Archives is participating as a research venue for National History Day. Ms. Nancy Perlman, former Head of Special Collections at the Loyola-Notre Dame Library, was recruited and now serves as volunteer NHD coordinator. The goal is to encourage Baltimore City high school students, as well as those from the counties, to use original source material. This Fall, the City Archives will open on Saturdays to facilitate National History Day-related research visits.

President Miller commented that Baltimore City schools have been very slow to respond to additional history resources, noting that progress depends on motivated teachers and that home schoolers seemed more likely to move forward on these initiatives. Ms. Bachmann observed that homeschoolers often had more flexibility in their schedules whereas public schools were accountable to a rigid schedule. President Miller emphasized the need for archives and other organizations to make an extra effort to get their message out. He noted that we could expect to see a revolution in education in Maryland in the next few years spearheaded by the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education and led by Dr. William Kirwin. He cited the fallacy of expecting superior results while hiring and retaining mediocre teachers. Going forward the emphasis will be on

hiring the best teachers, paying them a professional salary, and prioritizing education over infrastructure. Chief Judge Barbera, recalling her own experience as a public school teacher in Baltimore City, agreed that student motivation and quality teaching are of utmost importance in educational outcomes.

Recent Gifts, Deposits, & Acquisitions

Report on records received since last Hall of Records Commission Meeting:

http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/hrc_transfers_11-16-2016.pdf

Special Collections:

<http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000044/special%20collection.html>

Additions to the state-owned art collection:

- Mold of the Maryland State Seal for the U.S.S. Maryland Silver service

The Chair's motion to approve the resolution of appreciation for all recent gifts was unanimously approved.

Forthcoming Special Meetings of the Commission & Events of Interest

December 3, 2016 Ms. Bachmann invited Commission members, family, and friends to attend the annual holiday open house at Maryland's State House. The open house will feature vocal and instrumental performances as well as the opportunity to tour the historic chambers and view 24 decorated trees representing every county in Maryland. Programming will run from 6:00-9:00 pm.

Old Business No old business

New Business No new business

Next meeting Upon the call of the Chair.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned 1:30 pm

Mr. Timothy D. Baker
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