

**STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes**

February 13, 2024, 11:00 AM

Online via Zoom & YouTube streaming

Board members present: Trey Adcock, Jan Davidson, Sharon Davis, Katherine Calhoun Cutshall, Karen Feeney, Scarlett Hargis, State Archivist Sarah Koonts

Staff present: Adrienne Berney, Danielle Shirilla, Greg Snyder, Kelley Young

<https://youtube.com/live/mxY2HR6c634?feature=share>

**I. Welcome**

Sarah welcomed all to the meeting and invited participants to introduce themselves to the group.

**II. Approval of minutes**

Sarah asked all members if they had a chance to review the October 10, 2023, minutes sent with the board meeting agenda. Karen moved and Sharon seconded a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Sarah conducted the vote with a show of hands, and the motion passed unanimously.

**III. Reports from the Deputy Secretary for the Office of Archives & History and the State Archivist**

With DNCR Deputy Secretary Darin Waters unable to attend today's meeting, Sarah shared news from the department.

- The Secretary's initiative for 2024 is "Learning Happens Here" to promote the work across all divisions to connect materials with classroom education. A new director of education position will help lead the initiative.
- At the end of this month, a new historic site will open—the Thomas Day state historic site—in Milton. The public is invited to a ceremony on February 29, 10 AM-noon in honor of the opening. Day was a free man of color and one of the largest employers in N.C. during the antebellum period.
- Departmental administrators are currently busy with budget development season.

Sarah also reported on major activities in the Archives: in addition to arrangement and description and records management duties, staff is involved in outreach.

- One committee has staffed information tables to promote the Archives collections at two recent festivals hosted by the Museum of History—the

American Indian Heritage Celebration and the African American Cultural Celebration.

- Staff are leading lots of tours from a variety of groups recently including teachers involved with A250 commemorative planning, “Freedom Fellows,” and four regional chapters of the African American Historical & Genealogical Society. A UNC law school class will be coming soon and the N.C. Community College Archives Association.
- Adrienne has been working with a local middle school class on a transcription project for Revolutionary War-era documents. Those students are also working on a project related to Freedom Park.
- The Archives will host two virtual programs this month: one on the RAIL project this Friday, and another on the State Capitol’s “From Naming to Knowing” project next Wednesday.
- Oral history outreach and collaborations continue to grow. The oral historian is working with the N.C. American Indian Heritage Commission on a large project. The commission has submitted a grant application to grow the project even more to NHPRC. We will learn whether the application is successful after the May NHPRC meeting.
- We have started work on the legislative earmark project to start a DocsBox program and will soon be hiring a one-year position for a project coordinator.
- 35% of archives positions come from fees that registers of deeds offices collect and the amount is proving unsustainable. Sarah is trying to get some positions moved to legislatively appropriated funds as part of current budget development.

#### IV. **Past grant (2022-2023)**

New resources are available and live on the America 250 NC website.

[Digitized primary source directories](#) are in the section of resources for researchers and new [print-on-demand exhibit panels](#) are in the community toolkit section. The group discussed whether the size in the downloadable files would work for smaller formats. Sarah suggested that the [source notes](#) section might be too small to read but that information is also available on the website. The group also discussed how usage statistics of these exhibit panels may be tracked. With funds left over at the end of the grant we were able to order another set of oral history equipment for lending to outside groups. Sets are currently in place in Raleigh, Asheville, and New Bern. The newer set will be set up at the Polk Birthplace state historic site near Charlotte. We plan to send out a new round of publicity once it is in place.

## V. **New grant (2024-2025)**

We have promised between three and six “convenings” to discuss the project with librarians. One goal is to present near the end of the grant period for the N.C. Library Association biannual meeting. An upcoming opportunity to introduce the project will be at the N.C. Public Library Directors’ Association in March at an annual conference in New Bern. Adrienne views it as a good chance to gather more feedback at the project’s beginning, before the print resources go into development.

Adrienne is eager to begin scheduling webinars with Karen and Katherine. Katherine can lead them in summer and fall 2024. She also suggested that staff at her library have been leading in-person workshops on personal digital archiving in the cloud and could convert that presentation to a webinar for this grant. Adrienne also suggested that the material would make a useful handout as one of the printed resources we develop with grant funds.

The 2024 Traveling Archivist Program is underway with applications due in two days—February 15. We currently have six applicants: four community college archives, a public library, and a small museum. A selection committee will only be necessary if more applications come in. Adrienne will keep the group posted and seek volunteers from the board to meet and make selections if necessary. A new component of the program that we are testing with this grant cycle is a paid summer intern to work for past and current TAP recipients. Sarah noted that this service will help the organizations with small or volunteer staff achieve some of the recommendations that Traveling Archivists have outlined.

## VI. **Board updates**

Sarah shared an advocacy effort to build support for programs in the federal budget that fund humanities; the Council of state archivists considering a program for groups to connect quarterly or so.

In A250 commemorative news, the Freedom Fellows program has begun. Seventeen teachers from across the state have been selected to work with the concept of freedom from the Revolutionary War period forward. DNCR’s goal is to have them advise the department on types of resources to support classroom teaching. The kickoff for N.C.’s commemoration will be at Historic Halifax in April. More commemorative events will occur in 2025-2026. Sarah encouraged board members to catalyze activities on the local level. Official county committees can receive \$10,000 with no required match. Money is also available for other

organizations. Archives staff are developing “One-Day Wonder” exhibits with original documents. The first will be on state constitutions and the evolution of voting rights. “[Documenting the Service of Revolutionary War Patriots](#)” in the archives is a new video now available.

#### **VII. Pending business and announcements**

Trey asked about the American Indian Heritage Commission and whether a staff member could speak to SHRAB about the commission’s initiatives. Sarah will reach out to the director.

Katherine listed upcoming Pack Memorial Library programs on urban renewal, Thomas Wolfe, and race.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**