



# COUNCIL MEETING

April 7, 2025  
2 – 3:30 pm CT  
Zoom

## Attendees

**Council Officers:** President, Troy Reeves; Vice President, Sarah Milligan; First Vice President, Mark Cave; Past President, Kelly Elaine Navies

**Council Members:** Nishani Frazier; Shanna Farrell; Anna Sheftel; Abby Perkiss

**Absent:** Francine D. Sprang-Willis

**Executive Office:** Executive Director, Stephen Sloan; Associate Director, Steven Sielaff; Program Associate, Leslie An

## Notes

AGENDA	DISCUSSION	ACTION ITEMS
<b>Welcome &amp; Opening Thoughts</b>  Call to order at 2:03 pm CDT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sarah shared inspiration from <i>The Art of Gathering</i> by Priya Parker.</li><li>Encouraged consideration of deeper “disputable” purpose of organization and annual meeting — what the annual meeting truly accomplishes beyond surface-level intentions.</li><li>These deeper purposes (beyond gathering oral historians) should drive planning and work.</li></ul>	
<b>Minutes Approval</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Midwinter Minutes were moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.</li></ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Leslie: Post Midwinter / February Minutes on OHA site</del>
<b>Advocacy Meetings Recap</b>	Three key points from March 24 and 31 meetings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Open virtual community forum for members</li><li>Better interacting with and amplifying local/regional voices</li><li>Sign-on statements to review or vote on</li></ol>	
<b>Advocacy Meetings Recap</b>  <b>1: Open Virtual Community Forum for Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Forum would allow members to express what's important to them and how leadership can help, rather than leadership making assumptions</li><li>Idea shifted from one big meeting to several virtual community forums</li><li>Proposal for one-hour Zoom rooms scheduled throughout the year</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Troy/All Council(?): Schedule virtual forums. At least one before Annual Meeting (Troy would like one in May). Set specific dates including evening and weekend options.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troy envisions scheduling several before Annual Meeting/business meeting with 1-2 leadership present</li> <li>• Sielaff reminded that virtual gatherings will not be recorded to encourage free speech</li> <li>• Need for consistent note-taking discussed; suggestion for having one person facilitate, one take notes, and possibly a third person from executive office</li> <li>• Sloan suggested regular day/time for predictability and engagement</li> <li>• Troy suggested offering both midmorning and late afternoon sessions to accommodate international participants</li> <li>• Nishani suggested adding weekend sessions for broader accommodation and volunteers to lead one</li> <li>• Strategy is to decide/formalize dates, add evening and weekend sessions, then have council volunteer for slots</li> <li>• Kelly will be in Bay area in late August for potential collaboration with Shanna on a meetup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Council members: volunteer for specific time slots</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Council members who volunteered to lead meetings: update Troy with their planned dates (e.g., "We're going to meet in mid-May")</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kelly and Shanna: coordinate Bay area meetup for late August</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy Meetings Recap</b>  <b>2: Better interacting with and amplifying local/regional voices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for both virtual and in-person regional meetings with Council members leading their regions</li> <li>• Kelly Elaine suggested Council members take lead for respective regions</li> <li>• Potential regional leaders: Shanna (West Coast), Kelly (Baltimore-DC), Abby (Philly-NY)</li> <li>• Shanna noted West Coast doesn't have much activity and she's been working on this already</li> <li>• Kelly Elaine and Abby could attend each other's meetings while still holding separate ones</li> <li>• Suggestion to leverage existing regional associations and conferences</li> <li>• Noted that OHA funded four meetups this year with some money available for food at in-person meetings</li> <li>• Discussion about supporting fledgling efforts in "desert areas" (South and Midwest)</li> <li>• Mention of New England regional efforts with Sloan speaking to someone trying to establish something there</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shanna, Kelly, Abby: Lead regional meetings in respective geographic areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Abby: Contact OHMAR about Philly-New York area meeting</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy: Reach out to Ellen Brooks about leading Chicago-Midwest area</del></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Troy and Sielaff: Connect with regional associations about potential collaboration, including SOHA and TOHA</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy Meetings Recap</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troy noted co-signers appreciate OHA support and there's strength in numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy or Sielaff: Write piece about sign-on statements</del></li> </ul>

<b>3: Sign-on statements to review or vote on</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shanna requested more review time before decisions. However, some statements require quick turnaround (e.g., IMLS, NEH).</li> <li>• Troy willing to allow 36 hours from time Sloan sends email notification to accommodate time zones.</li> <li>• Group chat suggested for quicker turnaround notifications; Sloan will notify via email, Troy will follow-up via group chat.</li> <li>• Discussion of reporting signed statements to membership. Solution: piece in upcoming newsletter linking to page compiling list of OHA-signed statements.</li> <li>• Consensus on writing own statements only when members request and when backed by action.</li> </ul>	<p><del>for upcoming newsletter. Include link to statements page in newsletter and news blasts.</del></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Troy: Create page on OHA site listing statements signed</p>
<b>Continued discussion of Atlanta</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troy decided to push continued discussion of Atlanta and strategic plan to May.</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Office Updates</b>  <b>1: All Chairs Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 24 meeting had good turnout from standing committees and caucuses</li> <li>• Office created shared folder for committee reports</li> <li>• Pushback from one committee about completing both minutes and the new form</li> <li>• Sloan clarified they could keep taking minutes but should also use the form to communicate with Executive Office and Council</li> <li>• Council liaisons should encourage all committees to use the reporting form while allowing them to continue their existing minutes process</li> <li>• Ongoing issue with unengaged committee members</li> <li>• Some members voluntarily leave, which is better so they can be reappointed</li> <li>• Council should identify committees operating under capacity due to inactive members and notify Troy about committees with “ghost members” so additional people can be appointed</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Office Updates</b>  <b>2: Volunteer Document</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanks given to Council members who completed their assigned pages (assigned in February)</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sloan: Compile completed work into a clean document to be finalized in spring</p>

<p><b>Executive Office Updates</b></p> <p><b>3: U.S. Programs and Centers List</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sielaff had removed outdated list U.S. Programs and Centers List in the Regional and International Organizations page of the OHA site, and noted it can easily get messy</li> <li>• Sielaff posed question about criteria for inclusion in U.S. Programs and Centers list</li> <li>• Sielaff suggested educational programming as the criterion and Metadata Task Force survey from 2018/2019 as starting point</li> <li>• Shanna affirmed education/programming as sensible boundary</li> <li>• In response to whether museums or historical societies should be included, Sielaff emphasized focus on organizations with oral history as main focus — not just collections</li> <li>• Kelly Elaine suggested including museums with instructional components and regularly updated site</li> <li>• Mark noted difficulty in defining education. His museum does exhibitions and social media posts using oral histories, and has an education department non-specific to oral history.</li> <li>• Kelly Elaine suggested that having outreach/education resources available on site qualifies</li> <li>• Nishani noted some public history programs do oral history projects, but inclusion could be unwieldy. Also suggested tending toward inclusivity since centers aren't available everywhere.</li> <li>• Troy emphasized definitely including all partners</li> <li>• Sarah questioned the purpose of the list to guide decision-making — helping connect people with local programs or creating a comprehensive list?</li> <li>• Sielaff called this list the regional association equivalent of the “Find an Oral Historian” tool</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Executive Office Updates</b></p> <p><b>4: Member Site Updates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sielaff cleaned up site but has outstanding questions for Memberclicks</li> <li>• Still needs to locate “Upcoming Events” and “Our Tweets” in backend</li> <li>• New copy added to member landing page explaining menu functions</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Shanna: Send Sielaff “Race and Power” recordings via Box</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of recordings pages as value-added exclusive content for members</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Office Updates</b>  <b>5: Federal Workers Oral History Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project promotion ongoing to get volunteers</li> <li>• Approximately 350 responses received</li> <li>• Intention to train about 12 volunteer interviewers</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Office Updates</b>  <b>6: Sister Organizations Spreadsheet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building comprehensive list of kindred organizations and contacts to be used for external communications</li> <li>• Part of new newsletter editor's function to develop external communications</li> <li>• External communications plan to launch in 2026</li> <li>• List will help with advocacy efforts</li> <li>• Will be searching for a newsletter editor</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> All Council: Add contacts directly to the spreadsheet to make it as comprehensive as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Troy and Sloan: Draft job description for newsletter editor
<b>Executive Office Updates</b>  <b>7: Accessibility Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief mention of continuing implementation of points in document</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy: Follow up with Francine, diversity liaison (cc Sloan)</del>
<b>Asides</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Sloan and Troy: Work with Committee on Committees to deliver Google Form to committee chairs asking about their needs and which members are/aren't doing their work, to help build next slate of committees <input type="checkbox"/> All Council: Accept Sloan's invite to Business Meeting
<b>General Updates/Discussion</b>  <b>1: Nominating Committee Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark reported on nominating committee's thoughtful discussion and selection process</li> <li>• Committee members ranked their favorites considering past OHA involvement and zones of influence</li> <li>• Mark expressed disappointment that some he nominated didn't make final list</li> <li>• Kelly reiterated concern about "recycling" the same people and OMHA being overly represented</li> <li>• Shanna expressed confusion about OMHA being called out</li> <li>• Sarah explained historical context: geographical diversity efforts 5-7 years ago brought in Northeast coast program graduates</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark: Send approval to nominating committee for First VP outreach <input type="checkbox"/> All Council who hasn't already: Add nominees to list for Nominating Committee and Committee on Committees by Monday, April 14 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy: Verify with Sloan and Leslie who has run before</del> <input type="checkbox"/> Troy and Sloan: Conduct email vote on who to reach out to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive mention of geographic diversity with nominee Micah Mizukami from Hawaii</li> <li>• Clarification of two vacant Council positions</li> <li>• Explanation that Alissa Rae and Fanny get first opportunity to vye for First VP position. If anyone declines, opportunity passes to alternate list at their discretion.</li> <li>• Troy empathized that his nominees also didn't make list but resolved to honor committee's work</li> <li>• Anecdotal confirmation that everyone on list is a member</li> <li>• Council consensus to approve committee's recommendations</li> <li>• Commitment to continue discussions about bringing in new people</li> </ul>	
<b>General Updates/Discussion</b>  <b>2: Committee Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity &amp; Education need to add a member to Scholarship committee</li> <li>• International does not need to have a member on it; they have their own thing</li> </ul>	
<b>General Updates/Discussion</b>  <b>3: Berkeley Misquote Issue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berkeley's Office of Scholarly Communications is redoing legal releases; they misquote OHA Best Practices in training and online toolkit, incorrectly stating that OHA says one should sign legal releases in advance; OHA's position on informed consent miscontextualized and misinterpreted as legal release.</li> <li>• Need to update language in Best Practices to specifically use "informed consent" terminology; to clarify distinction between permission form as part of copyright exchange VS informed consent; and to clarify that there are ethical expectations that transcend a legal document.</li> <li>• Shanna reported that informal correction was rejected and suggested formal letter as only way to change this</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy and Sloan: Schedule meeting with Shanna before next Council meeting</del> <input type="checkbox"/> [Undesignated responsibility]: Update language in Best Practices
<b>General Updates/Discussion</b>  <b>4: L&amp;E Task Force Webinar Proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written proposal included \$300 honorarium per speaker</li> <li>• Nishani suggested reducing speakers or honorarium to tighten budget</li> <li>• Sarah supported more programs, but suggested charging non-members and recommended capping budget at \$600 per session, however they want to divvy that</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <del>Troy: Communicate decision to L&amp;E Task Force</del>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agreement to pay only invited speakers, not task force members, who can participate as moderators</li><li>• Council approves first session, still to work through budget details</li></ul>	
--	--	--

Minutes prepared by Leslie An