



ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Council Meeting
June 01, 2026
01:30 pm – 3:00 pm CST

Present: President Sarah Milligan, Vice President Mark Cave, Immediate Past President Troy Reeves, Council members: Abby Perkiss, Fanny Garcia, Francine Spang-Willis, Anna Sheftel, Associate Director Steven Sielaff, Program Associate Hailey Rowe

Others Present: Martha Norkunas

Members Absent: Adrienne Cain Darough, Stephen Sloan, Alissa Rae Hudson

Minutes Prepared by: Program Associate Hailey Rowe

Agenda	Discussion & Decisions	Action Required	Responsible Party
Welcome 1:31PM	Opening Thoughts: Troy shared June thoughts of growth/hope, movie quotes, baseball, he hopes future leaders will continue moving the organization forward.		
Consent Agenda	Items on the consent agenda: • May meeting minutes • Revised Advocacy Committee behind the scenes policy and front facing statement	Post minutes to website	Hailey
	<i>Mark Cave moves to approve the consent agenda, Francine Spang-Willis seconds. All approved at 1:39pm.</i>	Post revised front facing statement to the website	Hailey / Sielaff

Present Business: Guest Introduction	<u>International Committee co-chair: Martha Norkunas</u> ● Steadily increased commitment for funding - OHA is providing \$8,500 this year for international scholarships - requests for support far exceed funding ● Scholarship applications represent oral historians from around the world ● Received 22 applications so far, representing countries such as: India, Pakistan, Mexico, Montenegro, Kazakhstan, Kashmir - conference attendance can be transformative for applicants whose monthly income may be less than the cost of attending the conference ● Ummul Muhseneen will take over Martha's role in October. She is currently searching for a co-chair to join her ● Working on videos from international oral historians to show at annual meeting and maybe eventually shared on OHA website ● Foresees a big international turnout at the annual meeting		
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Present Business: Reports	<u>Executive Office Update:</u> Council Hosting Portland Dine-Arounds ● The Program Committee will be asking for Council volunteers to lead conference dine-arounds in Portland. Volunteers would help guide attendees to designated restaurants and facilitate small-group networking opportunities. <u>Executive Office Update (Steven):</u> ● The Find an Oral Historian directory will be updated later in the week as part of the quarterly update schedule - 10-12 new entries were added since the last update ● OHA will transition away from WP engine hosting solution for the website - this transition is expected to be completed later in the month <u>Committee Reports or Discussion</u> ● Development Committee - Troy ○ The committee emphasized the need for OHA to think more broadly and strategically about development and fundraising ○ Would like to incorporate development priorities into conversations regarding the next Executive Office/Executive Director ○ The committee appreciated council's decision to provide additional funding for the second emerging crises grant and suggested exploring opportunities for external support for the program ● Membership Committee* (next steps for disseminating OHA Action Plan Survey results to membership) - Abby ○ Council discussed ways to share and utilize the findings from the survey:		
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	■ Publish highlights in the OHA Newsletter ■ Potential future virtual programming tied to survey priorities ■ Potential discussion of survey findings at the annual meeting ■ Explore hybrid/recorded conference programming opportunities ● Emerging Professionals Committee - Fanny ○ The committee requested \$100 for snacks for the Meet & Greet event ■ The event is usually catered, light bites and beverages	Provide attendee list for speed networking & meet&greet to Fanny once registration opens Communicate food logistics to Emerging Professionals	Hailey Stephen Sloan/Steve n Sielaff
	<u>Update on 2026 annual meeting (Mark)</u> ● Poster proposals and event submissions recently closed ● Session chair recruitment is open until June 3rd ● Six planned workshops: ○ Introduction to Oral History ○ Working with Memory to Build Community, Heal and Transform ○ Climate Disaster Project ○ Trauma-Informed Interviewing ○ Indigenous Oral History as Medicine, Curriculum, and Community Praxis ○ Archiving and Indexing ● Preliminary Program development is underway ● Sponsorship recruitment continues ● Exhibitor participation remains a challenge	Make corrections to the program	Hailey
	<u>2026 Symposium Update (Anna, Francine, Abby)</u> ● 132 registrants		

	● Anna encouraged council to continue to promote the symposium with a goal of reaching 200 registrants ● Francine noted a few corrections needed in the symposium program ● Steven reported staff coverage plans for the symposium		
Unfinished Business	<u>Strategic Objective Planning: 2027-2030 strategies and benchmarks (Abby and Francine, Troy and Mark)</u> ● Advocacy and Professional Practice Strategic Objective ○ Abby and Francine reviewed their draft strategic planning document. ○ Discussion included: ■ The role of independent practitioners within advocacy-related work. ■ The need to prioritize achievable goals. ■ The importance of continued review and refinement through comments and discussion before October. ○ Council agreed to continue providing feedback asynchronously. ● Organizational Excellence Strategic Objective ○ Troy and Mark presented their draft organizational excellence framework. ○ Key topics included: ■ Leadership development. ■ Coordination between the Nominating Committee and Committee on Committees.		

	■ Executive Office/Executive Director transition planning. ■ Organizational structure and transparency. ○ Council will continue refining benchmarks and strategies prior to the October Council meeting.		
New Business	<u>OHA Certification Program development/launch (Sarah)</u> ● Sarah presented an early proposal for a professional development certificate (or similar credentialing/badge program) ● The proposal aims to provide structured professional development opportunities, help members demonstrate continuing education to employers, encourage deeper engagement with conference programming, offer topic-specific learning pathways ● Supportive comments included this would provide members with tangible outcomes from conference participation, may enhance employer support for attendance, and fill a professional development gap within the field ● Concerns raised included: clarifying distinctions from the proposed Oral History 101 course, defining exactly what the credential represents, avoiding perceptions of expertise based solely on conference attendance, ensuring quality and consistency of educational content, reviewing comparable models used by other organizations <u>Policy for instigating partnerships/collaborations with OHA - initial steps (Sarah)</u>		

Upcoming Meetings	Strategic objective planning - developing 2027-2030 language August: Inclusive Engagement and Participation September: Programming		
	<i>Meeting Adjourned at 3:17pm.</i>		