

The Archives of the Episcopal Church
Board of Archives
Teleconference Call Notes
November 7, 2019; 3:00 pm cst

Attendees: Pan Adams-McCaslin, *Chair*, Lawrence R. Hitt, II, *Member-at-Large*, Anne Bardol, W. Keith McCoy, Heather Calloway, Robert F. Pace, Mark J. Duffy, *Canonical Archivist and Director*, Margaret Evans Porter, R. William Franklin, *Vice-Chair*, Samuel Rodman, Frederick W. Gerbracht, Jr. Brian K. Wilbert, *Secretary*. Excused: Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows. Guest: Michael Barlowe, *Executive Officer*

The Chair welcomed and thanked the attendees for their time and participation. An opening prayer was offered by Wilbert

§ The Chair asked Duffy to review his interim report.

Good work has been accomplished thus far in 2019 as the Archives has been able to focus primarily on archival projects and initiation of new tasks. The first year of each triennium is typically the busiest in this regard as the Archives then turns to preparing for General Convention midway through the second year of the triennium, and then fully to GC in the last year.

Summary of the work focuses on the importance of the area of research and the increase in the number of research reports with about half of our inquiries being historical. Archives research reports are well-received and used and shared widely by interim bodies and DFMS staff. Website use has decreased, which is not surprising due to the lessened amount of new content that has been uploaded to the website. An update to the Digital Archives databases is underway with a beta version of the 2018 Acts of Convention currently in quality control and testing mode. Episcopal News Service digitization and normalization is underway. A large project that has been completed is the digitization of *The Witness Magazine* and a first round of quality control of the files has been completed with some further minor adjustments and how the digital archive will be presented on the website to be finalized.

The Archives Digital Repository has moved along well over the past year with new information and standards being reviewed and incorporated into the repository. This major undertaking in the area of ingest, disposition, and preservation of electronic records increases the possibilities for the Church and the Archives. We are working toward a full beta test version of the repository by the end of the year.

A great deal of energy is being put toward an online catalog and includes a review of many legacy systems and increased scrutiny of the Record Group finding aids, which we have been standardizing in order to feed good data into the catalog system in a streamlined way.

The Archives staff are facing more and more the many ways to effectively capture electronic records that not only allow for a quick and current turn around for use and access to those records, but being mindful of future generations of curators who will be required to pick up these open-source systems and carry them forward for the Church and the Archives.

Chair called for questions and reactions to the Archivist's Interim Report

§ McCoy: This is a tremendous amount of work with a limited number of staff and I hope that no one on the staff is doing this work without compensation for their time.

Duffy: It would certainly help if we had staff who have sufficient skills in the areas of developing technologies and other more advanced workflows that are inherent to electronic records. Those who do feel the need to make up the difference. Nonetheless, the Archives staff are good about balancing out the

work across the department. We look out for one another when there is a great deal of work to be accomplished. Some folks put in extra time to see that their work is finished to satisfaction, but others are out the door faithfully at 5:00.

Our greatest challenge is having the best people for the skill level that the work now requires. The post-Convention budget reduction left us with no room to remain competitive in the Austin labor market. I learned recently that new graduates from the UT School of Information are accepting positions with an average beginning salary of \$72,000; we currently have two experienced professional employees who are paid less than that amount. Market and merit increases are no longer part of management's thinking on employee retention, which means that the Archives risks losing experienced staff while forced to retain staff with inadequate technical skills and the motivation for professional growth.

§ Hitt: Would you please tell us some more about your statement in the last paragraph of your report?
[Archives Facility: In June 2019, the Archivist and Board representatives were informed in a meeting of the Governance and Administration Committee of Executive Council that an "exploratory committee" was designated by the Presiding Officers to begin negotiations on an archives structure at an alternate site. This exploratory work is promised to be concluded by the end of this calendar year. At this time, the Canonical Archivist has not been consulted or contacted by the group or by management figures and has been excluded from the standard staff invitation list for Executive Council, where the matter would normally be discussed.]

Duffy: I have not been included in any of the discussions or decisions related to the Archives nor am I any longer being invited to attend Executive Council meetings.

Hitt: Why is that do you think?

Duffy: Michael Barlowe is on the call and may have an answer to that question.

Barlowe: I am not aware of reasons for any changes. The exploratory committee has met and is not talking about specific things at this point, but seeing how the Archives is going to fit into the broader perspective of others that are being talked to about this project. It is not just about the Archives.

Hitt: I would hope that Mark as an archives professional and other members of the Board would be brought into the conversation.

Adams-McCaslin: It is difficult when there are questions about the selling of the land and the money that was realized.

Barlowe: This all will most likely be brought forward by end of the year. It is going well enough that I do not feel that we have to worry about having to make any contingency plans.

§ Adams-McCaslin: I would like to come back to Larry's questions about Mark not being invited to Executive Council. Is there some reason why Mark is not being invited regularly to the Executive Council meetings?

Barlowe: The invitation protocol has changed to what it was over the past 6 years.

Duffy: How has that been changed?

Barlowe: No staff are routinely being invited at this time. The invitations to attend Council come from the chairs of the committees or senior staff. The Chair and the Vice-Chair of Council, as well and other members, prefer that there be a wider variety of visitors rather than the same folks just being there.

McCoy: The Archivist's report shows that there are a great deal of requests from interim bodies and it seems that there should be some representation of Archives at Council Archives due to the nature of the work of that body.

Duffy: My being at Council previously has allowed them to see a ready resource to answer historical questions related to their work. My current report does not show research requests from Council as there have not been any. Most of our research has been for DFMS staff and other interim bodies.

§ Adams-McCaslin: Looking forward to the upcoming budget process: How do we move forward proactively with the Board's request for increased staff position and necessary funding to support the Archives? The budget cut after the last Convention has affected the staffing of the Archives.

Barlowe: This next triennium's budget process has not begun at this point. The Archives should create an optimal staffing plan and have it mooted by the HR office of 815 to ensure that it is supportable and have that incorporated into their upcoming budget request. There were a number of other areas that were affected by the budget cuts that came out of General Convention. The Presiding Bishop made the decision not to increase the staffing of the DFMS. There were no new positions.

Porter: Are things on track with the budget at this time?

Duffy: Yes, we are currently under budget which is typical as we wait to late in the year for larger purchases to ensure that we remain within our annual budget.

§ McCoy: What happened to the report that the Board labored over at their meeting in February?

Adams-McCaslin: Mark, Bill, and I were invited by teleconference to the June meeting of Executive Council to discuss the Board's report. There was a response from the senior leadership committee that the report was very helpful and answered all of the leadership committee questions.

§ Adams-McCaslin: The next meeting of the Board will be in late spring (May-June) or early fall of 2020 and most likely in Austin. David will send out a poll in early 2020 to arrive at some dates. Bill has something to share from the House of Bishops.

§ Franklin: Mark and the Archives staff have been great in helping the HOB Theology Committee with understanding in the areas of the under-heard and under-represented members of the Church. And offer great thanks for their good work in support of the Committee.

§ Pace: I would like to announce that I have accepted a new call to Trinity Church in Fort Worth Texas effective December 16, 2019. Just wanted to let everyone know that news. Congratulations were extended by all.

Franklin closed the meeting with prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm