

Washington Preservation Initiative
Advisory Group Minutes
July 8, 2003, University of Washington

Present: Gary Menges, UW, Chair
Gudrun Aurand, WSU (by phone)
Linda Pierce, Gonzaga (by phone)
Eric Palo, Renton Technical Institute
Margaret Riddle, Everett Public Library
Kathryn Hamilton Wang, WSL
Susan Barrett (WSL Project Mgr)

Absent: Jill Bourne, Seattle Public Library
Lee Dirks, Microsoft

New York State Preservation Grants

The meeting began with a conference call with Barbara Lilley, Conservation /Preservation Officer, New York State Library. (See agenda 7-8-03 for basic description.)

They give grants to any not-for-profit with an archive/research component, including museums and others beyond the scope of our grants. They have \$500,000 to distribute, and give \$30,000 maximum grants. They ask for a \$1,500 minimum, since the paperwork makes small grants too troublesome.

Barbara reviews the applications with the help of two outside reviewers, removes the portions of the request that are outside the grant guidelines, and monitors to make sure that enough funds have been requested to complete the project as described. There is a reviewer's sheet with a score of 1-3 per section, and an overall 1-10, and she asks that reviewers also make comments. If they do not comment, she does not use them again as a reviewer. Barbara will send a copy of their sheet to Gary for our review.

The New York grants do not pay for staff salaries or general overhead, "like copiers and office equipment." Grant requests now number about 65, at one time were 90-100. Requests usually total about one million, and about \$500 thousand, or about half, is distributed. The program has been in operation since 1985.

Barbara mails grant application announcements to a long list which has accumulated over the years, including library directories and museum associations. The New York grant applications are always due in December. In preparation, she does several grant-writing workshops per year and used to do more, when the program had three staff members. Her salary is paid with separate LSTA funds.

The New York application asks about accessibility of the collection to the public, bibliographic control (ie, is the collection cataloged?), the size of the budget, and the general size of the collection. There are about 7,000 sites which fit the parameters. The applicant cannot be affiliated with a religious organization, as part of the New York State constitution, although religious colleges are permitted.

Barbara said that by now word-of-mouth is the best means of publicizing the grants' availability, but in the early days, the hardest part was getting the word out. Now, there are 800-900 organizations on the mailing list. She does not allow the use of home addresses, so the list remains fairly stable.

The funds all come from the state. In addition, \$126,000 goes annually to the 11 large research institutions, plus \$350,000 in discretionary money that the research libraries can apply for. So those 11 universities are never part of the applicant pool for the \$500,000 grant cycle.

For small organizations which find the process intimidating, she suggests requesting funds for a general preservation survey. If the first time, the library gets funds to do a survey and prepare a plan, it can hire someone to come do this. Then when the plan is made, they will have something to work with. They have also allowed a photo conservator to come and survey a photo collection. Some libraries ask for microfilming, some are seeking housing, some preservation. New York has also offered preservation workshops, or funded workshops for regional libraries and organization on what is preservation. Barbara thinks that doing the workshops helps in getting quality applications.

Someone asked about vendor lists, and she said that too quickly becomes very political. She doesn't feel that the State Library can give the appearance of vetting one set of vendors. She tells people that if they call her, she will tell them some vendors who might be possibilities. She disqualifies some vendors from being used by grantees, and will tell the grantees that these vendors are not qualified.

In New York, the State Archives has a much bigger grant program, giving out \$10 million a year, mostly to towns and villages seeking to save their town records, but she occasionally gets an application from a town also. (New York towns, and their records, of course could be much older than those in Washington.)

(At this point, we lost Elizabeth into a void of static.)

Workshops

The third workshop topic is likely to be "Saving Family Treasures: Hold Onto the Memories", a half-day presentation by a lady from California (for\$350) on helping library staff respond to the public's questions about preserving family-owned items. There was some discussion about moving this close to the PLA meeting in Seattle, as a sort of pre-conference, but, as Linda said, "PLA is going to be such a big deal already". It

was decided that we might approach WLA regarding the August 2004 WLA/PNLA conference in Wenatchee, and see if it might fit as a pre-conference there. The hope was that we would draw a crowd which was already coming to the site. Gary will speak to Jill about this, since she is on one of the WLA planning committees. (These 2003 funds will need to be spent by the end of September 2004.)

Barbara had said that the North East Documents Conservation Center does a very popular preservation program on scrapbooks. There was speculation that although we had mentioned holding three workshops for \$15,000, because we have been fortunate in budgeting, using Gary's knowledge of speakers with flights to the area already paid, for instance, we might be able to bring in a fourth program, and still remain under budget.

The question of paid lunches was raised, but since the locations are on university campuses, with accessible food within walking distance, saving this money for a fourth speaker was judged highly preferable. Susan will investigate the cost of providing morning coffee, although it will be at university food service prices. Doughnuts will also be priced, but may have to be expendable. Linda and Gary will send Susan information about their campus caterers.

There was some discussion about how soon we can begin advertising for the September and October workshops, but the group feeling that the sooner the better, as soon as contracts are signed and mailed back. Gudrun suggested that instead of calling the first one Disaster Planning, it be called Response to Disasters, to engage people's interest.

As soon as possible, Susan will send out workshop announcements on Wiif, Linda on ACRL, Eric on CLAMS and LMDC, Kathryn on SLA-PNW. Susan will work on engaging the registration database, and on verifying the speaker's requirements.

Tom Parker's contract, for the October workshops, was mailed to him on July 1st. Tom Clareson's is still being approved in the state contract process, since the contract will be with OCLC, which will also do his travel arrangements. (Update- Tom Clareson's contract was mailed to OCLC on July 15; Tom Parker's signed contract has now been returned.)

Assessment

Tom Clareson feels that we should also include schools in a needs assessment; Susan mentioned that this adds to the complexity. Gary has found a website of schools with websites, which might provide a sufficient sample, <http://www.wlma.org/WaLibraries/washschlibs.htm>. Some suggested writing into the solicitation for the assessment how the contractor would do the survey; others warned against being too prescriptive. Tom has mentioned to Gary that their (OCLC's) research people say that an email survey gets back the most returns.

Solicitation for the Assessment

Possible recipients of the solicitation: OCLC ; Paula De Stefano at New York University; Janice Mohlenrich Lathrop, formerly the preservation administrator at Emory University and now working as a preservation consultant in the DC area.

When the solicitation is prepared, the text could be linked on the website so others could apply, with some careful review. By email, the group should decide on the criteria for acceptance. General notice of the survey's existence should also be added to the web site.

The group felt the solicitation should go out soon, with a possible deadline to have them returned by August 15. (This may depend upon how much prior approval of text will be required.)

Grants

Susan raised the possibility of doing a "criteria-based", first-come-first-served grant cycle, expediting the release of funds by bypassing the long review process. The group felt that this was not the best choice and that the grants should be selected by the standard approach. Some felt that as a new program, there would not be large numbers of responses. Hopefully, this grant cycle can be announced in early fall and disbursed before Christmas, at the latest. Applicants would only have until Sept. 2004 to spend their grant, but would be aware of this as they applied.

Out of the available \$100,000, a maximum would be set for \$20,000, with no minimum figure for this round. It is suggested that the application include some suggestions for possible preservation activities, perhaps incorporating some material from California, as in "potential grants might be sought in the areas of...". Linda mentioned that a couple of "samples" of filled-out grant applications might be included on the web site; Gudrun cautioned that these be marked prominently as samples. Extra evaluation points might be given for a survey application. The library should be open to the public, and if the project involved treatment of a collection, the collection should have bibliographic access.

Meeting by Conference Call

Linda felt that we should work on smoothing out the technology on the Seattle end—a smaller room, with a smaller table or more mikes. It was suggested that a round table with the speaker phone in the middle would solve the "politeness problem" of a speaker automatically turning to the person to whom they were replying, and turning away from the phone. Gudrun felt that meeting this way was hard but preferable to traveling.

Next Meeting

The next advisory group meeting will be August 19, 2003, at 1:30 at the UW, at the Allen Library, Room 482A, a small, "cozy", conference room in library administration, behind

the reception desk. Eastern Washington members are welcome to attend in person or by conference call/speaker phone.