

Archives, Reference and Research Advisory Board
Archival Review Board
April 8, 2025, 4:00 p.m.
Joint Meeting Minutes

Present:

Members: In-person—Marco Carrion, Jeff Lowell.

Via Remote—Pamela Cruz, Chotsani Sackey, Yazmin Ramirez, Eric K. Washington, Sarah Gonzalez, Brian Carlin, Jason Bauman.

DORIS Staff: Pauline Toole, Sylvia Kollar, LaTonya C. Jones, Kenneth Cobb.

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

After a short delay due to technical difficulties, Marco Carrion announced there was a quorum and called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. He asked for a vote to approve the agenda, and the 04 February 2025 meeting minutes. The agenda and meeting minutes were approved.

2. ARRAB Chair Report- Marco Carrion

Marco Carrion began the by noting that the proposal to merge the Boards was continuing. He introduced Jeff Lowell to provide the latest information.

Jeff Lowell said he had in contact with the people at the City Legislative Affairs office. They assured him that Council Member Gale Brewer would sponsor the Board merger bill. He added that Member Brewer expressed enthusiasm about the bill. He did not anticipate the bill would encounter opposition.

Commissioner Pauline Toole added that the Law Department had already reviewed the language that would appear in the amended Charter once approved by the Council.

Marco Carrion urged all the Board members to contact their representatives on the Council to urge support of the bill; he will notify Board members when it has been introduced.

3. ARB Chair Report – Commissioner Pauline Toole

Pauline Toole noted that it was budget season and the impact on DORIS will be evident in a few weeks. She said that DORIS was working with the Commission on Racial Equity (CORE). She said that there are two proposals DORIS submitted to CORE that are particularly relevant to the Board: 1) DORIS' plans to communicate to younger audiences about careers in archives, libraries and records management in an effort to diversify the profession; 2) DORIS' plans to take programs about Library and Archives content to neighborhoods throughout the city.

Commissioner Toole said photographs of the mayoral gifts would be distributed to Archival Review Board members. They will be asked to provide guidance to the Archives on disposition of these materials.

Commissioner Toole also noted that there were three exhibits currently on view: 1) New Visions of Old New York, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Dutch arrival; 2) Items from the collections about the 1964/65 New York World's Fair; and 3) Pop-up exhibit on Women's Reproductive Rights.

4. Joint Board Report

Commissioner Toole reminded Board members that the combined report would be reflective of the fiscal year. She remarked on success of the prior years' video-based report and asked for comments for the upcoming report. Pamela Cruz spoke about resources that would be needed for another video-based report, adding that video production and editing is labor intensive. She said it should be a group effort. Sarah Gonzalez said she liked the hyperlink idea and volunteered to assist.

5. Archives Report- Sylvia Kollar

Archives Director Kollar reported on current projects:

-Commenced processing and digitization of the records of the Commission on Human Rights, with grant support from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. One full-time staff member funded by the grant and one full-time staff member from the Archives will perform the specified tasks.

-Conservation staff are finishing the Brooklyn Bridge drawings collection project funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

-Developing projects in reference and processing for the summer interns.

-Launched two transcription projects – indexing the 1890 census, and transcribing records of enslaved persons from the Old Town records collection.

-Coordinating with the Municipal Library on acquiring a software system to better manage reference requests.

-Collaborating with several Dutch organizations on projects related to the 400th anniversary.

6. Outreach Report – LaTonya C. Jones

-Hosted or participated with community partners in 12 events including public programs, tours, and community outreach events with approximately 750 attendees. A few highlights include: tours of our New Visions of Old New York exhibit, Women's History Month program on saving Radio City Music Hall, and a series of three Lunch and Learns in April.

-The agency is currently finalizing its Summer, Fall, and Winter public programs calendar. Upcoming events include two tours being provided as part of Jane's Walk, including a tour of our collections at Industry City, as well as a walking tour of key sites connected to New Amsterdam, which will end with our exhibit at 31 Chambers Street.

-Neighborhood Stories has gathered approximately 320 interviews. They are currently working with volunteers and staff to prepare them for a website, as well as to identify strong excerpts for promotional purposes and a future exhibit.

-Partnered with agencies like the Commission on Racial Equity and Department for the Aging, as well as community-based organizations and other institutions, including: Historic Richmond Town, Todt Hill branch of the New York Public Library, and the NYC chapter of the OCA which represents New Yorkers of Asian and Pacific Islander descent.

-Recently finalized and published two curriculum aids, including one on women leaders in post-WWII NYC, and another exploring the history of enslavement in NYC. Currently developing more resources around themes such as immigration and labor movements, housing and the unhoused, and prohibition in NYC, among others. They are also conducting outreach to K-12 schools to make them aware of the curriculum resources and educational programs available through DORIS.

-Planning our 2025 volunteer appreciation event.

-Pulling together relevant data for inclusion in the Boards' report, including DORIS' community outreach projects; curriculum aids published; educational and public programming over the past two years; and social media highlights.

7. New Member Recruitment

Commissioner Toole said that the Community Boards had been contacted and that potential candidates would be forwarded to the Mayor's Office of Appointments for vetting and possible appointment. Eric K. Washington asked if additional members were still being sought; Commissioner Toole said, yes.

8. Other Matters.

None were voiced.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.