



Council of State Archivists
2025 Annual Business Meeting
Thursday, August 7, 2025
3:00pm EST | 12:00pm PST | 10:00am HST
Virtual

CoSA's Mission: The Council of State Archivists provides leadership to strengthen and support state and territorial archives leaders and staff in their work to preserve and provide access to government records.

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Call to Order

The 2025 CoSA Business Meeting was called to order in Zoom by President Catheryne Popovitch (IL) at 3:00pm Eastern. Cathy welcomed all attendees and introduced Steve Murray.

Roll Call of States and Territories

Secretary/Treasurer Steve Murray (AL) called the roll and introduced guests as follows. Instructions were also shared for voting, with a reminder that each member institution received one vote.

Members

Alabama (AL) – Steve Murray	Montana (MT) - <i>absent</i>
Alaska (AK) – Karen Gray	Nebraska (NE) – Anna Holley
American Samoa (AS) - <i>absent</i>	Nevada (NV) – <i>absent</i>
Arizona (AZ) - <i>absent</i>	New Hampshire (NH) – <i>absent</i>
Arkansas (AR) – David Ware	New Jersey (NJ) – Ronnie Calder
California (CA) - <i>absent</i>	New Mexico (NM) – Jonathan Pringle
Colorado (CO) – Aly Jobrocki	New York (NY) – <i>absent</i>
Connecticut (CT) – Allen Ramsey, Damon Munz, Todd Gabriel, Britany Rankins	North Carolina (NC) – Becky McGee
Delaware (DE) – <i>absent</i>	North Dakota (ND) – Shane Molander
District of Columbia (DC) – Lopez Matthews, Ali	Northern Mariana Islands (MP) – <i>absent</i>

Rahmaan	
Florida (FL) – Anya Owens	Ohio (OH) – Fred Previts
Georgia (GA) - <i>absent</i>	Oklahoma (OK) – Natalie Currie
Guam (GU) - <i>absent</i>	Oregon (OR) – Stephanie Clark
Hawaii (HI) - <i>absent</i>	Pennsylvania (PA) – David Shoff
Idaho (ID) - <i>absent</i>	Puerto Rico (PR) – <i>absent</i>
Illinois (IL) – Cathy Popovitch, Kristi Lear, Josh Hackel	Rhode Island (RI) – <i>absent</i>
Indiana (IN) - <i>absent</i>	South Carolina (SC) – Eric Emerson
Iowa (IA) – <i>absent</i>	South Dakota (SD) – Sara Casper
Kansas (KS) – <i>absent</i>	Tennessee (TN) – Jami Awalt
Kentucky (KY) – Rusty Heckaman, Cathrine Giles	Texas (TX) – Jelain Chubb
Louisiana (LA) – Melanie Montanaro	Utah (UT) – Ken Williams
Maine (ME) – Christian Cotz	Vermont (VT) – <i>absent</i>
Maryland (MD) – Emily Oland Squires	Virgin Islands (VI) – <i>absent</i>
Massachusetts (MA) – Jack Warner	Virginia (VA) – <i>absent</i>
Michigan (MI) – Jessica Harden	Washington (WA) – Heather Hirotaka
Minnesota (MN) – Shawn Rounds	West Virginia (WV) – Aaron Parsons, Mary Johnson
Mississippi (MS) – <i>absent</i>	Wisconsin (WI) – <i>absent</i>
Missouri (MO) – John Dougan	Wyoming (WY) - <i>absent</i>

Sponsors

Craig Bullough (Ancestry), Richard Covington (Backstage Library Works)

Guests

Eira Tansey, Helen Wong Smith

CoSA Team Members

Joy Banks, Becky Julson, Anne Ackerson

Old Business

Materials for the business meeting were distributed to the primary contacts of all member institutions on Wednesday, July 23, 2026 and posted online in advance of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

After roll was called and quorum established, President Cathy Popovitch (IL) called for a motion to approve the agenda. **Eric Emerson (SC) motioned to approve the 2025 CoSA Business Meeting Agenda. Melanie Montanaro (LA) seconded. The motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes from the 2024 Annual Business Meeting

Cathy called for any corrections to the 2024 Annual Business Meeting Minutes. Allen Ramsey (CT) noted the misspelling of Lisa Lew's name. No other corrections noted.

Cathy called for a motion to approve the 2024 Annual Business Meeting minutes, as corrected. **John Warner (MA) motioned to approve the 2024 CoSA Annual Business Meeting minutes as amended. Eric Emerson (SC) seconded. The motion carried.**

Corporate Sponsors Recognition

Cathy expressed her appreciation for the support of CoSA's Corporate Partners, Sustainers, and other supporters, both our longstanding and new relationships.

- Corporate Partners
 - Preservica - SERI Program Sponsor
 - Ancestry
 - APPX
 - Family Search – CoSA Awards Program
- Corporate Sustainers:
 - Conserv
 - PageFreezer
 - SMA Scanners
 - Atlas
 - AVP
- 2025 Lifeline Partners
 - Gaylord Archival
- 2025 News Brief Sponsors and Advertisers
 - NEDCC
 - FromThePage
 - Digital Government Institute
- 2025 Annual Meeting Sponsors
 - Ancestry - *Friday lunch*
 - APPX - *Opening reception*

- FamilySearch - *Closing reception*
- Preservica - *Opening plenary*
- AM Quartex
- Atlas Systems
- Backstage Library Works
- Conserv
- JSTOR
- Kofile
- Libnova
- NAGARA
- Pagefreezer
- PreserveSouth
- SMA Scanners
- Active Grant funding:
 - IMLS – supporting BACKER and AWARE (through April 2025)
 - The Mellon Foundation

New Business

Nominating Committee Report: Election of New Board Members

CoSA President-Elect and Nominating Committee chairperson Allen Ramsey (CT) thanked current board members and committee members (Sara Davis (WY) and Abbie Norderhaug (WI)). Outgoing board members Steve Murray (AL) and Karen Gray (AK) were also recognized. Allen then presented the candidate slate to serve a three-year term (2025-2028):

- Shane Molander, North Dakota
- Melanie Montanaro, Louisiana
- Catheryne Popovitch, Illinois

No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Coming as a recommendation from a committee, no second was required. **Electronic voting ensued resulting in the election of the candidates.**

President's State of the Association – Catheryne Popovitch

Cathy Popovitch (IL) presented an update on the association as follows:

First, I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve as CoSA President. It has been such an honor to work with and for this great organization and to connect with so many of you this past year. I also want to thank the CoSA staff, contractors and consultants that we work with on our various projects. A big thank you to the CoSA Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication to ensure that CoSA remains a relevant, inclusive and collaborative organization. Thank you especially to our departing board members, Steve Murray of Alabama and Karen Gray of Alaska – your years of service to this group are greatly appreciated. I'd like to thank the

Executive Committee (Allen and Steve) and our Executive Director, Joy Banks, for your time and effort on behalf of CoSA – I will truly miss the dedicated time that we have each week to plan and commiserate and to dream big. And Joy, a special thanks to you – we have all benefited so much from your calm and steady leadership and for your thoughtful and relevant updates on the shifting nature of the government and non-profit landscapes these past months.

Reflecting on this past year and looking at the current state of our organization, there is much to celebrate. In March, the CoSA Board met in person in Salt Lake City where we had the opportunity to spend two concentrated days focusing on all things CoSA – thank you to our gracious hosts, the Utah State Archives and FamilySearch. During our time together, the board engaged in a thoughtful and constructive scenario planning workshop where we explored emerging challenges and opportunities for our association. We plan to revisit these scenarios as we continue efforts to ensure that CoSA remains a thriving and sustainable organization. We also did some planning and brainstorming for our 2025 annual meeting, toured the conference hotel space and had a sneak peek of tours that will be provided in September. Continuing the work done in the previous year, the board adopted and revised a number of policies and reviewed the CoSA Strategic Plan, reaffirming a commitment to providing quality education and training, relevant and reliable research, advocacy that represents our members' needs, and sustainability and excellence for the organization.

This past year, CoSA reworked its committee and working group structure to provide for more well-defined opportunities for involvement. I want to thank Becky for her efforts in that reorganization and a big thank you to all of our volunteers for the impactful work you do within these groups. CoSA would not be what it is today without your dedication and willingness to share your expertise in order for us to fulfill our mission. If you are interested in learning more about what working groups are available and how you can be involved, please reach out to me or Becky and we can get you connected.

In October, the Board approved a new short term strategic plan for SERI, and SERI did some rebranding in recognition of the program's longevity. SERI is now the State Electronic Records Institute. In May, SERI facilitated another successful STEER Unconference and has completed 2 installments in a three-part webinar series with Preservica entitled *"Tools and Techniques for Streamlining the Transfer of Agency Records"*. The third and final webinar is scheduled for later this month, and I would encourage you all to attend.

At the end of 2024, CoSA migrated to a new association management system, which came with a brand new website featuring an interactive calendar of events, enhanced member directory features, and new and improved communication tools. Joy spent some time walking us through those features during the What's On Tap webinar in January so if you've not spent much time in Info Hub or if you need a refresher, that video is available on CoSA's YouTube channel.

CoSA has continued its efforts to bring awareness to issues important to our members and to advocate on their behalf. Just recently, CoSA submitted testimony to the Congressional Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government in support of continued NHPRC

funding; Joy submitted a letter on behalf of CoSA encouraging restoration of funding for a new DC State Archives; and earlier this year the Board approved a revised Statement on Essential Characteristics of the Archivist of the United States. Last December, CoSA joined with NAGARA, RAAC, and SAA to issue specific recommendations to the IMLS regarding inclusion of archives in its reauthorization language and the Advocacy Working Group is hard at work creating advocacy resources for our member institutions.

Despite termination of IMLS funding for the BACKER and AWARE grant projects, CoSA has committed to meeting our goals for those projects. We are thrilled to continue our work with the Mellon Foundation – in April we announced that CoSA had been awarded \$900,000 to continue the work of our website migration, creation of a revamped Resource Center and improved information sharing. Joy will provide more details on the status of these projects in her Executive Director's report.

Since we last met, we've marked the following state archivists' retirements from our community:

- David Joens, Illinois
- Sarah Koonts, North Carolina
- Lizette Pelletier, Connecticut

We've also made note of the following departures from state archives

- Kate McBrien, Maine
- Hilda Teresa Ayala-González, Puerto Rico

Passing

- John Metz, Virginia

We also welcome new state archivists who have been named to their positions since our business meeting last August:

- Pennsylvania, David Shoff
- Illinois, Catheryne Popovitch
- North Carolina, Becky McGee-Lankford (*Interim*)
- Connecticut, Allen Ramsey
- Maine, Christian Cotz
- California, Andrew Hyslop

So, what's next for CoSA? During the Board's scenario planning workshop in the spring, we were challenged to answer an uncomfortable question: If CoSA went away tomorrow, what would be the biggest loss? To a person, we agreed that the biggest loss would be the loss of connection – of a network of archival institutions and practitioners that share our struggles and successes and are so quick to provide guidance or solace and to celebrate our wins. Now, to be clear, as you'll hear from Steve in a few minutes, CoSA is on solid financial ground and Allen will undoubtedly move this organization toward greater excellence. But my point is that regardless of our path forward, CoSA is committed to maintaining and supporting connection – for

State/Territorial Archivists and Directors and for their staff. Please take advantage of the opportunities provided by CoSA to make connections and build those lasting relationships – that is our greatest strength.

Executive Director's Report - Joy Banks

Cathy invites CoSA Executive Director Joy Banks to share remarks as follows:

Thank you, Cathy. It's my pleasure to come to you as your Executive Director to share a few highlights from the last 12 months. CoSA provides leadership to strengthen and support state and territorial archives leaders and staff in their work to preserve and provide access to government records. Our focus on documenting government, promoting history, and securing rights have long guided the Council's direction and provide grounding whenever the field of government archives and records management seems in flux.

I hope you all had the chance to explore our 2024 Year in Review, celebrating our first ever solo in-person meeting in St. Louis and the many other accomplishments of your peers through their work on various committees and projects. Early in 2025, we released our Top 10 priorities, ranking those issues that matter most to the CoSA Community. We are in the thick of planning our 2025 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, managing an engaging webinar and affinity group schedule, and continuing several major projects.

Funded by the Mellon Foundation, we recently completed a planning grant investigating CoSA's historical data collection and aggregation. That seed money allowed us to transition to a new member management system at the end of 2024. We also leveraged the Proof of Concept and recommendations provided from our project consultants at AVP to roll into an implementation grant that started in January. We are eager to see how this project progresses as access to trustworthy data and resources continues to be a priority.

Despite the termination of our two active IMLS grants in April, the CoSA Board committed to seeing these important projects to completion. In the coming weeks, we should be sharing an extensive final report from BACKER by project consultant Nick Connizzo, sharing outcomes about electronic records in state government archives. I would like to yield the remainder of my time to Helen Wong Smith and Eira Tansey, project consultants for our AWARE project, for which a final public report is also imminent.

Eira and Helen presented "Report on Archives Working Across Remote Environments (AWARE) Project." The report included a brief overview of the seven site visits to the partner institutions (Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Alaska, US Virgin Islands, and Washington, DC) between November 2024 and April 2025. The consultants also shared a preview of recommendations that will be included in the project's final report. Collectively, they traveled over 111,000 miles during the project. At the conclusion of their update, the consultants returned the presentation to Joy.

Thank you both for your care of this important project. I'm eager to share your report and recommendations.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary/Treasurer Steve Murray (AL) presented several slides to illustrate the financial position of CoSA, year to date. He thanked the membership for their consistency in making dues payments, which creates stability for CoSA to support its members, leveraging into sound grant management and new awards. Long term financial goals started more than a decade ago place the organization in a position to let our money start working for the CoSA Community. The CoSA Board and Executive Director are working closely with our financial support team to use our assets wisely and have clear reporting leading to more transparency in the financial health of the organization.

The 2024 audit is nearing completion. The Finance Committee and Board shifted funds to high yield savings and laddered CDs in order to maximize earnings when possible. The Reserve Fund has grown to an extent that the Board voted to reduce mandatory contributions from sponsorship dollars from 10% to 5%, allowing for continued growth to a 6 month reserve fund while capturing more sponsor dollar for current expenses.

The new dues structure is proving a sound shift and participation has been strong. Members are facing difficult budget situations, and CoSA remains committed to a flexible dues model that allows broad participation from its member institutions. Alerting CoSA to your expected contribution allows us to create the best budget scenario each year.

Looking Ahead

Vice President Allen Ramsey (CT) presented remarks for the membership as follows:
Good afternoon, everyone,

It's an honor to join you today and offer a few reflections. CoSA's strength is its people — every state and territorial archivist, their staff, our Board, Executive Director Joy Banks, Program Manager Becky Julson, and our contractors. Much of your work is unseen, but essential. It's what keeps this profession — and this organization — moving forward.

The past few years — especially the last six months — have shown how vulnerable our systems can be. Retirements, vacancies, tight budgets, and rising expectations stretch us thin. We're also navigating AI, electronic records, and increasing public interest in how records are handled. Our responsibility remains clear: maintain reliable, accessible records for the long term. Our work is grounded in principles of accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public records.

Looking ahead, here's where we'll focus our efforts. As Cathy shared in last year's remarks, CoSA's purpose is grounded in its core values. That purpose remains our guide as we move forward.

First, we need to continue strengthening our workforce. That means practical steps: mentoring, internships, continuing education, and clearer entry points into the field. These aren't extras — they're basic needs for operations and succession planning. CoSA will keep supporting programs that help agencies train and retain qualified staff.

Second, we'll continue to engage with partners who support government archives at the state, territorial, local, and federal levels. That includes staying involved in federal budget conversations and making the case for the value of archives. We've seen progress — like the Mellon-funded work to support CoSA's strategic planning and technical improvements — and we've seen setbacks, including reductions in some federal grant programs. Through it all, our job is to stay informed, stay visible, and explain why these programs matter.

Third, we need to treat electronic records infrastructure as essential. This isn't a future concern — it's a present responsibility. The upcoming BACKER report will offer practical recommendations to help states strengthen their capabilities. We're not talking about optional enhancements; we're talking about the systems and tools needed to ensure long-term access and authenticity of records. CoSA will continue to support states and territories with peer mentoring, training, and resource development so that everyone has a path forward.

Fourth, we need to be honest about the limits many of our offices face. Gaps in staffing, aging systems, and competing priorities make it harder to deliver consistent services. Many of you are doing more with less, and that takes a toll. Over the next year, I want us to keep having direct conversations about what's working, what isn't, and what it takes to maintain stable operations. That's how we support each other — and improve as a field.

I'm proud to build on the momentum of our Board and recent past presidents. CoSA's work is ongoing — and effective — because we balance continuity with steady progress. In the year ahead, we'll stay focused on clear goals, strong partnerships, and practical results that help state and territorial archives manage and preserve records.

We'll have the chance to continue these conversations in person at our Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City from September 25 through 27. If you can join us in person, I encourage you to do so. If not, you'll still be part of the work. Because CoSA doesn't just meet once a year. We're working collaboratively every day — in committees and working groups, peer mentoring, and more. If you've considered getting involved, now's the time.

The year ahead will bring real challenges. But this community is experienced, committed, and serious about the work. Thank you for showing up and for moving forward together with focus and purpose.

Closing remarks — Cathy Popovitch and Joy Banks

Cathy closed the meeting by expressing gratitude to Allen and the CoSA community.

Joy reiterated the invitation to join CoSA in Salt Lake City in September, emphasizing the unique nature of the gathering and, new for 2025, a Director's-only gathering on the members-only day. In closing, Joy shared the following remarks:

I am reflecting back to the beginning of this meeting, when so many of you said that you were here all by yourself. And I hope that you recognize that in the "all by yourself-ness" that you brought with you, you join together as the CoSA community. Despite the uncertainty that has escalated in recent months, I continue to be so inspired by all of you: your resilience, your dedication, your understanding of the critical contribution government archives and records management programs make to the maintenance of our democracy. I had the chance recently to sit on a panel alongside some other representatives of government at the NAGARA annual meeting. Our goal as panelists was to leave the group inspired, and that is my goal every day that I serve you as your CoSA executive director. To remind you that you are not alone. That in this space with these people you are stronger together. That I am here to support CoSA as we foster spaces for your conversations, for sharing knowledge, for really exchanging ideas, and for having fun. CoSA is your community in good times and bad, and we are always only a phone call away.

The floor was opened to any other remarks. Seeing none, Cathy called for a motion to adjourn.

Adjournment

John Dougan (MO) motioned to adjourn the 2025 CoSA Business Meeting at 4:00pm Eastern. Melanie Montanaro (LA) seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Julson, CoSA Program Manager

Joy M. Banks, CoSA Executive Director