

Public Records Advisory Commission
Minutes of the September 19, 2022 Meeting
Alexandria Archives and Records Center, 801 S. Payne Street

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist), Allan Krinsman, Monica St. Dennis

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.

Appointment of Secretary: Monica St. Dennis was appointed secretary.

Approval of Past Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were not approved due to the lack of a quorum. They will be voted on at the October meeting.

Update on Facility Renovations: Bids for the facility renovation closed in August. Five bids were received, one of which was under budget, so purchasing is now in the process of beginning the repair of the HVAC work, sprinkler heads, and a few other things. The project also includes landscaping work.

The other major renovation project is the replacement of the fire escape, which was condemned in June. It will be replaced within the budget of the current renovation project.

Update on Interns, Volunteers, and OHA Staff Onsite: There were no interns over the summer, but there will be one for the fall semester from the University of Maryland. They will continue with the city council records digitization project.

An employee from the Office of Historic Alexandria is using the conference room to work on an oral history project a few days a week. OHA plans to hire another employee for the same purpose.

For the vacancy within the Archives and Records Center, 180 applications were received. Most of the applications were a poor fit, as they preferred higher pay and more hours than the position has available. Jackie hopes that someone will be hired in October.

Update on Public Research: There were several researchers in the archive over the summer, including one who completely followed the FOIA process as requested by the city attorney, and another who is working with the Virginia Theological Seminary on reparations to the descendants of enslaved people at VTS.

Update on the Annual Report of the Commission: The report was submitted on August 31, 2022.

Update on Parking Issues: The parking lot continues to be very crowded due to the needs of the food bank, and if OHA continues to send staff to the Archive it could become a problem.

Update on Collection Storage: The collection is growing, but there isn't enough space and there is no plan to increase the available space.

Accreditation Visit in December: The Office of Historic Alexandria is due for re-accreditation. Accreditors will be visiting the first week of December, including a visit to the Archive and Records Center.

HARC Report: Sean Ferguson was absent, but sent his update to Jackie to be read in his absence.

- Debate continues regarding the future composition of HARC
- The city is seeing community input on bonus height zoning rules
- HARC members are concerned about converting single-home affordable housing near Chetworth Park into high-rise affordable housing

New business:

- We still have two vacancies on the commission.
- The September 20 meeting of the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission will be held at the Archive and Records Center.
- Our next meeting will be held October 24, 2022.

Adjournment: The commission adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica St. Dennis, secretary