

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the October 24, 2022 Meeting
Archives & Records Center, 801 S. Payne St.

Present:

Jackie Cohan (Archivist), Lynn Jordan (Chair), Cam Cook, Sean Ferguson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

Appointment of Secretary:

Cam Cook was appointed secretary.

Minutes:

The minutes from June 27, 2022 and September 19, 2022 meetings were approved.

Facility renovations update:

A contract had been awarded, though there has not been much movement since the last meeting. They're still working on the paperwork and that phase likely won't be complete until next year.

Fire-escape replacement is held up finding the right area of funding to draw from.

Intern and volunteer update:

Jackie had high school interns from the PHILLIPS program in Annandale start this fall. In addition, a volunteer from the University of Maryland is continuing to scan historical city council minutes, dockets and transcripts.

Records Center Clerk position update:

The job opening for a part-time Records Center Clerk has been open for about three weeks. The department reviewed the ~110 applications received and interviewed 2 applicants; with another one to be interviewed in the coming days. Jackie is looking into reclassifying the position; as the compensation/hours may be too low for a suitable candidate. It is possible the Archives may have to rely on a temporary worker to fill the position.

Discussion on future Archives and Records Management Program structure:

The Commission discussed the future of Archives and Records; its structure, strategic vision and the role of the Commission. Jackie provided the Commission with it's own history to help guide our discussion. The Commission posed the following questions and goals.

- How are similarly situated historic cities in Virginia organizing their Archives and Records?
- Should the roles of Archives and Records be kept together?
- What are OHA's plans for the department going forward?

- On the topic of FOIA/Research

- Is there an emergency fallback to fulfilling FOIA requests if the Archives lacks staff?
 - How can we increase the Archives commitment to researchers, finding aides, open access platforms?
 - How can we make research requests from the public flow smoother?
 - Does a collections access policy need to be developed or reworked?
- What do deliverables for this strategic planning process look like?

Action Item: The Commission requests a briefing from Gretchen Bulova, OHA's Director, at her earliest convenience, to discuss these plans.

HARC report: Sean provided a thorough report from HARC.

Other Business:

- Vacancies - There are 2 vacancies on the Commission; if anyone knows anyone interested, tell them to apply.
- The next meeting is Nov 14, 2022 @ 7:30pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cam Cook
Secretary