

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the January 22, 2024 Meeting

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist); Lynn Jorden (Chair); Cam Cook; Dennis McDonald

Call to Order, Appointment of Secretary & Minutes : The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM. The minutes from the November 27, 2023 meeting were approved. Cam Cook was appointed Secretary.

Facility renovations update:

Facility renovations are behind schedule. Crews are currently working on HVAC. New HVAC installations upstairs are ceiling-mounted; replacing 25-year-old floor-mounted units. Their placement may make some shelving too precarious to use. Elevator renovation has not been started. Crews created a large hole in the floor with a roughly 15-foot drop without any safety cones to alert anyone of the danger; which was later filled in.

Permanent records storage issues/decisions:

Archives took over some space upstairs for archival storage. The decision to keep that area for archival storage is not permanent and a future archivist may make a different determination of that space's use.

Additions to digitized Archives records in SharePoint:

Jackie added more city council records, all planning commission minutes in the Archives' possession, and city annual reports from 1955 to 2003 available to the department through SharePoint. The idea is to broaden sharing to larger audiences and to the public.

Open Data status:

The commission discussed the current status of the Open Data effort made by the IT commission. It would seem that we're not seeing a lot of effort to move forward from them beyond vague generalities.

Virginia, too, has an open data commission who seem to be moving toward a Commonwealth-wide initiative on Open Data. Senator Adam Ebbin, representing Alexandria, is on this commission; though what progress that commission has made is not obvious.

The commission suggested we move forward on our own open data goals without the IT commission.

Preserving the City's Web information/dashboard (research

results):

The commission continued a conversation about preserving city performance dashboard information. Jackie consulted others from in and out of state on what, if anything, should be preserved. There will be a meeting next week with the head of performance accounting and then ITS discussing preservation.

The commission discussed the importance of preserving the source data that fed into those dashboards to make the metrics; though the derivative metrics themselves may not actually require any preservation.

Records of the Alexandria Historical Society de-accessioned:

Records from the Alexandria Historical Society that were previously kept at the Archives have been de-accessioned to the Society.

New Business:

- a. Next meeting: February 26, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Cam Cook