

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the March 19, 2018 Meeting
Alexandria City Hall, Room 1102A

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist), LiMin Fields (Chair), Barbie Keiser, John Hocker, Monica St. Dennis

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM

Appointment of Secretary: Monica St. Dennis was appointed Secretary

Minutes: Minutes of the February 26, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved.

Freedom of Information Act Requests and Public Access: Jackie has started calling other jurisdictions to find out about their FOIA policies. She is specifically interested in jurisdictions who handle archives *and* records management, instead of one or the other. She is particularly interested in speaking to the City of Norfolk and the City of Fairfax.

Anecdotally, it seems as though the requirement that all requests for information be submitted as FOIA requests is spreading throughout the state. All of the jurisdictions Jackie contacted mentioned FOIA.

In the case of a citizen who was interested in a series of records that have already been digitized, the Commission suggested using cloud-based storage systems to complete the request. Some other jurisdictions offer digital access to their patrons, and the Commission feels that this is a reasonable suggestion.

Shelving: The final stage of necessary building improvements is improved shelving, and Jackie would like to move forward with the process. The Commission will plan to begin contacting the City Council in the near future to discuss shelving improvements, and will plan to develop a list of talking points and potential contacts. It was suggested that we should initially focus on budgetary concerns, such as how new shelving or an eventual facilities move can save the city money.

Scheduling: Moving forward, the Commission will consider meeting on a different schedule, to avoid the conflicts caused by Federal Holidays, which often fall on the third Monday of the month. This change would also be beneficial for the HARC representative, and enable the Commission to receive updates from the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission in a timely manner. It was suggested that the Commission meet on the fourth Monday of every month.

New software: Jackie reported that the new software is working out well. Since the Archives and Records Center staff will soon be equipped with laptop computers, so Jackie would like to consider barcoding, possibly with the addition of handheld scanners.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Monica St. Dennis, Secretary