

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)

Minutes of the May 21, 2018 Meeting

Alexandria City Hall, 301 King Street, Room 1102A

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist), Rich Brune, LiMin Fields, Susan Hellman, John Hocker, Barbie Keiser, Monica St. Dennis

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM

Appointment of Secretary: John Hocker was appointed Secretary

Minutes: Minutes of the April 16, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved

Introductions: The Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC) welcomed new commission member, Susan Hellman. Jackie Cohan, Archivist, provided a brief description of Alexandria's Public Records and Archives. Specifically, she mentioned that while the City's records and archives are part of the same office, all of the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) is looking for a new place to store records. Some records are still stored off site in Fairfax County.

Components of Effective Records Management Training: A meeting was held with Craig Pfeiffer and the City Attorney's Office to discuss records management. Specifically discussed was the need to promote the records management process for new staff. The Commission provided a number of options for provided initial and regular training on records management:

- Include training as part of orientation for new staff
- Develop/provide records management manual or guidance document
 - Challenge here – retention requirements differ by division
- Large annual onsite trainings have been helpful in the past but have not been done in several years
- The archives offers a monthly training option on the 1st Tuesday of the month if requested
- Development of a recorded training
 - PRAC could assist in developing, such as identifying recording software, etc.
- Pinpoint types of records for annual training

Intern: Jackie will review the sample internship announcement. The intern would likely be used to help scan architectural plans. The intern would likely work once a week, early in the week.

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) - 2 meetings:

- **April**
 - Waterfront Implementation
 - Discussed public art and history
 - Interim park is set to open in November
 - 3 ships have been identified at the waterfront and a lot of little artifacts

- Archaeological records want to move into the digital age
- Equal Justice Initiative with Alabama Museum
 - Duke Ellington school is a part of the project
 - No sites were identified in current DC but Alexandria sits within former DC
- Spring to Action
- April 10 City Council Meeting – Vice Mayor wants to reduce the number of Commissions
 - There are two Boards of Architectural Review (BAR) – one for Old Town and one for the Parker-Gray neighborhood.
 - The suggestion is to only merge the BARs but the community may be wary of losing the Parker-Gray district
- Lyceum renovations
- Attics and Alley Tours
- **May**
 - Waterfront Interpretation Commission
 - Indigo ship – received \$97K to continue excavation
 - A full city block has been excavated
 - New ship identified – 3 ships have already been excavated, the 4th remains but is the most intact
 - Art firm has been identified and \$100K has been set aside for art at the waterfront
 - Combined sewer system – requires tunnels under Old Town
 - Sloop – will be berthed at interim waterfront
 - Lynching signs – not yet complete and where they are put is unknown
 - 410 S. Fairfax – dispute over private alley
 - Combined BAR proposal – split sentiment

New Business:

- FOIA and Virginia law relating to property owners: Requests go to the City Attorney’s Office and then to the office that is responsible for the records, then to Records Management because they maintain the records onsite.
 - New Virginia law – homeowners can look at property records without the City Attorney reviewing the request
 - This is for detached homes only
 - Code Enforcement wants some records to be destroyed but Records Management would like to keep them.
 - Not all records would be scanned and digitized (10K+ records)
 - Scan on Demand and then have a rationale for certain types of records (i.e., year, location, type of structure).
 - Large scanner used to copy architectural plans is currently malfunctioning
 - Machine for digitizing microfilm – could borrow but would need to commit to doing everything all at once, otherwise a machine would need to be acquired.

- HPE software troubleshooting update: still troubleshooting some glitches and there is still no barcode scanner
- Roof replacement: replacing the roof that is 20 years old. This includes the flat parts of the roof. The pitched roof may not need to be replaced.
- Fiche reader/printer replacement: could not get parts for the old machine so a replacement was acquired – fiche only
- Architectural plans scanner: need to call company

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Hocker, Secretary