

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the November 20, 2017 Meeting
Alexandria City Hall, 301 King Street, Room 1102A

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist), Limin Fields, Rich Brune, Barbie Keiser, Monica St. Dennis

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

Appointment of Secretary: Barbie Keiser was appointed Secretary

Minutes: Minutes of the October 13, 2017 Meeting were reviewed, amended, and approved (as amended)

Budget cuts and board priorities: The commission discussed a 2% reduction of budgets across the city government considering and where the archives might make cuts to its budget. In a departmental budget of about \$300,000, \$6,000 will need to be eliminated.

It was agreed that some savings could be achieved by cutting back on professional memberships and archival supplies. Jackie will explore what savings could be achieved by renegotiating the cleaning budget and offsite storage, recognizing that we must retain offsite storage if we don't have money to increase the number of archival storage shelving units at the Records Center.

The Records Center will not reduce hours for staff as some hours were given up in prior year requests to reduce spending. The commission discussed whether it could charge departments for their archival boxes, providing specifications for purchases to be made. Jackie is not certain whether this is possible, given the way that the regulations are written, but this action could save the department more than \$1,000 each year (though it would not save the city any money as those expenses would shift to other departmental budgets).

Charging for photocopies/scanning of documents + time spent on FOIA requests might yield a small income stream for the department. A summary of the fee schedule for federal agency FOIA requests can be found at <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/29/1401.36>

The commission also will consider how it might assemble a friends' group for fundraising and host events by outside groups (e.g., library association meetings).

Upcoming meeting dates: There is no commission meeting in December. As the third Monday in January and February are holidays, Martin Luther King Day and President's Day, respectively, the commission will meet on the fourth Monday, January 22 and February 26, 2018.

New business: A few changes have made to the website, with a few more planned in the near term, including a link from the website to the Records Retention Policy in the online handbook.

The project to replace the records management software is now on-track with the funds released for two user licenses and 1-2 read-only licenses to be shared (saving money). A kickoff meeting with the vendor is set for December 15.

Monica St. Dennis is the new HARC representative.

Emily Traeger and Jen Walsh have resigned from the commission. The City Clerk will announce the vacancies.

Jackie told the commission that there had been no further talk of “save it all” in meetings concerning record retention, but formal records management training has been **canceled or postponed** . Rather than across-the-board training, the commission recommended training for those responsible for FOIA requests, including the city attorney. With more e-records being searched, we also recommended training for IT staff. Some material concerning records management should be included in a welcome packet for all new government hires, if only pointing them to the website for further information. Jackie noted that the City Public Information Officer had some good ideas about messaging around City Hall, including a “Preserve and Protect” campaign that might be developed/launched for city records management.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.