

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)  
Minutes of the June 17, 2019 Meeting  
Alexandria Archives & Records Center, 801 S. Payne St.

**Present:** Jackie Cohan (Archivist); Rich Brune (Chair); Cam Cook; Lynn Jorden; Barbie Keiser; Monica St. Dennis; Susan Hellman

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

**Appointment of Secretary:** Lynn Jorden was appointed secretary.

**Minutes:** The minutes of May 20, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously with no corrections or additions.

**Laserfiche/Records Management Subcommittee update:** Jackie has been meeting with the Laserfiche/Records Management Subcommittee for 2 hours a week for a month. Jackie says progress is being made as they start to establish parameters for data entry. There had been questions about duplication and ITS allayed those fears. Some of the things Jackie thought would have to be done, like mapping out processes, may not be necessary. The process for applying for permits will eliminate duplicate sets of plans, so there won't be an issue with multiple sets of plans—a positive development. Rich asked if applicants still needed a physical set of paper; Jackie stated that all applications could be made electronically, though Code Enforcement will accept paper applications if asked.

**Talking Points for City Council:** Jackie is working on a new document that incorporates Barbie's suggestions. Jackie stated that she was not going to include any reference to the Davis & Ruffner Collection in the talking points, because we no longer pay the monthly storage charges for it.

**HARC Update:**

- HARC has declared opposition to the Interior Department's Rule Change 10248E49, the federal rule that would give businesses more of a say in historic preservation. This rule would allow businesses to protest additions to the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore be putting business needs ahead of community needs. Monica stated it's been a big issue in a lot of other historical preservation groups.
- 5G towers need to be put on top of the current historic power polls (HARC is trying to determine whether they can put on stoplights), so they'll be closer to 25 feet tall when they're done. That will patch the gaps in 4G coverage. They cannot go on top of the Gadsby lights. Something has to be done about the proliferation of trees in order to implement 5G. The federal government has declared our lack of 5G a national emergency and is pushing hard on this. Rich asked what was environmentalists' stance on this plan, and Monica stated that HARC did not discuss it. Rich noted there was a big push to have a lot of green cover in the city. Monica speculated that the 5G towers would be considered more important.
- 10 Duke Street will be torn down and then rebuilt with the same bricks atop a new foundation. That comes up before the VAR on July 10.

- 619 S. Lee Street – A lot of people turned up. Council voted unanimously to let the owner make changes. The Historic Alexandria may appeal it, but they have not taken solid steps. The issue is largely settled at this point.
- Christ Church’s potential plan to build high-rises next door on top of Ross Dress-For-Less has been overshadowed with the matter of 619 S. Lee Street and there has been no word.
- Joshua Rothman came from Alabama to give a talk to HARC and spoke in front of OHA as well. Jackie praised him as being well-informed and an interesting discussion.
- There was a discussion about people wanting to leave money to OHA in their estate but not the city. Some people on the commission are looking into how to start a foundation to facilitate and encourage legacy donations, preferably with some sort of 501c status to benefit OHA.
- HARC will likely continue to meet in the summer.

### **New Business:**

- Building repair** – Luming Li came to the Archives building for the walkthrough related to the project that will take place likely this winter. They’re still talking with their first vendor pick over money. She had some interesting and unexpected repair items around the building, such as replacing the toilet and sink in a bathroom that are working perfectly. Jackie asked the main if they would paint and to replace the heater in the same bathroom. Jackie also asked for the railings to be painted outside and a few things that haven’t been done in a while.
- Fire escape** - They are going to replace the fire escape at some point. Jackie thinks it will be costly because they’re doing a whole super structure. A few weeks ago, water was pouring into the building—turns out it was from firefighters training to put out fires. Jackie spoke to a battalion commander, who explained they were new recruits and were still practicing aiming. Jackie thinks we need to just get a tarp and put it outside, since commanders keep getting reassigned and don’t know the situation.
- Records destruction update** – Jackie and the city attorneys came to an understanding and changed the language on the paperwork. Everyone is happy and the issue has been resolved.
- Intern** - The intern is in her third week. She is working on scanning city council minutes and dockets so they can be searched, as well as doing minor preservation. The intern is enjoying it.
- New van** - Fleet Services offered to give Archives a new (used) van. The current car is a 2003 Suburban and it’s at the end of its useful life. The new van is a 2010 model, a retired police vehicle and will have more room than the Suburban.
- ALIVE** - The ALIVE manager, who shares the building, is resigning. Rich asked if this manager had been the one to implement a pick-up station at the Ice Shop on Commerce Street. The ALIVE manager has been very helpful and Jackie is sad to see him go. ALIVE does not have a replacement for him at this time, but Jackie has the contact information for their interim director. A discussion briefly ensued about the common practice of city workers returning as volunteers after they retire.
- Landscaping** – The Archives Building had a really bad problem with landscaping since General Services left the print shop in 2007. It gets overgrown frequently. In the past, inmates on work detail took care of the landscaping. Jackie asked Annette if that was still possible (with discretion according to what the inmate’s crime was). But something needs to be done about the overgrown foliage, ivy and bushes. Someone does come to cut the grass, but they can’t trim bushes. The building is starting to almost look abandoned.

- h. **Return to discussion on City Council TPs** – Barbie asked about talking points for city council. Jackie would like some more time to work on it. She will probably start with some history and a paragraph, but the main points will remain the same as the draft talking points that were previously distributed. Jackie noted that the last room they got shelving in was 2006 and 2007, 29x47 feet, although shelving didn't fill the room. That was \$137,000, because it was really good shelving and they also had to change the lighting and greater sprinkler coverage. Barbie noted that there should be some idea of how much money new shelving would cost, because city council was likely to ask about it. Jackie estimated it would potentially cost \$250,000. Barbie suggested getting someone to come and estimate the cost of the shelving. Jackie thought about contacting Warner Boyd to do the estimate.
- i. **Records management training** – Jackie suggested trying to push the records management training for city staff. She doesn't think it's on people's radar.
- j. **New administrative regulation** – Jackie will try to work with the city attorney last year to push a new administrative regulation for records management, which we've been trying to do for 20 years and badly needs to be updated. Rich asked what needed to be updated. Jackie said it doesn't so much talk about records management as it prescribes certain parameters, such as how many boxes and labels people get.

**Next meeting** - Our next meeting will be in September.

**Adjourn:** Rich made a motion to adjourn at 8:07 PM; Monica seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Jorden