

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the February 24, 2020 Meeting
Alexandria Archives and Records Center

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist), Rich Brune (Chair), Cameron Cook, Sean Ferguson, Susan Hellman, Lynn Jordan, Barbie Keiser, 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: Jackie Cohan requested a change to the January 2020 minutes, to clarify that her video for the intranet is actually a PowerPoint. The minutes were approved as amended.

Building Renovations

At this point the city does plan to move forward with renovations on the Archives and Records Center; there will be a final walk-through at the beginning of March and the project should begin in the fall. The plans do not include covering the circular windows, but do include repairing the existing fire escape, giving ARC staff control of the HVAC system, and possibly adding an ADA-compliant restroom.

FOIA Records Access

A question was raised about access to city records for remote researchers, and Jackie pointed out that many requests don't necessarily come from Alexandrians or Virginians.

Records Management Training

There is no major update, but the project remains ongoing.

HARC Update

Monica St. Dennis updated the commission on the following topics discussed at the February 18, 2020 meeting of the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission:

- The George Washington's Alexandria Tours have resumed for February;
- HARC is actively trying to fill their vacant seats;
- The Ramsey Homes Symposium will be held on Friday, May 15;
- Al Cox is retiring, and has been replaced by Susan Hellman and Bill Conkey;
- Alexandria does allow solar panels in the Historic Districts in many cases;
- Alexandria Archaeology expects to finish scanning the ship timbers by late March or early April;
- Christ Church has reached an agreement with an architect;
- the North Waterfront Trail is finished and is hoping for a June launch date; and
- The Equal Justice Initiative committees are planning annual commemorations for each of Alexandria's lynchings.

After discussion of her expiring term, Monica was selected to continue representing PRAC on HARC.

Building Maintenance

The Archive and Records Center has some ongoing maintenance issues which need to be addressed. Specifically, the fire escape doors have been sticking, some other doorknobs in the building stick, the roof leaks, and some of the windows have leaks.

Commission Vacancy

There is a current vacancy on the commission, which is being advertised by the city. Commission members were encouraged to reach out to Alexandrians who might be a good fit; there was some discussion of reaching out to former applicants who weren't selected in contested appointments.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:06PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Monica St. Dennis, Secretary