

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)
Minutes of the January 20, 2020 Meeting
Alexandria Archives & Records Center, 801 S. Payne St.

Present: Jackie Cohan (Archivist); Rich Brune (Chair); Cam Cook; Barbie Keiser; Sean Ferguson; Lynn Jordan;

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:27 PM.

Appointment of Secretary: Sean Ferguson was appointed secretary.

Minutes: The minutes of November 18, 2019 were reviewed and Sean Ferguson asked if the minutes stated that the burn building would be demolished and if this was correct. The Archivist clarified that it will be demolished, but that it will be rebuilt in the same place and said that she we add that clarification to the minutes. The minutes were approved with this change.

Update on Archives and Records Center renovation: The Architecture Firm Cole & Denny submitted their final report on the renovation to the Archives & Records Center. Cole & Denny propose:

- Adding a curtain when for the loading dock to stop cold air from coming in;
- Installing separate climate controls for the Archives, so they can determine environmental set points separate from the food bank;
- Reworking the bathrooms to be up to code;
- Installing new doors with panic bars in the main entrance;
- Adding new painting around the windows;
- Bricking up the circular windows, except for the one that lights the third-floor library. These bricks could be removed in the future;
- Securing a balcony near archeology; and
- Leaving the cupola.

The Archivist will go through the report in more detail but does not expect anything that was not mentioned in the meetings she had.

Additional building updates unrelated to the renovation were mentioned, including:

- The heating was fixed recently. It had been 65 and 66 lately, and now it is 68 and 69;
- The front door was fixed to slow the rate with which it closes for about \$950 out of the General Services' budget; and
- There are plans to fix the roof to address water incursion.

Update on Records Management training and the City's Administrative Regulations for the Records Management Program: Progress has been made with the training program updates, and The Archivist rewrote the City Administrative Regulations on Records Management as per the City Manager's request, because the document – originally written in 1983 – no longer reflects current practices. The meeting for feedback is scheduled for Wednesday, January 22, 2019.

For the training program, The Archivist will propose a timeline. She is planning to:

- Ask the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria if changes need to be made to last year's training;
- Complete a city employee instructional PowerPoint by March;
- Conduct a Management training for the department heads in March;
- Train records officers in April; and
- Hold city-wide training twice a year in April and October.

Cam Cook asked if the department heads would train their employees, and the Archivist answered that the Records Center would do this training. The Archivist added that she will continue to do one-on-one visits on demand, which is very effective, because the training is personalized.

Status of record destruction: The Archivist wrote a memo to the City Manager about records destruction that proposed the following:

- In keeping with the practices of other jurisdictions, the city attorney should not have to sign off on records destruction; only the department head should have to. This should be enough, because department heads will know if records are under FOIA request.
- The Center should keep its own destruction form, which -differing from the state's form – invites department heads to visit the Center and review the records that are up for destruction.

The Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria will present this memo to the City Manager. Rich Brune pointed out that aligning destruction practices with other jurisdictions will cut down on the records destruction backlog and the Archivist concurred, adding that we already have signatures from many dept. heads. Lynn Jordan asked how many years records are typically kept, and Jackie answered that it varies depending on the type of record, but that 3 years is common.

New guidelines for Boards and Commissions members/meetings: The new commission guidelines were shared ahead of the meeting. Rich Brune noted that the guidelines do not cover meeting on holidays. Cam noted that it states that a commissions' role should be to advise and should not reach out to organizations outside the city without receiving permission from the Council.

New Business:

- a. **Update on removing ivy from the fire escape** – A landscaping company referred to the Center by Fort Ward provided an estimate for \$7,000 for removing the ivy. According to city purchasing regulations, two more estimates must be sought when a proposal is over \$4,999. The Archivist may choose not to have the back of building addressed to reduce the cost of the estimate and avoid having to seek two more estimates.
- b. **High-density shelving** – Warner-Boyd & Associations gave two estimates: one estimate for installing shelving in one portion of the large room, and one estimate for installing shelving throughout the large room.

Lynn Jordan asked if there is a specific date the Center plans to ask for the shelving. The Archivist said we may ask this year to keep it in this year, budget, although the Center is not in a

rush to get the shelving installed. Rich added that it may make sense to wait until the renovations are completed.

- c. **Additional new business, new microfilm machine:** The Center will receive a new microfilm reader that can scan PDF's. This will be for the entire Office of Historic Alexandria. This will speed up how quickly The Archivist can complete FOIA requests.

Adjourn: 8:02pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Ferguson