

Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC)  
Minutes of the November 15, 2021 Meeting  
Archives & Records Center, 801 South Payne Street

**Present:** Jackie Cohan (Archivist); Cam Cook; Sean Ferguson; Monica St. Dennis; Allan Krinsman. Lynn Jorden (Chair) had an excused absence and had informed Ms. Cohan in advance of the meeting.

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

**Appointment of Secretary:** Allan Krinsman was appointed secretary.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the October 18, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously with no corrections or additions.

**Reorganization and staff departures:** Jackie started a discussion about possible staff departures and a reorganization of the Archives and Records Center. She noted that city departments have been reorganized to improve efficiency. The Archives and Records Center has not been affected yet because it is not a museum. Jackie indicated that the reorganization would be a good opportunity to redefine people's positions in her department and how they work, and possibly move the department in a different direction. Jackie said she hopes there will be not less than one position maintained that is devoted at least part-time to doing research and FOIA requests because the department receives many such requests. There are benefits from the current arrangement of having a centralized records management rather than having everybody do things in a less organized manner. By law, there has to be at least one records administrator and archivist for the city, but it doesn't have to be a separate position.

The subject of departmental retirement was also discussed briefly. In the next few years there may be two retirements in the department, including Jackie's retirement. However, with the pandemic in effect, there are no immediate retirement plans, but at some point planning for the departmental succession will need to occur.

**Renovations:** Jackie told the Commission that the renovations of the Archives are currently uncertain and there is no specific schedule for when the renovations will take place. Sprinklers will need to be replaced to be in code and stay in compliance. One bid for the renovations was received, but it was judged to be too high and the city may start over again. Cole & Denny, the architectural firm, did an evaluation of the building, but that was a month ago.

**Internships and Volunteers:** Jackie informed the Commission members that the intern from the University of Maryland is doing great. However, Jackie is getting a bit concerned that she has not recently received inquiries from schools to see if they can have an internship for the coming semester. She attributed this to the fact that there are now more opportunities for internships than a year ago. She would like to have an intern for the next semester. There is a new coordinator at the University of Maryland and Jackie plans to contact her to make sure that she knows that there are internships available at the Archives.

**Records management training:** Once the pandemic hit, the normal training that the Archives conducts did not happen. Jackie had been contacted by one of the assistant city attorneys about training and she informed him that the department had not been having training, but she would be happy to discuss whether some form of training can be done. Jackie intends to review the powerpoints she did last year or two years ago and hopes to revise them. She also mentioned the records retention document that she has been writing and hopes to get it posted to the city intranet so that other city staff could see it.

**HARC Update:** Monica St. Dennis updated the Commission on what's going on with HARC:

- Most of the meeting last month was taken up with a presentation by the planning and zoning employees who gave an overview of the development review process.
- Two of the HARC members spoke before the Planning Commission about the cobblestones on Prince St. Monica noted that a few members of City Council have expressed their interest about how to protect the cobblestones from the cars that are getting diverted on to that street.
- One member of HARC has been going to the torpedo factory meetings and gave the commission her assessment of the meetings. The person's impression is that there was not much interest in keeping the torpedo factory as an historic site.
- HARC was working on packets and briefings to give to the new City Council members, but that was delayed until after the November elections.
- HARC is in the process of adopting bylaws. The commission may be adopting bylaws tomorrow. The proposed bylaws are about 4 pages.
- Ongoing discussions about the size of the HARC membership was also mentioned. Restructuring the size of that commission has presented a series of challenges.

**New Business:**

- a. **Vacancies** – There are 2 vacancies on the Commission; if anyone knows anyone interested, tell them to apply.
- b. **City Manager:** Jackie mentioned to the Commission members that the city is in the process of hiring a new city manager. Two of the people in the Archives department are on the hiring team. Jackie said it looks like there are now a very small number of finalists for the position. Jackie expressed her appreciation for the work that Mark Jinks has done as Alexandria city manager.

**Next meeting** –No meeting will be held in December. Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 24, 2022 at 7:30 PM.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Krinsman,  
Secretary