**Meeting of the Record Storage Advisory Committee, October 25, 2017**

**Meeting opened**, 11:07 a.m.

**Present**: Leslie Bracebridge (LB), Susan Millinger (SPM), Susie Mosher (SM), Savannah Ouellette (SO), Linda Avis Scott (LAS), Becky Torres (BT). Absent, Building Committee Representative, Jim Aaron.

**The minutes of September 27, 2017**, were approved as read. Copies will be sent to Rachel Onuf, the Roving Archivist; the Select Board; the Buildings Committee; and Jim Aaron.

**Application for grant from Massachusetts SHRAB (the State Historical Records Advisory Board)**: Chair SM reported that the application for a grant from SHRAB for an archive-quality filing cabinet for maps, with a letter of endorsement from the Select Board, had been submitted the previous week. We expect to hear something in the next two months.

**Consultation with a local archivist scheduled:** SM reported that she had had a conversation with Linda Seidman, retired from the Special Collections of UMass Amherst Library, in which Linda indicated that Special Collections can store (some) town records. In order to find out the details, SM invited Linda to meet with the Committee at its next meeting, on November 15th. It was suggested that the Committee should also consult with a librarian who is currently working in UMass Amherst Special Collections, to ensure that policy there has not changed recently. LAS mentioned the experience of the 250th Committee, which placed records in Special Collections—but also has copies stored locally. It was acknowledged that even if storage of (some) records at the UMass Library is a possibility, the Committee might propose that the Town continue to store its records locally.

**Discussion of possibility of applying for a grant from Community Preservation Committee**: A motion was made to apply to CPC for a grant for a datalogger which could be used to monitor the environment. The type with software which the Roving Archivist, Rachel Onuf, recommended costs $349. In the lengthy discussion which followed, a number of points were brought up and questions asked.

* Noted: in the 2000/2001 *Long-Range Historical Records Strategic Plan*, as well as in Rachel Onuf’s report, the importance of environmental monitoring on an on-going basis was emphasized. Therefore, even though the function of this committee is to recommend actions, not to take action, acquiring a datalogger to permit such a program is an important initial step, affecting decisions the Committee should make, such as what spaces could be used for record storage.
* Noted: It is possible to borrow the needed datalogger for free for six months from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). It would not be available, however, until August 2018 or later
* Question: do we need a long-term environmental monitoring program, or would a six-month period be adequate? Given the need to track the environment in various spaces in the Town Hall, as well as in the Town House (old Town Hall), and to monitor repeatedly, it would seem that a six-month loan would would be only a stop-gap.
* Question: do we need more than one datalogger? It was acknowledged that we may need more than one, but it was decided to start with one.
* Suggestion: that the committee might also include in the proposed grant application to CPC acquisition of proper archival storage material (such as archive-quality storage boxes, file folders and paper), in order to make a start at storing documents in Town Hall.
* Noted: Training for staff is also needed, so that going forward all staff in Town Hall will have both the materials and the knowhow to store records intended for permanent storage according to best archival practice. Is it necessary to bring in a specialist to lead a workshop, or is there a video or book which can serve the same purpose, and be available for new staff?

It was decided that the Committee had not yet carried its investigation and discussion far enough to apply for funds for archival materials and staff training, especially since its main function is advisory. It was decided, moreover, that the cost of a datalogger was not high enough to warrant applying for a CPC grant. Rather, it was decided to look elsewhere for funds for a data-logger. **The motion to apply to CPC for funding for a datalogger was defeated**

**A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to request the Town Administrator to find funding for a datalogger for environmental monitoring.**

**Tour of old Town Hall (the Town House):**

The Committee toured the Town House to look into record storage there**.** The amount and variety of materials stacked in the hall, the condition of the old vault, the crowded conditions of the new vault, the mixture of Town and Historical Commission materials, and the poor environmental quality in the building were noted.

**Next meeting: Wednesday, November 15**, beginning at 11 p.m. **On the agenda:** meeting with retired UMass archivist Linda Seidman; discussion of which recommendations of the 2000/2001 *Strategic Plan* the Committee should focus on.

**Meeting adjourned, 12:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Millinger, note-taker.