

Record Storage Advisory Committee Minutes for May 22, 2019 meeting *DRAFT*

Present: Leslie Bracebridge (LB), Susan Millinger (SPM), Susie Mosher (SM), Savanna Ouellette (SO), Linda Avis Scott (LAS). Absent, Becky Torres (BT).

The meeting convened at 11:08 am.

1. Minutes from March 27, 2019: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended; the motion was unanimously approved. *Note: there was no meeting of RSAC in April.*

2. Shredding and Record Destruction. The whole Town shredded 2300 pounds of paper at the Community Shredding event on May 10. The contents of three boxes from the school and 17 from Town Hall were shredded.

The records shredded included boxes of records of the Town Accountant. Gail had provided SM and LAS with parameters to use in selecting, by their dates, some of the boxes of the records of the Town accountant stored in Old Town Hall. SM and LAS brought Gail a list, which Gail could use in filling out a form requesting permission to destroy non-permanent records earlier than a certain date. The online form was then sent to the State by Gail. The State, responding quite expeditiously, gave permission for destruction of the records identified. It helped that Gail had prior experience of this process; SM and LAS themselves gained good experience from this process.

RSAC discussed some of the complications of selecting records to be destroyed. Perhaps there are people in other Town departments with experience in destroying records which can be easily identified as ready for destruction. LB had experience in the 1970s in sitting down with groups of people to sort out how the rules applied to their records. Departments keep such a wide variety of records that identifying the categories into which records fall, and thus applying the rules for record retention, is not always easy.

It was suggested that this identification of records which can be destroyed is a process which should be continued, probably gradually, and starting with the most obvious categories.

How best to package shredded records? Items shredded in Town Hall have been going into plastic bags, which means that the paper contents of the bags do not end up in recycling. Is it possible to put the shredded materials into paper bags (which must be tightly fastened). SM will talk to the Recycling Committee and ask for their suggestions about how the shredded paper can be recycled.

Town clerks are working to get record retention rules made simpler and clearer: SM learned this at a workshop for town clerks.

3. Communication of Record Retention Rules to Departments. The Committee revisited the earlier discussion about whether to hold a general meeting of those responsible for retaining records to go over the rules for records retention. It was suggested that it be a daytime meeting, perhaps over lunch, or could it be part of the fall All-Board Meeting (though not all Boards and Committees might need this information)? Should it be aimed at ensuring that all know what their responsibilities are: what records to retain permanently, and the environment in which the records should be kept? If the environment is not what it should be, it was suggested that these departments should contact the Town Clerk and let her know what space needs they have for proper storage of permanent records.

4. Writing a report to the Select Board on the work of the Committee.

About at this point in the discussion, the objection was raised that this proposed education of departments, boards and committees might be going beyond the charge to the Committee. It was decided to write a report to the Select Board of what the RSAC has been accomplishing, a report fuller than annual reports, and see whether the Board wishes the Committee to continue or not, or whether the SB would prefer to give the next tasks to other people and/or another body.

The Committee decided that as it worked on this report, it would also complete LAS's earlier survey of volume of permanent records held in a number of departments in TH. This survey had provided RSAC with estimates of the size of most of these departments' permanent record holdings and annual growth in such records. It makes sense to finish these surveys. SM will inquire of the Highway Dep't, LAS of the Police Dep't and LB of the Fire Dep't. SO reported that she had already asked the Library Director; that the answer was that there is only a tiny amount of permanent records, SO was told that there is already a list of what is retained; SO was asked to check. Questions to be asked: How many boxes of permanent records do you have now; how many do you add each year; is the environment in which your records are kept healthy for records

Next Meeting June 26 at 11 a.m.

Proposed agenda:

1. Report on information about permanent records gathered in meeting with Departments of Fire, Library, Police and Public Works
2. Brainstorming the possible contents of the report to Select Board. SM requests that we read over the 1st year Annual Report and work on the 2nd, and look over the minutes of the meetings to gather information which the report could contain. The chart of possible spaces for storage can be given to SB as just that: possibilities. The goal of this report: to give information and to let SB decide what, if anything, RSAC should do next.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P Millinger, secretary