

Meeting of the Record Storage Advisory Committee, January 24, 2018

Meeting opened, 11:04 a.m.

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

Minutes of November 15: The amended minutes were unanimously approved.

Minutes of December 20: One sentence was corrected; a motion to approve the minutes as amended was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Old Business:

A. Datalogger Placement. SM had consulted Gregor Trinkaus-Randall about whether it could be put inside the flat file. Gregor said it was probably not a good idea to put it inside a drawer, or up near the ceiling: either would tend to distort its readings. The datalogger is now on the back side of the flat file. It is gathering data from the middle of the room.

B. Materials for Flat File storage. The goal is to discover what materials will need to be kept permanently in an environmentally sound space. Selection of materials for the flat file is currently in the experimental stage. LAS is starting with current maps from her office; she plans to move next to materials in the Conference Room. LB pointed out that some plans are stored in the Registry of Deeds, so we may not need to keep them.

Another part of the experimentation is to learn how to cross reference maps and letter file materials on the same topic.

Learning by doing is the approach RSAC is taking: LAS's work is a part of that. LB suggests the paperwork of the Prescott/Leverett/Cooleyville Road Project, some of it still unsorted, might make a good project for the group.

An agenda item for the future: becoming more familiar with Record Retention guidelines. The questions of what must be kept and the categories which should be used clearly impact the amount of records to be kept as well as the types to be kept. What part of the permitting process produces permanent records is, for example, a question to be answered.

C. Annual Budget for archiving materials. In order to get a clearer sense for a budget request of what storage materials are likely to be needed, LAS has begun the process of determining how many boxes of a certain size each office estimates it needs each year for permanent and non-permanent records. Although the process is not yet complete, the data collected is useful. The Committee looked at the rough draft of LAS's survey.

The Town Clerk has 8 ^{1/2} feet of records for four years: 1 ^{2/3}, or an estimated 2 boxes a year. (The estimated is 15" = 1 box.)

The Tax Collector has 2 ½ boxes every 3 years. The new Municipal Light Plant (MLP) will be providing more minutes for the Tax Collector to store.

Conservation Commission (CC) is yet to be calculated.

Total so far: an estimated 4-5 boxes a year. Still to be surveyed: the offices of the Town Administrator, Town Treasurer, Assessors and Board of Health from Town Hall. Also, although the School, Highway and Fire Departments store their own records currently, they might in future be stored in the Town Hall. The head of Public Works should be asked how many permanent records his department generates and whether he wants them stored in an environmentally better place.

LAS will be presenting a completed report at a future meeting.

It was noted that at times there are big projects that generate a lot of documents; this needs to be kept in mind. Also, we may still save some documents even if they are not officially permanent because of their special interest to the town.

D. Meeting process.

Consensus or Votes? The chair commented on the importance of summarizing the main ideas of issues before moving on, and asked that members indicate whether they want to have a vote on an issue.

Discussion followed. SO commented that she will help check in on whether a decision needs a vote or consensus is sufficient. LB noted that consensus meant that all agreed on a decision; therefore, a vote is needed if all don't agree.

Votes are more essential if we are making recommendations about what should be done. the question then arose: what is the RSAC's goal?

The chair presented a statement of her understanding of what the committee's goal is and methods should be. We are not to make specific recommendations of what should be done, but to figure out what the pieces are that form records storage needs. She sees us ending up with a grid of options, with each option involving choices; with identification of needs and a laying out of what could be done to meet each need, with the pluses and minuses of each. (For example, if specific environmental conditions are considered a priority, the environmental conditions of various storage spaces would be identified.) The method required is research and the writing of a final report on issues and ramification. The 2001 report showed issues but not how to deal with them: not what it would take to take care of problems: e.g., how to deal with permanent vs. non-permanent records.

LB's view is that the goal is to figure out where we can store records, since we are running out of space. Many of the steps recommended in the 2001 report have, she commented, been taken.

SM observed that the process of decision-making changes with time, as people who weren't involved in earlier stages become involved and decisions are made about what to keep and not keep.

Agenda for the next meeting

The final items on the January agenda are kept for the February meeting:

- more discussion of using the flat file
- making a list of the questions and issues about record storage our research has so far raised*
- Also on the February agenda:
 - what record storage space opportunities are there?*
 - Report on the field trip to Wendell

*See the assignment given at the end of the December meeting, repeated here.

General action for the committee members: write down what you know to this point about record storage, and what questions you have, with a list of any possibilities for record storage, permanent and non-permanent.

Let SM know if there is anything you would like to add to the agenda when it comes out.

Meeting times: in order to find a time when a member of the Building Committee might be able to join us, it was decided that SM would contact the Building Committee and tell them that if there is an item on the agenda that looks interesting to them, they should contact SM who would set up an evening meeting on a Monday or Wednesday when everyone is available.

Tentative Future meeting dates: February 21, March 21, April 25

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 21 beginning at 11 p.m.

Meeting adjourned, 12:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Millinger, secretary