

Memorandum

DATE: 12/07/2011

TO: Personnel Review Committee:
John Dunlap, Chief of Personnel and Labor Relations
Vivian Leonard, Director, Office of Human Resources
Karen Connor, Director, Office of Budget Management

FROM: Rosaria Salerno, City Clerk

RE: Restructure/Reclassification of Positions in the Archives and
Records Management Division

I request salary plan changes for positions in the City Clerk Archives and Records Management Division as appropriate to the professional duties of staff.

The City of Boston is committed to professional staffing for the management of its archives by virtue of State statute chapter 68, acts of 1988. This law establishes the Archives and Records Management Division in the office of City Clerk and specifically states that “said division shall be supervised by a professional archivist...”. The law further enables the City Clerk to “employ within said division professional and technical experts and such other employees as may be required in the performance of its duties...”. To ensure that the mission of the City Archives is carried out with the utmost professionalism the Division sets a high standard of performance expectation and recruitment qualification for professional archivist staff positions. This standard materially exceeds that reflected in the classifications with which the City currently grades the division’s positions. To ensure compensation levels are appropriate and warranted in relation to professional duties, the following adjustments are recommended:

1. Establish the position of Archivist as division director with a grade of MM1-12 and eliminate the position of Deputy Archivist, Principal Administrative Assistant, MM1-8. Promote the current Deputy Archivist to Archivist, as this person performs and is *de facto* responsible for the Archivist’s duties.

There has never been a chief archivist appointed in accordance with the provisions of the City Archives statute. From 1988 to 1993 the position was anomalously filled and salaried by the BRA. Since 1995 the Deputy Archivist has assumed the duties and responsibilities of a *de facto* division director and has reported directly to the City Clerk. Thus, the Archivist/Deputy Archivist directs the overall management and programming of the Archives and Records Management Division and executes the responsibilities of chief records officer of the inactive records of the City. He directs the work of the Assistant Archivists and oversees the direction and coordination of all programs, projects, and major activities of the Division including those encompassing core archival activities such as records appraisal, access, and preservation. He supervises the selection of documents for permanent preservation; oversees the development of outreach and training programs for improved records management throughout City departments; initiates programs for the promotion of public interest, education, and scholarly projects centered on the Division's holdings; presents annual budget estimates to the City Clerk for the operation of the Division; and directs the long-range and strategic planning necessary to development of the Division.

2. Reclassify the Assistant Archivist position from Administrative Analyst, MM1-4 to Principal Administrative Assistant, MM1-8.

Assistant Archivists are responsible for the following tasks:

Archives Management. Assistant Archivists are responsible for implementing programs for the care and custody of official City of Boston records deemed permanent for historical or legal purposes. They acquire the City's archival records from departments and incorporate them into the City Archives collections. Utilizing professional methodologies they preserve and protect archival records and develop and maintain archives storage systems. They document archives by means of agency histories, descriptions of records series structure and characteristics, and details of series content. They supervise the sub-professional work of contract workers, interns and volunteers.

Reference and Public Access. Assistant Archivists are responsible for managing patron reference. They service research requests from City departments to determine legal or historical precedent or provide historical background for current City business. They carry out the City's statutory responsibility to make records in the Archives available to the public and to protect information subject to privacy laws. They develop and enforce security policies. They continuously deepen their knowledge of the contents of the City Archives in order to meet a wide variety of researcher needs. They service public requests for records documenting property, business ownership, genealogical information, student records, biographical information, building and site history, academic topics of local and national historical interest, or other areas of research. And they have gained a reputation for serving the public with the utmost efficiency, competence, professionalism, speed and courtesy.

Special Projects Supported by Grants. Funded projects involve Assistant Archivists in concentrated work producing results of special value to the City and to the research public. In such projects Assistant Archivists analyze large collections, supervise administrative support workers, ensure the preservation and proper re-housing of records, develop in-house finding aids as well as on-line finding aids in EAD and HTML format. Assistant Archivists perform background historical research to provide work products with balanced and informed historical context. They prepare and deliver presentations at public meetings and professional conferences. They develop content for document exhibits, work with other institutions in collaborative activities and work with the project director in the development of reports.

Records Management. Assistant Archivists provide records management services. They assist the Archivist in developing and updating schedules and policies governing management and retention of records in various media (paper, electronic files, email, social media, etc.). They work with departments in the development of agency-specific file retention plans. They process department requests for records destruction and maintain reports of authorized agency records disposal. They inventory unidentified records and records at un-staffed locations. They advise departments on preparation of records for records center storage or archives transfer. They advise departments on records preservation and access. They participate in interdepartmental initiatives for City-wide records management implementation.

To carry out these responsibilities in a way that effectively meets the needs of the public and the City, Assistant Archivists must have professional experience and training. Since 1995 archivists have been qualified to perform these duties by virtue of professional experience and educational credentials, notably the Master in Information and Library Science with concentration in Archives Management. From the beginning of their employment in the Division, Assistant Archivists are grounded in the principles of archival science and seasoned with practical experience in the way that is expected in areas such as teaching, engineering, medicine or law. Without question these positions are professional, not clerical, and should be recognized as such by commensurate classification and compensation.