



CITY OF BOSTON
Archives & Records Advisory Commission

**Deputy Archivist's Report on Archives & Records Management Division Activity
Since 20 September 2010
For Meeting, Friday, 28 January 2011 3:30 p.m.**

NHPRC Project

Final narrative and financial reports for NHPRC Project Award # NAR08-RA-10057-07 ("Project for a City-wide Archives and Records Management Program") were submitted to NHPRC in late September and early October.

In a letter of January 10, 2011 NHPRC offered a further grant of up to \$91,604 to the City of Boston for its "Consolidate and Preserve the Archival Records of the City of Boston" project. The offer is \$122,859 less than the \$214,463 requested for the project and reflects the Commission's recommendation to fund only the first year of the project and to fund only direct costs (i.e. \$5,000 requested for indirect costs was disallowed.) As required by the offer's contingency, the Clerk and Deputy Archivist agreed in writing to comply with all applicable Federal grant management and NHPRC rules and regulations. These signatures, together with revised performance objectives, plan of work and budget have all been submitted by the 28 January 2011 deadline.

The Archives will use these funds to support a project archivist for one year, and the supplies and relocation services needed to transfer from the departments and shelve at Rivermoor an estimated 3,000 equivalent cubic feet of hard copy archival records. In addition to transferring legacy collections from departments, the project will establish protocols for the annual systematic transfer of archives; the transfer of City archival records from the Boston Public Library deposited for safekeeping by the City several years back; the identification of electronic archives and assessment of their preservation needs. (The project will dispense with certain objectives proposed in the original project, viz. the document exhibit and the building permit plans study.) The Archives proposes to get the project under way by July 1, 2011.

Reference

The following is a breakdown of City of Boston Archives reference activity.

REFERENCE REQUESTS SUMMARY, JULY 2007 – JANUARY 2011

CLIENT CATEGORY	FY11(thru Jan)	FY10	FY09	FY08
<i>Public</i>	821	1580	1527	1715
<i>City Agency</i>	100	145	162	144
<i>Total</i>	921	1725	1689	1859

CONTACT MEANS	FY11(thru Jan)	FY10	FY09	FY08
<i>Telephone</i>	477	858	963	1058
<i>E-mail</i>	301	635	555	598
<i>In-person visits</i>	109	172	129	140
<i>Mail and Fax</i>	34	60	42	63
<i>Total</i>	921	1725	1689	1859

Accessions

Public Health Commission burial permits 22 cu. ft.
PWD scrapbooks, ca. 1871-1919, 17 volumes
School Dept. news clippings scrapbooks, 1941-1958, 9 volumes
Donations to the Archives:

- Barnes School Class photograph 1927.
- City Council resolution presented to 4th of July Orator in 1890
- Police Dept. photographs of car accident ca. 1935.
- Misc. Health Dept reports 1875-1956
- Misc. School Dept reports 1920-1978.
- Framed Frederic Lincoln School Class photograph 1911 and framed diploma 1911

Field Surveys

Parks Department, Cemeteries Division (at Mt Hope Cemetery): approximately 100 cubic feet of burial permits, lot deeds, plans, and administrative records that are permanent public records or generally kept permanently to document the physical and organizational development of City-owned cemeteries. Records are in poor sanitary condition and will be treated for mold before being transferred to Rivermoor.

Printing Department (recently abolished), North Street:

- Approximately 91 cubic feet, mainly City publications, 1897-2010 to be transferred to Archives; large volume of obsolete records to be scheduled for approved destruction; approximately 60 cubic feet of unexpired records to be transferred to records center
- Records of other departments stored at this site: estimated 100 cubic feet of World War I Veterans Services case files to be transferred to Archives; small volume of Parks

Department plans to be transferred to Archives; Auditing Department records previously approved for destruction.

Web Site Development

Staff (Zach & Kristen) completed training in web site content management, enabling them to add an updated version of the Guide to the City Archives, fourteen detailed finding aids and various detail improvements. The finding aids added were:

- Guide to the Town of Hyde Park records
- Guide to the Boston Art Commission records
- Guide to the Boston Arts Festival records
- Guide to the Deeds to City Property.
- Guide to the Boston Housing Authority proceedings
- Guide to the Office of the City Clerk records
- Guide to the City Census records
- Guide to the Records of Qualifications (Oaths of Office)
- Guide to the Franklin Fund records
- Guide to the Legal Opinions of the Corporation Counsel
- Guide to the Boston Tercentenary Committee records
- Guide to the School History Collection
- Guide to the Committee on Superintending the School for Mutual Instruction records
- Guide to the Department of School Health Services subject files

Ongoing Processing

Includes continuing work on entering records series in Archivists' Toolkit and updating locations

Volunteers

The Archives has one volunteer, recently started, working eight hours per week.

Records Management and Email Retention Management Training

On 12 October Corporation Counsel William Simmott wrote to all department heads requesting cooperation in facilitating records management and email retention training for all supervisory staff. Specifically, department heads were asked to assist the Law Department and the Archives and Records Management Division in completing two essential milestones in implementing City policy on records management, viz. training staff in email retention management and appointing a department records officer (DRO) responsible for developing and implementing a department file plan based on the City' records retention schedule. The training team, consisting of John McColgan from the Archives, John Houton from the Law Department and Patrick Collins from the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT), has thus far conducted fourteen trainings (four in public works) involving fifteen departments. The goals of this initiative are to create a general awareness of records management concepts in general and email retention in particular, to generate file plans in the departments and to initiate the implementation of records management practices as standard operating procedures in all departments.

Departments trained thus far include:

Arts, Tourism & Special Events
BFD (Fire Prevention Division)
Boston Public Library
Boston Transportation Department
Department of Neighborhood Development
Intergovernmental Relations
Mayor's Office
Neighborhood Services
Office of New Bostonians
Purchasing
Public Works
Registry Division
Small & Local Business / Residents Jobs Policy Program
Veterans Services

Among these and other departments ten file plans have been drafted or completed.

Records Management Technology: managing e-files other than e-mail

DoIT has two formal projects under way testing the capability of the City's existing technology resources for managing electronic records other than email. One aims to discover whether **Microsoft SharePoint 2010**, together with **MS Records Center**, can meet the City's requirements for a records management application. The other aims to investigate the various ways **Symantec File System Archiving** can be configured to meet the City's records retention requirements for electronic records, as well as current and future storage needs. (Patrick Collins, professional trained archivist/records manager formerly with the Archives Division, is managing both projects for DoIT.)

Records Management Technology: managing e-mail

DoIT is conducting a formal pilot project (also with Mr. Collins project manager) for a City-wide email management software, again using the City's existing technology resources. Through custom configuration of **Enterprise Vault**, DoIT will test an email management solution designed to allow users to properly file their email records. Such a solution will enable more efficient electronic discovery in the case of litigation and help ensure that the City is meeting its records retention and disposition obligations under state law. In the pilot project an **Enterprise Vault** managed folder entitled "Public Records" will be deployed to a small group of City email users. Widestretts Corp. of Cambridge, MA will perform the folder customization work as well as the programming necessary to push the folder to all identified users.

Program development planning

At the urging of Commission members at the last meeting Archives staff committed to begin designing a program development plan. To this end staff have identified generic steps to be taken and applied to the circumstances of the Division:

- Analyze the Archives Division's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges (SWOC)
- In the context of this analysis redefine the City Archives mission/vision
- To chart the achievement of the Archives mission, develop a plan of Goals & Objectives, Strategies & Tactics (GOST)
- Identify required resources for the GOST, including labor, materials, equipment, possible alternative revenues and labor resources, Public Relations, etc.
- Create a budget
- Create measurement tool for charting progress toward mission and goals.

General Summary

Since relocation to Rivermoor four years ago this four-person office has consolidated and documented the storage of more than 12,000 cubic feet of archives in a secure, environmentally controlled facility and created an extensible online *Guide* for all its contents. With the help of an additional archivist funded by the NHPRC grant, the Division created dozens of detailed finding aids for several hundred cubic feet of records, while simultaneously accessioning new collections and fielding the better part of 2,000 reference requests per year. With purpose-designed archival space available for the City's historical records for the first time ever, the Division has planned a project for systematic City-wide archives acquisition and has applied for NHPRC funding assistance for the project.

The Division has also developed records management policies and retention schedules and has enlisted stakeholder departments, including IT and Law, in collaborative initiatives for implementing records policy City-wide through departmental staff training and technology design. Records Officers are now being designated in the departments. A training program is under way for instructing and guiding DROs in managing email, developing file plans and implementing records management as standard operating procedure. Thus, consequent to the work of the Archives Division the City has committed to transforming the management of its records to a system that is legally compliant, operationally efficient and that preserves and protects its information assets for the appropriate period of time.

Yet, much work remains and more resources are required in bringing about a fully operational, City-wide archives and records management program. While this unprecedented collaborative initiative has got under way, it is not clear what long-term resources and strategies will be needed to ensure a thorough, comprehensive and effective records management transformation throughout the entire municipal government complex. It is certain that this huge project and its specific components require a clearer definition; that resources needed to tackle it must be identified; and that the resources to hand at the moment are not adequate.



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Agenda

Friday, 28 January 2011, 3:30 p.m.
City Hall – Curley Conference Room, 5th Floor

- I. Call to order

- II. Approval of Minutes

- III. Report of Chair

- IV. Report of Deputy Archivist

- V. Old Business
 - Electronic Records Management Software Application Initiative
 - Law Department / City Archives / DoIT / HR Email Training Initiative
 - Program development planning

- VI. New Business