



CITY OF BOSTON
Archives & Records Advisory Commission

Deputy Archivist's Report
For Meeting, Monday, 20 September 2010 3:00 p.m.

NHPRC Project

NHPRC Project Award # NAR08-RA-10057-07 ("Project for a City-wide Archives and Records Management Program") ended June 30, 2010. In the final report due to NHPRC by September 30, we can state that the project's archives objectives have been accomplished. We have created online folder-level finding aids for well over the 300 cubic feet required in the project, and an online guide to the all the contents of the City Archives. The processes for accomplishing the records management objectives have also been established. Retention schedule and policies have been written and approved; department records officers are being designated; employee records management training has been established; a collaborative relationship with DoIT has produced strategies for the management of electronic records and archives. The critical accomplishment of the project has been to bring together key stakeholder departments in the City, e.g. Law, DoIT, HR, BPS and BRA, in a joint effort to find solutions to the problem of managing and controlling the City's records and archives, particularly those in unstructured electronic format. The project has set in motion the processes for implementing records management City-wide.

Following up on this project and its predecessors, we have applied for a further NHPRC grant award for a "Project to Consolidate and Preserve the Archival Records of the City of Boston". If awarded, the grant would begin January 1, 2011 and provide funds supporting a project archivist for two years, a part-time assistant archivist for one year, and transportation for an estimated 5,000 equivalent cubic feet of hard copy archival records from the departments to Rivermoor. In addition to transferring legacy collections from departments, the project would 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; and an online and physical exhibit displaying the "*Lost Treasures of the City of Boston.*"

Reference

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

REFERENCE REQUESTS SUMMARY, JULY 2007 – AUGUST 2010

CLIENT CATEGORY	FY11(thru Aug)	FY10	FY09	FY08
<i>Public</i>	251	1580	1527	1715
<i>City Agency</i>	31	145	162	144
<i>Total</i>	282	1725	1689	1859

CONTACT MEANS	FY11(thru Aug)	FY10	FY09	FY08
<i>Telephone</i>	145	858	963	1058
<i>E-mail</i>	93	635	555	598
<i>In-person visits</i>	33	172	129	140
<i>Mail and Fax</i>	11	60	42	63
<i>Total</i>	282	1725	1689	1859

Accessions since 20 April 2010

- Rental Housing Resource Center 65 cubic feet
- Mayor's Press Releases 7 cubic feet
- Collecting Dept. records (additional books found) 100 cubic feet
- PFD/Capital Construction records 494 cubic feet
- City Clerk's office Business Certificate index 1 volume
- High School of Practical Arts Alumni Association records 2 cubic feet
- City Council Committee records 8 cubic feet
- City Council meetings on DVD 08-09 4 cubic feet
- Fire Department records 3.5 cubic feet
(missing volume from previous transfer and fire alarm cards)

Email Retention Management Training

The City-wide Email Retention Management Training project is under way as of mid-September. The Archives, Law Department, DoIT and Human Resources have collaborated to plan and produce an online training similar to that used in Conflict of Interest Law orientation earlier this year. All City employee email users must participate in this training by October 31st. Employees will be directed to the City's intranet site containing the Email Management and Retention Policy and a PowerPoint slide presentation. Employees will click an "Accept" button declaring they have received and read the document. An electronic record will be maintained by the City to verify citywide acknowledgment and compliance with the directive.

Records Management Training

In order to be fully compliant under the public records laws, the City must implement its records management policies and procedures across City departments. Effectual City-wide employee training in records management is therefore critical to the City's due diligence in carrying out its records management policies.

Official City policy defines records management responsibilities of employees:

- Department heads are responsible for implementing the City's records retention schedule in their respective departments and appointing a records officer to operate the department's records retention program.
- The Department Records Liaison Officer (DRO) is responsible for developing a department-specific retention file plan and administering the departmental records management program.
- All employees are responsible for following their department's file plan.

The File Plan is a department-specific management plan for records. It is a list of records series that are maintained in a department and that are related to items in the retention schedule. It is the department's specific plan for implementing the retention schedule.

The online email management training described above will be followed by onsite visits with key personnel in all departments. Department heads are being asked to provide the Archives Division with the name of a liaison to act as department records officer (DRO). The DRO should be a high level manager who has an effective overview of the business of the department. The appointment of a DRO and the submission of draft department file plans are critical preliminary benchmarks to this training.

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

At the last meeting it was reported that the Archives, along with several other agency stakeholders (DoIT, Law, BPS, BRA), have been investigating software technology solutions for the retention management of electronic records. In developments since then the team has

- Met with two additional vendors, OpenText and CA, to review their RMA products and evaluate them against the City's RMA Requirements and overall needs
- Held a conference call with a Gartner consultant to review the City's RMA Requirements and obtain advice on whether we should look at issuing a formal RFP for an RMA based on the City's current resources. The suggestion was made that we look to leverage the assets the City already possesses, e.g. Microsoft SharePoint Proof of Concept (POC) software; Symantec Enterprise Vault (for Email Archiving); and Symantec File System Vault (for Archiving other electronic files). Gartner recommended exploring MS SharePoint 2010 if we were going to look at SharePoint for records management purposes.

- The City thus reached out to Microsoft and a meeting was held at the end of July with Microsoft and their multi-vendor SharePoint Team. This meeting served to inform Microsoft about the City's current records management program, current electronic records issues, and what we were looking for in an electronic records management solution. Microsoft took the information they gathered from this meeting and produced a Statement of Work (SOW) for a pilot project using the City's SharePoint 2010 POC in one of the departments.
- Following the City's critique of the first draft, Microsoft is currently revising the SOW. The project is expected to focus on using the SP2010 POC as a place where we can explore and test SP2010's records management capabilities. This will involve bringing in SP2010 "Records Center" software and applying it to copied data, e.g. a copy of Patrick's "My Documents" folder, being managed within the SP2010 POC environment.

Records Management Technology: managing e-mail

The City owns Symantec Enterprise Vault for Email Archiving and is currently using this product in a broad way, i.e. once an email reaches ninety days it is brought into the vault. A system of Symantec managed folders, or "buckets", has been devised to refine the categorization of City email. These "buckets" match the various retention periods found in the City's General Records Retention Schedule and the departmental file plan. They are:

- **Reference Material (After Use)** [Reference Material consists of transitory records or other items not subject to further legal retention but convenient to the user to retain as reference. Items should be deleted on a regular basis once reference/informational use ceases.]
- **Short-term Administrative Records (≤ 1 year)** [Short Term Administrative Records document the routine business of the agency and have a retention period of less than or equal to one year.]
- **Routine Administrative Records (3 years)** [Routine Administrative Records document the routine business details supporting operational initiatives of the agency, e.g. work orders and routine correspondence.]
- **Operational Records (7 years)** [Operational Records document the operational means of carrying out the program, for example, project files or contract files. When a project or contract formally closes, all attendant records should be moved to the "Closed Files" folder.]
- **Program Records (Long-term)** [Program Records document the essential functions and actions of the agency in its role within city government. Program records include records uniquely documenting program development and executive decisions.]

These "buckets" help categorize email by tagging the emails in each respective folder with a distinct retention category meta-data tag. The user, however, must still decide which "bucket" to use when filing their email. Since each "bucket" aligns with a category from the file plan, the user will be able to consult their department's file plan to determine which "bucket" to use. This system is not perfect and it will require training and consistent auditing.

Currently the "buckets" have only been delivered to the Archives Division. Once acknowledgement of the Email Policy is underway, we are looking at the Office of Human

Relations (OHR) as a more formal pilot environment for the “buckets.” If the “buckets” are deemed successful within OHR, further plans will be developed for a roll out on a department-by-department basis. The exact path of such a roll out will be determined by whether a department has a file plan in place.

General

The City’s archives and records management program is at an important crossroads. In the past four years the program has relocated to a purpose-designed, environmentally controlled archives facility. It has placed online an extensive and detailed guide to the City’s archival holdings and continues to provide the public and City departments with speedy, courteous and efficient reference services. It continues to offer outsourced records center services to departments for non-archival records. It has created a retention schedule and policies for the management of records of all formats. It has promoted the collaboration of stakeholder agencies in addressing the management of electronic records and compliance with the public records laws.

The question is whether progress can be sustained so that the program can be truly implemented throughout the enormous and complicated organization that is the City of Boston. The answer lies on the one hand in the level of commitment on the part of senior management in the individual departments and the emphasis management places on the importance of the program; and on the other the appropriate level of professional expertise allocated to the program centrally in the Archives Division and in the departments themselves.