



**CITY OF BOSTON**  
**Archives & Records Advisory Commission**

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**Agenda**

Monday, 26 March 2012, 3:30 p.m.  
Piemonte Room, City Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

- I. Call to order
- II. Approval of Minutes
- III. Report of Chair
- IV. Report of Deputy Archivist
- V. Old Business
  - Implementing City-wide Records Management Policy
  - Permanent Records Transfer to City Archives (NHPRC Project)
  - Physical/Intellectual Control over City Archives Holdings
  - Promotion of City Archives Holdings
  - Archives Staff Classification
- VI. New Business



**CITY OF BOSTON**

**Archives & Records Advisory Commission**

**Deputy Archivist's Report on Archives & Records Management Division Activity  
Since December 5, 2011  
For Meeting, Monday, March 26, 2012, 3:30 p.m.**

**Goal I: Establishment of City-wide policy for management of all municipal records**

The City is in essential compliance with public records laws in so far as departments implement records management policy as standard operating procedures. Building a program for bringing about this compliance involves:

- Designing and implementing electronic records management (ERM) software enabling users to store electronic records in folders that will preserve the records for the appropriate retention period. *(In 2011 DoIT and the Archives Division collaboratively designed the email and electronic files retention folder rules for ERM systems. DoIT is currently phasing in Symantec Enterprise Vault retention folders for all email users [excepting BPS, BPD & BPL] and will soon implement Symantec Files System Archives for unstructured electronic files.)*
- Developing department-specific file plans based on City or State municipal retention schedules
- Designating and training Department Records Officers (DROs) to develop file plans and carry out records disposition procedures
- Providing consultation to departments and coordinating records disposition procedures
- Affording records center and archives repository services

There are now approximately fifty DROs representing most City departments. All have been given permissions for accessing the "DRO Toolkit". The Toolkit consists of a SharePoint database and related resources enabling DROs to develop file plans with online assistance from Archives staff. It provides links to retention schedules; terms and definitions; and electronic workflow forms to request destruction authorization and archives transfer. DRO training sessions have been scheduled in April and May. In the meantime we have been distributing a one-page weekly bulletin for the edification of DROs in the development of their records management expertise. A DRO Guide is near completion, and an information sheet on the Division's services to City departments is being printed for distribution among department heads, DROs and elected City officials. While outreach has focused on records management principles and file plan development, in-person training will promote practical implementation of records disposition.

Authorized destruction of obsolete City records since the December 5 Commission meeting amounts to 152 cubic feet and 562 Mb:

- Office of Civil Rights 48 c.f.
- City Council 64 cf., 562 Mb
- Municipal Police 40 c.f.
- TOTAL: 152 c.f., 562 Mb

## **Goal II: Transfer archival records to City Archives**

Accessions outside the scope of the NHPRC project include:

- Boston Teachers Retirement Fund records 0.5 cu. ft.
- Gift – Portrait of Mayor Samuel Eliot, 1837-1839
- Gift – 500 color slides of Boston circa 1965-1985 by photographer Peter Dreyer
- Gift – Henry Parkman Mayoral campaign poster, 1933, with Parkman's picture and the slogan, "Give the People a Break". (Parkman placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the election won by Frederick Mansfield). Gift of Herb Gleason.
- Gift – CPAC records of Patricia Corcoran 14 cu. ft.

The NHPRC project calls for (among other objectives)

- "Survey[ing] a minimum of thirty departments or executive level offices to compile and develop an inventory of the City's permanent records, both hard copy and electronic"; and
- The "Transfer to the Archives Center and accession of an estimated 3,000 equivalent cubic feet of hard-copy archival records that are most at risk".

Completed File Plans will reveal the identity of permanent records in the departments. Systematic disposition procedures will ensure the transfer of hard copy permanent records to the City Archives and the preservation of electronic archives in the permanent retention folders installed by DoIT.

Accessions related to the NHPRC project thus far include:

- Cemetery Division records, 1880s – 1962, 25 cu. ft.
- City Clerk administrative files, 1993-2011, 5 cu. ft.
- City Clerk Business certificates 2006, 3 cu. ft.
- School Building Contracts and specification, 1902-1938; published reports for specific years between 1838 and 1952, 8 cu. ft.
- Fire Department records, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, includes minutes, photos, mayor's approvals, correspondence, reports, fire alarm records and artifacts, 59 cu. ft.

While most departments may generate low volumes of archives, large volume accessions are anticipated from certain agencies, e.g. Corporation Counsel and Schools.

Among the most important historical records of the City of Boston are those held at Boston Public Library for physical safe-keeping on behalf of their legal departmental custodians. Records of the City Clerk, including early town records, the Mayor, Corporation Counsel, Schools, Public Works and other agencies have been under the physical protection of the Library due to the erstwhile inability of responsible agencies or the City Archives to afford their physical accommodation. With the purpose-designed Rivermoor facility in operation under the care of professionally trained archivists, the City is now in a position to retrieve these records to statutory custody. These records are specifically mentioned in the NHPRC grant application as among those to be transferred. They further qualify as among "at risk" records which NHPRC is prioritizing for transfer in that, while they remain outside proper custody, they are at risk of being arranged and organized without regard to their organic relationship to the records of agencies whence they came. Thus, for reasons stemming both from statute and from the principles of archival preservation, these records should be managed in the Archives Division as an integral part of their department records group.

Also of singular historical importance are the birth, marriage and death archives of the Registry Division. The Archives Division has proposed an initiative for the preservation and access of Registry Division archives by means of a partnership between the two divisions. Modeled after statutory arrangements between the Massachusetts Archives and the State Registry of Vital Records, ninety+ - year old records would be transferred every five years. This would alleviate Registry workload, enhance user access at both the Registry and Archives Divisions, and fulfill the NHPRC grant commitment to transfer hardcopy archival records most at risk.

The Archives Division looks forward to more definitive responses from both these agencies to its transfer proposals. The Library has indicated that planning the return of City records is subject to the results of internal discussions, and it is hope these results will soon be made known. The Registry Division has indicated that before such transfer can be considered, a capital project for digitizing birth, marriage and death records must be designed for a document management system to service current agency operations. As an advisory participant in the work of designing this project the Archives Division will likely advise that 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century vital records are not required for current agency operations and would be better served by their early transfer to the Archives Division whether or not they are part of the digitization effort.

### **Goal III: Physical and intellectual control over City Archives holdings**

Since December progress has been made on five of the six objectives for achieving this goal.

1. Consolidate archives data into Archivists Toolkit data management system: All series not previously recorded in ATK have been so listed.
2. Backlog Processing: one intern and two volunteers have been processing nineteenth century City Council Committee records. Mayor Flynn's Development Office files, the final textual series of the Flynn group will be soon completed by Marta.
3. Provide Collection Access Resources for Users and Staff: all finding aids have been printed out for use in the reference room.
4. Stacks Maintenance: Cleaned the records room.
5. Develop Security Policies: Policies for archives security and reference room use are in final draft.
6. Objective 6, "Develop archives management policies", is a matter of defining, in writing, consistent procedures long in practice. (Accessions, Donations, Transfers).

### **Goal IV: Promotion of City Archives holdings**

Progress has also been made attaining the objectives of this goal

1. Create workflow for scanning records: Perambulation records scanned and posted on Flickr. Scanners priced.
2. Exploit Internet resources: The Guide is being put directly on the web site and will soon be searchable. FaceBook is regularly updated, and a Tumblr account has been created featuring "Today's Treasure".
3. Improve outreach to City departments: The Informational Guide is about to go to press; a "Records Management Fact Sheet" has been posted on the HUB; DRO weekly bulletins.

4. Create exhibits: Marta has developed an exhibit of BPS records, online and physical in-house.
5. Accommodate all reference requests within 48 hours

**REFERENCE REQUESTS SUMMARY, JULY 2008 – March 2012**

CLIENT CATEGORY	FY12 (thru March)	FY11	FY10	FY09
<i>Public</i>	1125	1429	1580	1527
<i>City Agency</i>	147	185	145	162
<b>Total</b>	1272	1614	1725	1689

CONTACT MEANS	FY12 (thru March)	FY11	FY10	FY09
<i>Telephone</i>	611	836	858	963
<i>E-mail</i>	507	562	635	555
<i>In-person visits</i>	135	168	172	129
<i>Mail and Fax</i>	19	48	60	42
<b>Total</b>	1272	1614	1725	1689



CITY OF BOSTON  
**Archives & Records Management Advisory Commission**

**Minutes**  
**Monday December 5, 2011, 3:55 p.m.**  
**Curley Room, City Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Members Present:** Rosaria Salerno (City Clerk), Kevin Corridan (Law), Elaine O'Connor (Administration Services), James O'Toole (Public), Bill Fowler (Public), Patty McMahon (Registry)

**Others Present:** Deputy Archivist John McColgan, Asst. Archivist Dave Nathan, Asst. Archivist Kristen Swett, Asst. Archivist Margaret Crilly, Charles Childress (Boston Public Schools), Patrick Collins (Dept. of Innovation & Technology), Dean Huggins & Ruth Edele (Boston Redevelopment Authority)

**Call to order.**

**Acceptance of Previous Minutes:** City Clerk and Chair Rosaria Salerno directed attention to the agenda and the minutes previously distributed to members. The minutes for September 26, 2011 were reviewed and unanimously accepted.

**Report of Chair:** Rosaria Salerno welcomed Commission members and guests, and noted that this is indeed the last Commission meeting over which she presides. She noted that the Archives staff has been particularly active this quarter in developing an electronic records program. She also called attention to the staff reclassification issue which will be discussed later in the meeting. She then introduced Deputy Archivist John McColgan to review the previously distributed report on current activities of the program.

**Deputy Archivist Quarterly Report:** John McColgan introduced newly-hired Asst. Archivist Margaret Crilly and announced the pending hire of an NHPRC grant project archivist. The project archivist's work will assist us in systematizing and significantly increasing agencies' records destruction and transfer activity. He noted that we had six student interns and volunteers assisting on reference and processing this Fall, an unusually large number.

- Q: Processing & Web Update: Bill Fowler asked about a reported gap in Council transcripts.
- A: Gaps as these are unfortunately common in accessions.

A Mission Plan as requested by the Commission has been developed which will be linked with staff performance reviews.

- Q: Should the Commission approve the plan? A: Yes.
- Q: Suggest a reference to carrying out laws and regulations. A: We will do so.
- Q: Where are the legacy records to be transferred? A: in the agencies.
- Q: Can we assure the security of these valuable future accessions when being viewed by Reading Room patrons? A: We are committed to good security, have appropriate facilities to facilitate it, and, in fact, are tightening security now after identifying some problem areas.
- Q: What is the “Hub” referred to in the Plan? A: It’s the City’s Intranet site.
- Commission members unanimously approved the Mission Plan.

### **City-wide Strategies for Implementing Archives & Records Management**

- ERM Software: Folders for e-mail retention going up on screens of the first agency.
  - Q: How is retrieval done? A: through user’s sub-folder classifications.
  - Q: How will testing for compliance be done? A: Using criteria developed with Archives this will be done several months from now.
  - Q: Any checks and balances on inappropriate purging? A: Yes, working with DROs and their file plans.
  - Q: Will there be a system in place for disposition of departing managers’ records? A: Yes.
  - Q: Screening filter for users of permanent records down the pike? A: need to be developed jointly by DoIT and Archives.
- File Plan Database: This is a critical tool for managing agency series retention; education necessary; agency cooperation crucial in designing the file plans.
  - Q: From a manager’s perspective, suggest keep presentations simple and crystal clear; useful to include visual snapshots of subjects.
  - Q: Agree that training is critical for DROs
  - Q: Including a Help button and as many online resources as possible
  - A: We will target the DROs and exhort the managers to support them.

### **Archives Staff Reclassification**

- City Clerk Salerno directed attention to the reclassification materials previously distributed and called for discussion.
  - Q: Why is the request focused on individuals rather than on staff as a class? A: The practice has been to identify the individuals.
  - Q: How can the Commission help? Would it be useful for the Public members to comment on an apparent mismatch between the actual level of staff responsibilities and the level expected in the current staff classification? The Public members present agreed to consult together to fashion such a communication in support of a reclassification review.
  - Q: Motion proposed and passed with five affirmative and one abstention that the Commission go on record as endorsing the City Clerk’s recommendation for review of Archives staff classifications in accordance with normal City and Human Resources

- procedures.
- Q: Request to have the endorsement be addressed to both the Personnel Review Committee and Human Resources.

### **E-mail Retention Policy—Approval of Revisions**

- City Clerk Salerno directed attention to the e-mail policy materials previously distributed and called for discussion regarding a prohibition on use of personal accounts with “G-mail” and other non-City e-mail services for the sending, receiving, and storing of official City e-mail.
- Q: Request to make clear that the intention is not to interfere with personal use of non-City e-mail services A: agreed
- After discussion Salerno moved that, if there were no other observations, that the proposed revised policy minus the reference to “G-mail” be adopted; it was seconded and passed unanimously.

Salerno stated that, if there were no other observations that she would like to thank Commission members and Archives staff for their support over the years. As the e-mail discussion illustrated, the work can be messy but it’s being done and done well. Salerno moved that, if there were no other observations, that the meeting be adjourned; it was seconded and passed. The next meeting is to be determined. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.

### **Documents & Exhibits**

- Agenda
- Minutes of 26 September 2011 meeting
- Deputy Archivist’s Report
- City Archives Mission Plan
- Reclassification memo & 9-F letters
- Email Management & Retention Policy Proposed Amendments