

Record Storage Advisory Committee Minutes, June 26, 2019

Present: Leslie Bracebridge (LB), Susan Millinger (SPM), Susie Mosher (SM), Linda Avis Scott (LAS), Becky Torres (BT) arrived partway through the meeting. Absent, Savanna Ouellette(SO) .

The meeting convened at 11:07 am.

1. Minutes from May 22, 2019: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes; the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Datalogger data report: LAS presented two graphs, of temperature and humidity from January to June in the Old Town Hall (OTH) vault and in the lower level main room of Town Hall (TH), together with the eClimate Notebook report on Risk Summary, Preservation Metrics, and Data Overview.

First, it was pointed out that the notable drop in temperature observed in the graph from the OTH coincided with the period when its furnace was not working.

The Risk Summary consists of Natural Aging, Mold Risk, Metal Corrosion and Mechanical Damage. Both places were assessed as good in natural aging and mold prevention and ok in metal corrosion. However, while OTH was ok in mechanical damage, TH was assessed as risk. We do not know what this means, but noted that in Preservation Metrics, TH was lower than OTH in both %EMC maximum and minimum.

In comparison with the last reporting, of September 2018 to January 2019, there was a notable change. Mold risk, a major concern for the committee, was the same, good, in both sites in the earlier report. Mechanical damage was assessed as risk in both places in the earlier report but, as just noted, has improved in OTH though not in TH.

The decision was made to find out to what Mechanical Damage refers, and to report the findings of the datalogger to the Buildings Committee and the Select Board.

3. Reports on the meetings individual members of this Committee held with the Departments of Fire, Police, and Public Works about the permanent records they hold and their storage of these records.

a. Police Chief (meeting with LAS) was pleased to have a copy of the retention schedule, because he hadn't been sure what should be retained. Storage conditions have not been a priority; other matters are more pressing. Police Dept records must be kept confidential and stored in the Department.

b. Fire Chief (met with LB), thanked the Committee for the retention schedule. For the Fire Department, also, records must be kept confidential and stored in the Department. The Chief has plenty of space for storage; he knows that records must be kept in fireproof containers. Other aspects of safety and security of storage were not discussed.

Based on these two reports, the Committee hypothesized that emergency services have their own mandate about record-keeping, requiring that records be kept confidential and on site. It would be desirable, however, to have official confirmation of such a mandate. Since the Town Clerk is officially responsible for all Town records, there needs to be a method by which the Town Clerk can be reassured that every department is keeping its permanent records safe and secure. The Town Clerk should also be able to provide required materials if needed, and to help with the process of destruction if the departments in question want help.

Does the Secretary of the Commonwealth have any responsibility to ensure all permanent records are properly kept?

c. Department of Public Works (met with SM). The Head has a lot of records stored; realizes that he doesn't need to keep them all, that some could go into dead storage and others be destroyed. None of the DPW's records are kept in fireproof storage, so he needs to be provided with what is needed to keep his permanent records safe and secure. DPW does not generate documents at a fast rate.

Discussion of the DPW as a place to store records which is potentially at risk for a fire led to the realization that most of the records stored in TH are not in a fire-proof site.

Summing up the results of these meetings: the report will state that these situations are on a continuum. (BT was present for the rest of the meeting.)

The visits to offices not situated in Town Hall revealed that:

1. Emergency Services appear to have their own mandate which affects storage of records. How does the Town ensure that the permanent records of such departments are in fire-proof situations which are also theft- and pest-proof?
2. Awareness grew that most records in Town Hall are not stored in fire-proof situations. LB pointed out that one answer to this is to keep multiple copies in different places.
3. Other offices not in TH: the Library; the School
 - SO had met with the Library Director earlier, and learned that the Library does not generate records at a rapid rate. Was the requirement of safety and security mentioned?
 - The Elementary School was not included in this survey. Is known to have had a mice problem last year.
4. RSAC's concern is not centralization, but that permanent records are stored safely and securely.

4. On recycling shredded materials. Paper leaf bags are now available, so shredded materials can be recycled.

5. Writing a report to the Select Board on the work of the Committee. Was briefly discussed, as time was running out.

- It was agreed that the chart would be an important part of the report, as a preliminary document.
- Also, the field trips to learn about other towns record storage should be included.
- This should be a status report and a request for the Select Board to tell RSAC where they should focus their attentions, if the Committee is to continue.
- SM and LAS are to draft a report for the Committee to discuss at the next meeting.

Next Meeting July 24 at 11 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P Millinger, secretary