

FDCA meeting
Washingtoniana Division
Martin Luther King Memorial Library
October 7, 2015

Attending: Bill Rice; Mary Beth Corrigan; Fynnette Eaton; Trudy Huskamp Peterson; Bill Brown; Katharina Hering; Becky Katz; Andrew Cassidy Amstutz; Carl Bergmann; Matthew Gilmore; Brian Kraft; Leah Prescott; Robin Diener; Alyssa Stein; Derek Gray; Eric Stoykovich; Alison Bryce; Britney Crawford; Patrice Brown; Charles Hendricks; Leah Prescott; Justin Grimes; Yvonne Liser; Mary Ternes.

1. Introduction of the new PRA, Rebecca “Becky” Katz

1. After a pre-meeting with the new PRA, Rebecca “Becky” Katz with the core FDCA group, the official meeting convenes at 6:30 p.m.

Introduction Becky Katz, who was appointed as the new Public Records Administrator in September: Becky holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School, and in May 2015 completed her MLIS at Catholic University. She has worked for DC government for the past 9 years: Since 2012, she has been working as Assistant General Counsel for the Council of D.C. Prior to that, she worked for the Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances of the Office of the Secretary of DC for two years. She began her career in the DC government as a policy analyst for the DC government.

- Becky became interested in the archives, and public records administration, when she was trying to locate government records as part of her responsibilities and couldn't find them.

- Becky is glad to be meeting with us, and looks forward to working with the FDCA as advocates to making the DC archives more useful for the public, including staffing increase and the construction of a new facility.

-FDCA emphasize that we are here to help, and serve as a resource.

II. Planning for the new facility

-- architectural team

-- Program of Requirements

--Community meetings

-- FDCA review, comment on DGS report

Recap: The Council submitted a budget that appropriated \$2 million for FY 2016 for the DC Archives, representing a cut from the \$12 million proposed by Mayor Bowser. They delayed the project for a new facility to FY 2019 and FY 2020. The total seven-year appropriation for the Archives has increased from \$34 million to \$48.4 million.

The architectural team--Hartman-Cox Architects and EYP of Washington, DC, which was selected in July based on the RFP, will submit the first draft of the program requirements for the proposed facility for the Office of Public Records on October 30. This will include:

- Office space requirements
- Research space requirements
- Storage space requirements
- Staffing
- Space for public programs, incl. exhibits

The architectural team, Becky, Secretary of the District of Columbia Lauren Vaughan, Jeff Bonvechio and others traveled to Ottawa to tour the new facility for that city's archives. A written report on that trip is not yet available.

Discussion about how DGS versus the architectural team calculates space requirements. Ongoing discussion about survey of all records managed by the OPS – which surveys have been done of records that have been transferred to the archives, and records that are still in custody of agencies? How many estimated cubic feet total? How is growth over time estimated? Clarification that no records are stored at any Iron Mountain facility, and court records are not included in the total count.

--What is the procedure for public comment after the draft of the report gets submitted? Stakeholders, including the FDCA but also others, need to have the ability to have input on this important planning document.

-- Bill Rice and Fynnette Eaton plan meeting with Admiral Weaver (director, DGS) and Jeff Bonvechio (Deputy Director, DGS) on Oct, 26.

FDCA will request by email to Lauren Vaughn and Admiral Weaver the review of the program of requirements both by our leadership and at public meetings. This request will be reinforced during Bill's and Fynnette's meeting.

[Update: FDCA sent a thank you email to Becky and another to Secretary Lauren Vaughan, Beverly Perry, Jeff Bonvechio and Admiral Chris Weaver asking that FDCA review and comment on the draft report by Hartman-Cox and EYP as soon as it submitted and that input be solicited from all stakeholders. We also asked for a copy of the design contract and a written report of their field trip to Ottawa.]

III. Staffing

– How do we advocate for sufficient staffing? Comparison with other archives.

--Fynnette Eaton shares document with an overview of staff at other state and municipal archives in the U.S.

[Addendum by KH: Also informative: (2013) Council of State Archivists State of State Records report, <http://www.statearchivists.org/reports/index.htm>]

--Current staff at Naylor Court: Becky Katz and 4 staff.

--Becky Katz suggests seeking free labor – longer discussion about problems with volunteer labor, spacing needs, requirement for supervision and training, experiences at many other archives in the U.S. Emphasis by attendees that professional staffing requirements and volunteer and internship program are two different things. Suggestion that Becky Katz consults with the Historical Society, which has a long-established volunteer program, and other institutions in DC.

--Discussion about space at the current facility – how big is it? How many staff and researchers can it accommodate?

-BK: Accommodating additional staff is “high enough priority” that we should work to create the extra space. Naylor Court is only open 6 hours per week for research – 3 hours on two days. Facility can only accommodate few researchers. We are working on updating information for researchers.

-How many researchers come on average? How many requests do you get in general?

-- What is your elevator speech when people ask you when will you have digitized all the records? records?

-- What are the current digitization initiatives, what is the state of discussions with the Family History Center?

IV. DC Archives and relationship with MLK Memorial Library

-Mayor and other officials are obviously interested in exploring a partnership. However, there is a lack of clarity about what the partnership should entail. The needs for the library and for the archives have to be assessed independently – it’s clear that the library and the OPR serve different functions and that the OPR also has a business function. Once the needs are assessed,

then possibilities for partnerships at different levels can be explored. Co-location is clearly not feasible considering the records volume at the OPR, but there may be some organizational symmetry, and collaborations, such as developing a common public access portal for materials, or common administrative structures can be discussed.

-Derek Gray reported that the architectural team has met with Richard Reyes-Gavilan to discuss the feasibility of the addition of the Archives to MLK Library. They determined it was not feasible.

-Archives could tap into the resources of Washingtoniana, it's obviously a very well and professionally run operation.

- Could BK meet with Richard Reyes-Gavilan?

- General concern about how the public involvement in the planning process will be administered– Robin Diener says that the advisory group for the renovation of the MLK Library was insufficiently involved in the planning process.)

V. Outreach efforts:

--Not clear if CP and Metro Connection will do stories/shows.

--Archives Day, Oct. 30th – we will have a table.

--Present at History Network at the DC Historical Studies Conference,

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