

Friends of the D.C. Archives January 20, 2015 Meeting

Attending: Mary Beth Corrigan, Trudy Peterson, Jennifer Krafchik, Katja Hering, Bill Rice, Bill Brown, William Skelsey, Derek Gray, Andrew Cassidy-Amstutz, Ann McDonough, Eric Stoykovich, Barbara Burger, Fynnette Eaton, Henry Mayer, Dana Litowitz, Thomas Worthington, Patrice Brown

Updates:

1. Meeting with the Attorney General on Tuesday, January 20th
 - Encouraged him to understand the need for a functioning archive in order to properly defend the city and to prosecute; emphasized digitizing records of DC agencies
 - Requested he be an advocate for the Archives to the Mayor, Council, Auditor General
 - Watch as RFP for archives building goes through
 - AG requested a list of best practices for city archives so he understands what he is advocating for
 - His assistant was also very interested
 - Photograph taken at the meeting will go on the website
2. Clarence Davis, Archivist, has left his position—no other information at this time
3. Will try to get meetings with auditor general, Phil Mendelson, and the Mayor; group representatives should also get a meeting with the Secretary
4. There is another draft of the Gregory Hunter needs assessment report that no one in the Friends has seen yet (dated 8/15)

RFP for architectural engineers

- 1/15- RFP that has been publically released
- Pacifico, Traceries, and others have received calls/emails from architectural firms about joining their proposals
- Primary concerns about the RFP:
 - Call for a project to rehabilitate an unidentified building
 - Claims storage of 90,000 cubic feet—DC holds 300,000 feet (RFP mentions less than a 1/3 of what already exists)
 - Based on the Hunter report
 - Written in a very general way—any vendor will most likely qualify
- Bidder's conference on 1/23—someone will attend to see what District is telling bidders
- Proposals due 2/11
- Last day for questions 2/4
- Award on 2/27
- *Who are the reviewers for the RFP proposals?*

Appropriations

- City is in a deficit and there will most likely be budget cuts
- Nothing happening with the appropriation at this time; something to ask the council members and Mayor
- Hearings for budget begin in March? Need volunteers to testify at those hearings
- The Mayor's office is trying to demonstrate some progress on this project

Is it possible for the Friends to try and delay the award?

It may be possible if we pass a resolution that the Friends should have been consulted and would like time to review this issue with the Secretary and with Mendelson

Action Items:

Send a public letter to the acting DGS director Jonathan Kayne about the DC Archives and the concerns we have and request the opportunity to interact with those people who are managing the RFP process. Copies should be sent to:

- Kathy Patterson
- City Administrator
- Mayor
- Secretary
- Grosso
- Mendelson

Send letters and request meetings with the following to advocate the maintenance of the appropriation for the DC Archives.

- Kathy Patterson
- City Administrator
- Mayor
- Secretary
- Grosso
- Mendelson

Will seek meetings with:

- DGS
- Secretary
- City Administrator

Need to draft a one-page fact sheet with talking points for the meetings

Include the following points:

- Archives falls under the Secretary's office, who reports to the Mayor
- Situation with new archives appropriation

- RFP process executed by DGS
- Basic principles of the organization
- Space needs, staffing needs
- Advocacy group with mission

Outreach

- Website
 - Updates in December
 - Still need to add chronology
 - Features include digest to laws relating to DC Archives and Office of Public Records; appropriate terminology
 - Tried to get permission from the *Washington Post* to post Chen's article on the website—for one year it will be \$900; will apply fair use and summarize and quote from the article; provide link to ProQuest Digest entry
 - AOI is covering costs for the website
- Postcard
 - Evergreen piece for marketing and outreach; mission; for more information, etc.
 - Where to distribute—local repositories including universities, public library branches, bookstores, convention center
 - Need an idea of the amount to give to each repository, with some available for meetings, to hand out during hearings, coffee shops, etc.
 - DC Caucus is paying for a portion
 - Will be shipped to Derek, MLK and printed by VistaPrint
 - Funded in part by DC Caucus, MARAC
- Story ideas
 - Press release about the letter we will send; not doing the right thing by the Archives; not consulting Friends; needs are not properly quantified; fresh start with a new administration; make it a positive for the new administration to do right by the Archives
- Media relations
 - Local blogs (Greater Greater Washington, Prince of Petworth)— reach out to the blogs and others should also do this; the more people who put out the idea, the more likely it will be that someone starts writing about this issue; should Tweet at the blogs
 - Universal Declaration on Archives from Canada; language in universal format, 18 languages, UNESCO endorsed in November 2011
 - Put it on the website
 - Friends members should pull language from it and use when speaking to people about this issue
 - If possible, assign speakers to neighborhood organization meetings to gather support
 - Send the postcards to local bookstores, repositories and DC library branches
 - Reach out to DC Vote
 - DC Historic Preservation Office
 - Friends should reach out to local organizations to gather support

Governance

- Should we develop a steering committee to more formally organize?
 - Kim Bender, Heurich House offered to give legal advice
 - Miriam Nisbet also offered to provide legal assistance (Trudy)
 - Basic structure with officers, committees clearly defined with a BROAD outline of what you want to accomplish
- Election process
- No decision was made

Next Steps

- Distribute a schedule of hearings
- Bill will work with Friends members to prep them for testifying
- Need to find volunteers willing to attend the nomination hearings (DGS Director, Secretary) for support

FDCA will reach out to the following groups for information and support:

Historical Records Advisory board (2014)

- Elizabeth Clark-Lewis-Friends
- Joy Kinard, NPS
- Henry Terrell
- Veronica Pace-Friends
- Ira Stohlman-Friends
- Bernard Demczuk-Friends
- Jesse Bemley

Archives and Records Center Advisory Board –never met

- Trudy
- David Weinberg
- David Lake
- Merrick Malone
- Albert Banks
- Carol Mitten
- Danna Bell-Russell
- Jesse Bernley