

Blue Ribbon Task Force for Historic Archives March 10, 2023 Minutes

Strawbery Banke – Carter Center

Attendees: Richard Candee, Alan Cohen, Katie C. (for Christine Friese), Chuck Doleac, Elizabeth Farish, Tom Hardiman, Vince Lombardi, Kristen Peterson, Susan Sterry, Tom Watson

Minutes were accepted for meeting February 24

Kristen reported that her colleague, David Choate, said there was less than 1% of commercial real estate available in Portsmouth. He suggested that we investigate the land belonging to the Community Campus. Other open land in the city was discussed including Pease Tradeport. Vince is planning a meeting with Paul Breen, Executive Director of Pease Development Authority and will add this to his conversation with him. The McIntyre building would be highly desirable, but not realistically available. Space at Jones Ave was also discussed, but may not be suitable due to compaction issues. Municipal property would be the best option, if any could be identified as suitable and available.

Open discussion, covering several topics:

- Tom offered that perhaps 2 locations would be the best solution, one for documents and manuscripts and a second location for 3 dimensional items.
- Question raised whether the city would fund a facility that housed 3 dimensional items.
- There may be more grant opportunities for facilities housing 3 dimensional items.
- A lot of private collections would be more likely to donate them to a central facility if there was room.
- There are multiple organizations in the city, each with their own needs.
- We need to understand the cost of facilities.
- Does it make sense to look for storage outside of the City of Portsmouth. The city may have requirements to store in the City but is Newington a possibility?
- Certain documents may need to be within the city limits. Vince to investigate. The next meeting will be at City Hall, where we may perhaps meet with the legal department as well as the Mayor and City Manager.
- An important part of the mission statement is the growth plan.
- Funding sources: grants, gifts, 501(c)3, public/private partnerships.

Part of the final report should include a statement on the cost of waiting and the price of doing nothing.

- degradation of objects

- loss of objects to other facilities/organizations
- increase in construction costs

Kristen will attempt to contact former state archivist, Brian Burford, who is a wealth of information, who may be able to provide pointers to other communities who have successfully taken on a similar project. Alan will assist.

Kristen will also contact David Choate to determine potential commercial property available in communities other than Portsmouth.

Tom and Jeff will try to get processing costs of Historic New England's storage facility in Haverhill, MA.

The meeting concluded with a tour of Carter Center's archives and a look at the storage in the basement.

Respectively Submitted,
Alan Cohen

DRAFT