



Archives Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2024

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Location: Maine State Archives offices (17 Elkins Lane, Augusta, ME) and Zoom

Board Members Present: Greg Zinser, Eric Stout, Brenda Kielty, James Francis, Steve Collins, Adelaide Solomon-Jordan, Shelly Crosby

Board Members Absent: Shirley Browne, Paige Lilly, Jennifer Tarr

MSA Staff Members Present: Kate McBrien (ex-officio), Heather Moran, Felicia Kennedy, Tiffany Tattan-Awley

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm.

Welcome

James welcomed the Board and acknowledged a quorum.

Kate recited the Maine State Archives' Land Acknowledgement.

Approval of November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Steve Collins made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written. Greg Zinser seconded the motion. Kate did a roll call, Board members voted as follows: Brenda Kielty, yes; Steve Collins, yes; Greg Zinser, yes; James Francis, yes; Shelly Crosby, yes; Eric Stout, yes; Adelaide Solomon-Jordan, yes; Voting 7-0 in favor of approving the minutes.

State Employee Disciplinary Records Update

Kate provided an update on the state employee disciplinary record to the Board and the Board's recommendations to the Right to Know Advisory Committee, who was very interested and appreciative. The retention periods for most employees were deemed

sufficient, and we recommended a unique schedule for law enforcement to retain their disciplinary records for a more extended period due to their role in public safety. The advisory committee then consulted with unions, law enforcement, and the Bureau of Human Resources. However, they felt they lacked the authority to recommend significant changes as this public records issue had become intertwined with human resources and state policy and contracts.

As a result, the Advisory Committee submitted its report to the Judiciary Committee, found on their website. They recommend that the Judiciary Committee create a study group to examine the issue as it significantly impacts state policy and operations. The Judiciary Committee recently received the report and is currently discussing it.

Felicia and Kate discussed the possibility of tabling the personnel schedule for the local government at the next meeting. Eric Stout and Brenda were also involved in the discussion and mentioned that the Right to Know Advisory Committee only meets between October and December. The next meeting will be in mid or late October, during which the study group will provide input to the Judiciary Committee. Shelly expressed concern about the delay in reviewing the material and not making any changes relevant to the local government personnel.

Kate agreed that the Right to Know Advisory Committee would revisit the issue; Brenda acknowledged that the HR expertise in union representation was too much for the Committee to handle. She suggested that if the study group doesn't become active soon, the work could take a long time to complete.

Eric agreed with everything and acknowledged Shelley's concern about moving forward. He also mentioned that other stakeholders must be brought in, but the Right to Know Advisory Committee still has a say.

Felicia questioned whether the conversation on the actual disciplinary record should continue, but Greg agreed it was acceptable.

Consideration of Records Schedules

- a. DOT Aeronautics (Archival)
- b. Reports of the Child Welfare Services (Archival)
- c. Chief Advocate files (Archival)
- d. Land for Maine's Future (15 years, then destroy)

Felicia Kennedy and her team at the Maine State Archives have been working on inventorying and cleaning up files. They have identified three schedules for records review, including those related to child welfare services and chief advocate files. These records were found in the inventory and should be appropriately captured through records retention schedules. Heather and Felicia have agreed that these records should be kept as archival.

The Maine State Archivist has reviewed the records from the Record Center and determined that accident and incident records should also be kept as archival. They have also reviewed the railroad incident reports and found that some reports were filed incorrectly under bound volumes of patient records for review. They want to create another archival schedule for these files, which no longer exists and should be included in the bound volume.

James Francis asked about the DOT aeronautics, child welfare services, and child chief advocate files. Brenda, James, Eric, Adelaide, Sally, and Brenda agreed to move approval for the files presented.

Greg Zinser made a motion to accept the files as presented. Brenda seconded the motion. Kate did a roll call, and the following Board members voted as follows: Brenda Kielty, yes; Greg Zinser, yes; James Francis, yes; Steve Collins, yes; Eric Stout, yes; Adelaide Solomon-Jordan, yes; Shelly Crosby, yes: voting 8-0 on approving the file as presented.

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry - Land for Maine's Future (15 years, then destroy)

The discussion revolved around monitoring reports submitted to the Land for Maine's Future, which aim to provide a comprehensive view of the State's future. The proposed retention period for these reports is 15 years, with no significant information being included. In discussions with Felicia Kennedy, the senior planner at the agency discussed the importance of understanding the volume of reports and their potential value in the long run.

The Board's conversation also touched on the need for each site to submit a report on significant changes in its history, such as public events or climate change. Felicia understands from the agency that sites submit another proposal if there is a significant change. Eric questioned whether there is an existing record schedule for being archival and if it is tied to funding. Kate confirmed that the agency has an archival schedule for both accepted and rejected funding proposals, so even if the request is rejected, the need for funding is documented.

Shelly and Kate discussed the potential for a paper to digital preservation schedule for records, discussing the need for storage space and whether there are social, economic, or environmental reasons to keep records beyond 15 years. Brenda questioned the difference between 15 years and archival, suggesting that understanding where it's best stored could help better plan for the future. The conversation highlighted the need for rethinking and adjusting the preservation process to meet the evolving needs of the organization.

The Board asked Felicia to gather additional information from LUPC, including where the 15 years retention period came from and if significant changes to a site are

documented within other reports. The Board tabled this schedule seeking further information.

Local Government General Schedules Revisions - Personnel Records

The Board is discussing revising local government general schedules, which includes adding employee incident file records to the Local Government General Schedules. The Board also discusses whether to include substantive or informal discipline in the incident file records, leave them with the title, or remove them altogether. Kate acknowledged that a study group may not make any recommendations within a year, so she suggested making local and state government consistent. Brenda suggested adding the incident file record directly into the municipal and local government schedules, as there seems to be a benefit in making the state and local government schedules consistent.

Steve was skeptical about the potential for some records to be destroyed before a new policy is in place. He suggested changing the State schedule to remove the incident file records, but a collective bargaining agreement can still override any retention periods. The discussion highlighted the importance of consistency between local government general schedules and state government general schedules .

James asked whether they needed to vote on this proposal for review and feedback. Kate suggested that each section be brought to the Board for review and feedback, and Felicia would then consolidate the information and bring it back for a total vote. The goal is to vote on the final proposal.

Deaccessions

Land Office folio, circa 1830 – blank

Heather discussed an item for deaccession: a leather-bound folio from the Land Office collection, dating back to 1830, which is being deaccessioned due to its lack of any contents. The folio is blank. Labeled as Land Office Miscellaneous, it occupies valuable shelf space but lacks value for archival research.

Kate reported that the State is limited on what can be done to dispose of State property: State surplus or public auction.

Shelly Crosby suggested discarding the item and seeing if it has value to someone else. The proceeds from the auction could be re-deposited back into the Archives to help preserve or continue with archival measures. The only other option is to transfer it to another nonprofit collecting institution. The State Museum might want it as a teaching tool, or other museums around the state that are dedicated to the paper industry or papermaking. They proposed to move the material out of the Maine State Archives.

Greg Zinser made a motion to accept the deaccession proposal as presented; Steve Collins seconded the motion. Kate did a roll call, and the following Board members voted: Brenda Kielty, yes; James Francis, yes; Greg Zinser, yes; Steve Collins, yes; Eric Stout, yes; Shelly Crosby, yes; Adelaide Solomon-Jordan, yes; Voting in favor of 8-0 in favor of deaccessioning the Land Office folio, circa 1830- blank.

State Archivist Report

The Maine State Archivist is looking to hire a Digital Archivist II to assist with the digital presentation system and digital-born records. The Archives is in the second round of interviews for that position. Interviews continue for a Judicial Archivist II position, which will help better manage and maintain the judicial collection. The Imaging Specialist position has received the most applications; with 41 applications. The Director for the Maine Semiquincentennial Commission position has been approved, with a limited period of two years. The digital preservation system is expected to be ready in March, with an estimated completion date of April or May 2024. The State plans to move away from using Digital Maine as the public platform for digital records and move to its new platform for preservation. The Independent Commission Investigating the Lewiston Shootings will get an archival records retention schedule, as it is a significant historical event. Kate is working with the Commission staff as well as the Governor's office and the Attorney General's office to develop a schedule for the Commission's work, while taking into account concerns around confidentiality

Kate updated the Board on the progress and schedule for the construction of the Cultural Building, which is progressing as planned. As scheduled, Archives is expected to start moving back in January 2025. Kate confirms that the Archives will be the first to return due to their simplicity. However, the schedule is subject to change if necessary.

Adjournment

James Francis made a motion to adjourn, and Brenda Kielty seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 21, at 1:00 p.m.

