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Minutes – Approved  
Public Records Board  
April 18, 2016; 2:00pm – 4:00pm  
Sellery Conference Room  
Wisconsin Historical Society, 816 State Street, Madison

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Policy Committee Member Attendees:

Matt Blessing  
Carl Buesing  
Peter Sorce  
Linda Barth

Other Attendees:

Paul Ferguson  
Betsy Winterhack  
Helmut Knies

1. Call to Order/Approval of the Minutes

Policy Committee Chairman, Matt Blessing, called the meeting to order and requested that the approval of the minutes from the October 30, 2015 Policy Committee Meeting be added to the agenda. Mr. Sorce made a motion to approve the minutes from October 30, 2015, Mr. Blessing seconded the motion.

Matt Blessing: Aye  
Carl Buesing: Abstain  
Peter Sorce: Aye

2. Executive Order #189

Mr. Blessing asked the Committee members to focus on the following portion of Executive Order #189:

“b. ii. Provide public records training to all employees of the agency and all members of attached boards, councils and commissions, both as part of the orientation provided to new members and employees and as part of regularly scheduled refresher trainings on an ongoing basis.

b. iii. Provide regular training for all supervisors on the requirements for retaining the records of former employees who have left state service or have transferred to new positions.

d. ii. The records and forms officer(s) designated under sections 15.04(1)0 and 16.61(2)(bm) of the Wisconsin Statutes as having responsibility for ensuring compliance with all records and forms management laws.”

Mr. Blessing asked Mr. Ferguson of DOJ's plans for training. Mr. Ferguson said that DOJ always remains a resource for agencies seeking assistance on public records issues, but currently there is no plan for a specific training program. Mr. Blessing said that the PRB formed a group of records officers to work on handouts about record retention for agency human resources departments and that the annual report the PRB makes to agency deputy secretaries includes a request to provide records retention as part of new employee orientation. He asked if there is an opportunity for an online tutorial, with a quiz—similar to the IT security tutorial—on records retention. He added that given slim staffing resources, that this could pull resources away from his main priority, which is digitizing RDAs.

Mr. Blessing suggested that the PRB should issue a midyear report to agency deputy secretaries asking them to share the handouts with their human resources departments as a valuable resource for new employee orientation and employee training on records retention. He asked the Executive Secretary to draft the letter for consideration at the next Public Records Board Meeting.

### 3. Electronic Publication of RDAs on the PRB Website

Betsy Winterhack, DOA Legal Counsel, told the Committee that the Board has authority to publish the RDAs on the PRB website. She explained that under the public records law, when someone submits a request for a record to an agency, if that agency has custody of the record, even if it is a copy of another agency's record, it must be submitted to satisfy the public records request. She said that the Chairman and the Executive Secretary of the PRB both sign the RDAs and that DOA has physical custody of the RDAs on behalf of both the PRB and DOA. She said that agencies are custodians of their RDAs, as well. She said that the only thing she could see regarding publishing the RDAs on the website could be that there might be confidential information in the RDAs. She recommended contacting records officers to make sure that there is no confidential information in their RDAs before publishing them on the website.

The Committee discussed the need for publishing the RDAs on the website. They also discussed whether the website would include all RDAs or only active RDAs. The Committee thought that only active RDAs would be relevant. Mr. Ferguson said that he agreed with Ms. Winterhack's opinion and that courtesy notification to records officers before anything goes live on the website would be a good step.

### 4. PRB Committee Reorganization

Mr. Blessing said it has been 10 years since the Historical Society and DOA worked on standing committee structure. He said that the staff at the State Records Center is lean and the current structure for the ad hoc study groups is too loose. He suggested a smaller standing committee of records officers and that the Records Resource Committee should focus on electronic records. He said the Records Management Committee is central to the work of the PRB. Mr. Ferguson, the Chair of the Records Management Committee, offered that he did not see a need for changes to the Records Management Committee. Mr. Blessing said that he could see someone from an IT-type business or background filling the current vacancy on the PRB and working with Sandra Broady-Rudd on a committee focused on electronic records.

Ms. Barth provided a summary of her research looking at the organizational structure of records management programs in 14 different states with joint archives and records management programs. She said that no other states had a formal committee for records officers and that many state reviewed RDAs administratively, without meetings. Mr. Knies said that the Records and Forms Officer Council has been in existence since 1958 and that they have done a lot of detailed work, including general schedules. Mr. Buesing suggested eliminating the Records Officer Council and streamlining the current committee structure to three committees: Records Management Committee, Administrative Committee and Resource Committee.

Mr. Blessing asked Ms. Winterhack if there are state employee attorney groups that meet informally. She said that attorneys who deal with Chapter 19 get together to share ideas and best practices but it is not a formal group and there is no membership list. She said that lots of groups of state employees with similar duties or assignments get together for those same reasons.

Mr. Blessing said he would like to have the Policy Committee meet again in June. Before then, he said that he and Ms. Barth would work on the three committee concept sketched out by Mr. Buesing.

5. Mr. Blessing moved the Committee adjourn, Mr. Sorce seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.