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Minutes - Approved

Public Records Board  
August 26, 2019; 1:00pm – 3:30pm  
Legislative Audit Bureau  
Cattanach Training Room  
22 East Mifflin Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Madison, WI 53703

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Board Members Present: Matt Blessing, Paul Ferguson, James Friedman, Staci Hoffman, Julie Landrie, and Melissa Schmidt

- 1) Call to Order:** 1:03 PM. The Board Chair, Matt Blessing, welcomed the new Board members and everyone introduced themselves.
- 2) Approval of June 10, 2019 Minutes:** The Board reviewed the June 10, 2019 draft minutes. James Friedman moved, seconded by Paul Ferguson, that the minutes be approved as amended.

Member	Aye	No	Abstain
Paul Ferguson	X		
James Friedman	X		
Staci Hoffman	X		
Julie Landrie	X		
Melissa Schmidt	X		
Matt Blessing	X		

- 3) Comments from the Chair:** The Board Chair, Matt Blessing, gave a historical background of records management, the Public Records Board (PRB) and Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). The need for records management became apparent during the 1930s and 1940s with the rise in bureaucracy, mimeograph equipment and business processes. During that time archivists changed from being record “keepers” to “selectors”. This trend was the beginning of records management. Both the State Records Center (SRC) and State Archives were created in the late 1940s. The PRB duties are defined in Wis. Stats. § 16.61. These responsibilities were highlighted in the pre-meeting materials Board members received for agenda item 5 and also include a financial efficiency responsibility. Matt provided an example of the records explosion which has taken place by highlighting the volume of gubernatorial records the WHS preserves. The records from Gov. Rusk (1870s) are contained in 11 clamshell boxes and Gov. La Follette’s (1930s) are contained in 190 clamshell boxes. More recently, Gov. Doyle’s records, under only seven of the 39 RDAs unique to the Governor’s office, are contained in 267 SRC boxes which hold approximately 3 times more volume than clamshell boxes. The PRB has a responsibility to determine which records have legal, fiscal, audit, or day-to day administrative value. He reiterated that the Board’s fundamental duties focus on records management and not on open records which are in Wis. Stat. ch 19. Good records management is essential to fulfilling open records requests.

Matt also discussed a growing concern regarding the number of RDAs with a permanent or transfer to archives disposition. Among archivists it is universally accepted that 4-5% of records should be transferred to an archival

repository. Some records do have long-term or permanent value to an agency and should be kept at the agency permanently. He asked Kathryn Egeland to provide the Board with the number of RDAs under each disposition for the November 18, 2019 meeting. He feels the Board needs to get a handle on the number of RDAs with a permanent or transfer to archives disposition.

**4) Committee Reports**

**a. Records Management Committee**

- i. **Review of Records Retention Disposition Authorizations (RDAs) on Third Quarter 2019 Public Records Board (PRB) Records Series Index:** The Committee Chair, Paul Ferguson, noted the Committee met on July 30, 2019. At the meeting he again reviewed the process and communication flow for after the meeting and why the process is in place. He also stated the Committee is continuing to see similar concerns in grammar, typos, statutory citations, and use of old language that is not currently accepted in records management. There also seems to be a lack of review done by legal counsel prior to submitting RDAs for Board review. There was a discussion about these ongoing concerns and how best to address them at this point. The Board Chair suggested two options: sending a mid-year letter to Deputy Secretaries in the near future or highlighting the issue in the next annual letter. This letter would also go out to the local units which routinely submit RDAs for review. Board members agreed that a mid-year letter would be best. The Board Chair will prepare and send out the letter in the next few weeks.

The Board Chair opened a discussion of the index by Board members. Board members asked questions about specific submissions which were discussed and answered. Melissa Schmidt noted that the revision of RDA 19-0057, City of Milwaukee, was not clear enough and did not recommend approval at this time. James Friedman was concerned about the retention time for RDAs 09-0012, 09-0027, 09-0089, and 19-0063, City of Milwaukee, and did not recommend approval at this time.

Melissa Schmidt moved, seconded by James Friedman, that all submissions, except the five City of Milwaukee submissions, be approved. The motion was approved.

Member	Aye	No	Abstain
Paul Ferguson	X		
James Friedman	X		
Staci Hoffman	X		
Julie Laundrie	X		
Melissa Schmidt	X		
Matt Blessing	X		

There was further discussion of the five City of Milwaukee RDAs, current records retention practices, and the Boards roles. Following the discussion Melissa Schmidt amended the earlier motion, seconded by James Friedman, to include approval of four additional RDA submissions: 09-0012, 09-0027, 09-0089, and 19-0063 with only RDA 19-0057 not being approved. The amended motion was approved.

Member	Aye	No	Abstain
Paul Ferguson	X		
James Friedman	X		
Staci Hoffman	X		
Julie Laundrie	X		
Melissa Schmidt	X		
Matt Blessing	X		

- b. **Operations and Training Advisory Committee:** Tom Bowers noted that the Committee met on July 23, 2019. At the meeting Andrew Baraniak discussed his role at the WHS with local units of government and workshops the WHS have recently provided throughout the State. The workshops have been well received and the WHS has applied for grants to continue providing them over the next 2 years. Tom announced that Julie Landrie has agreed to be the Chair of the Committee.

**5) Other Business**

- a. **Membership Update & Welcome:** Matt Blessing overviewed the pre-meeting materials Board members received. These materials are to assist new members with learning the Board's roles and responsibilities and serve as a refresher to current members. New Board members asked questions of existing members.

Meeting adjourned at 2:42 PM.

Next scheduled meeting: November 18, 2019.