

Municipal Records Retention Committee Meeting Minutes of 1/9/14

Attending: Jessica Call-Public Works; Evelyn Horn-Code Enforcement; Elayne Pierson-Assessing; Kim Blichmann-Tax Collector; Nancy Comai- Town Council Representative; Christine Soucie- Finance; Todd Rainier- Town Clerk

Todd called meeting to order at 9:35AM. Minutes of November 21, 2013 meeting reviewed. Elayne requested her last name be corrected.

Elayne motioned approval of minutes with correction; Christine seconded; motion carried unanimously. Nancy abstained, as she became member of committee after November meeting.

Discussion about Municipal Records spreadsheet resulted in agreement that departments would be given until February 11 to complete their sections and email back to Todd.

Todd stated that a short term goal of the committee is to develop a written records retention policy and to post this policy on Town website.

RSA 33:A was discussed by committee.

Extensive review and discussion ensued about email response from NHMA legal regarding request for input on guidelines for creating an electronic records policy.

Nancy asked how we know if existing records are online.

Christine added that committee should research what information departments have on outdated media (floppy disk), and is it covered under RSA 33:A. If departments have records stored in this way, they must be put on current media.

Nancy added that departments should be given a timeline to get this done.

Jessica noted that if old data is on paper, that is acceptable.

Christine stated that if there is an updated form, to use that.

Todd stated that the Municipal Records spreadsheet seems to be addressing this.

Jessica stated that she has been going through files at Highway and expressed concern for the time it would take to go through all the files and weed out those records that do not need to be retained, based on RSA 33:A.

Nancy recommended that old files be looked at and consolidated as time permits. Going forward, retain records according to RSA 33:A.

Jessica stated that she sees nothing on the 'cemetery' column on Municipal Records spreadsheet. She tracks the Cemetery Commission records with Mike Horne.

Christine stated an understanding that Municipal Records spreadsheet was for paper records, not electronic as well, and she felt many held the same belief. Committee expressed agreement.

Christine asked for clarification on when to destroy online records and keep as printed records only.

Todd stated the first step is to see who has what records, where they are and what format the records are held. Recommended lines be added to Municipal Records spreadsheet indicating 'paper' and 'electronic'.

Christine stated that when records are destroyed based on RSA 33:A guidelines, a list of what was destroyed and when should be retained for reference. Committee agreed.

Some discussion about how to destroy records ensued. Todd stated that election records are incinerated.

Christine stated that Records Retention Policy needs to state how records should be destroyed.

Nancy stressed the importance of educating employees about handling of records. Also stated the need to find the original of a record before deleting. Christine agreed.

Evelyn stated that this should be on the Municipal Records spreadsheet.

Nancy stated that when electronic record was deleted, other locations where copies of record are held need to be contacted for deletion.

Todd will add 'Owner' to Municipal Records spreadsheet in place of 'Official Record'.

Christine added that when record 'Owner' deletes/destroys original, notification to anyone possessing copies be made.

Nancy recommended a working box/file be made by departments in the process of purging expired files. Box should have a running list of box/file contents to be retained after contents are destroyed.

Elayne reinforced comment regarding notification by 'Owner' to any departments with copies of a file/document needing deletion. Also reciprocal-if department possesses a copy, notify 'Owner' before deleting. This will ensure Municipal Records spreadsheet is updated, and that 'Owner' has edited/current document/file.

Committee unanimously agreed to add this to Record Retention policy.

Kim reminded group that Motor Vehicle and Vitals have some retention guidelines that vary from RSA 33:A. Longest timeline takes precedence.

Nancy initiated conversation by asking whether the act of emailing a copy of a document from a Town department to an individual makes the email a public record. Christine suggested that if the emailed document is already a public record, it becomes an electronic public record (such as by scanning a paper document to email). Evelyn stated that the record being sent, if public, remains public, whereas the email would not be public. Christine stated that this would fall under the 91A Right To Know law. Nancy asked if the committee was responsible for 91A and purging of records. Todd agreed.

Kim asked if Town Charter supercedes State Law. Discussion ensued. Nancy stated that State Law should be followed should it differ from Town Charter. She also stated that Town Charter was created to mirror State Law to minimize instances of conflict between the two.

Christine asked for assignments for next meeting. Todd stated that a committee should begin draft of a records retention policy, utilizing suggested format sent to them by email after previous meeting and NHMA Legal input.

Christine asked that a column be added to Municipal Records spreadsheet to indicate paper and/or electronic. Todd will add column.

Next meeting: February 12th at 9:30 AM.

Christine will email next meeting date/time and reserve meeting room.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM

Nancy asked if there was a need for more Town records storage.

Todd stated at this time no. In the future more storage would likely be necessary and it should be fireproof.

Nancy stated Hooksett Fire should inspect current records storage vault and make recommendations to ensure it meets fire proof standards.

Todd will contact Chief Williams to coordinate inspection and solicit recommendations.

Some discussion ensued about current vault. Christine asked what current vault ceiling consists of. Todd and Kim stated there appears to be a drop ceiling. What is above that is unknown. It was agreed that inspection by HFD is the first step in the process.