

Minutes of the meeting of the Records Commission of Cuyahoga County, held May 16, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in the Cuyahoga County Archives, Third Floor. The following members of the Records Commission were present.

Judith G. Cetina representing Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne
Vanessa Bradfield representing the Clerk of Courts, Nailah K. Byrd
Michael Chambers Fiscal Officer
Kelli Perk representing County Prosecutor, Michael C. O'Malley

The following persons were also present:

Patrick Hewitt Cuyahoga County Monument Commission, Chair
Brian O'Malley Fiscal Office
Sherri Bolcevic County Archives Intern

Attended Virtually:

Mike J. DiMarino Department of Information Technology
John Sheffler Department of Information Technology

Dr. Judith G. Cetina, representing Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne, called the meeting of the Cuyahoga County Records Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting began with an introduction of the Records Commission members and guests. Vanessa Bradfield announced that this would be her last Records Commission meeting representing the Clerk of Courts. She noted that she had accepted another position elsewhere in Ohio. The members of the Commission, led by the Acting Chair, expressed their sadness to see her leave but wished Vanessa all the best in her new endeavors.

The first item of business was a consideration of the RC-2 presented by Patrick Hewitt, Chair of the Cuyahoga County Monument Committee. Mr. Hewitt began by providing a brief history of the Monument Commission, outlining its purpose and responsibilities. Mr. Hewitt had been present at the Records Commission Meeting on August 22, 2022, when a comprehensive RC-2 for the Monument Commission was approved, but at that time Dr. Cetina noted the retention schedule did not include any items providing for the maintenance of records in an audio or

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visual format, although that issue could be considered later. Thus, the RC-2 being submitted on May 16th added a new item, 2023-1, that called for retaining Meeting Records as Video and Audio Records until the Minutes were Adopted. And according to the existing RC-2 approved on August 22, 2022, one copy of the Meeting Minutes, the official copy for regular/special meetings, would be kept permanently. The Records Commission then reviewed the retention schedule to determine if any adjustments were necessary but found none. Prior to the vote Dr. Cetina inquired of the Board Members whether she should recuse herself from the vote as she was a current member of the Monument Commission. Following a brief discussion, and consultation with Kelli Perk from the Prosecutor's Office, it was agreed that Dr. Cetina's participation in the vote would not cause a conflict of interest. Then upon the motion of Michael Chambers, seconded by Vanessa Bradfield, the RC-2 from the Cuyahoga County Monument Commission was approved.

Next, the Commission addressed an RC-2 sent by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department Concealed Handgun License (CCW) Unit. Unfortunately, there was not a representative present from the Sheriff's Department and the Commission members considered the question of whether to table the retention schedule until someone could attend to answer any potential questions, or to review the RC-2 without further delay. As there were only four items on the retention schedule and everything appeared to be in good order, the Commission members proceeded with its review, and finding there were no adjustments necessary, upon the motion of Kelli Perk, seconded by Vanessa Bradfield, the RC-2 from the Sheriff, Concealed Handgun License (CCW) Unit, was approved.

As there were not any other retention schedules to consider, the Commission went on to discuss an issue brought up by the Fiscal Office regarding the preservation of permanent records in a new format, like the PDF-A, to replace Microfilm. Before the meeting Dr. Cetina had communicated with a Government Records Archivist at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus who, with her colleagues, assumed the position that permanent records should only be backed up on microfilm, a medium that is known to have a 500-year longevity. According to Dr Cetina, the National Archives in Washington, D.C. also continues to microfilm records because it "is a low-cost, reliable, long term standardized image storage medium." Nevertheless, the Ohio History Connection recognized that ultimately only the local government can select the format in which its records are to be kept, and the State Archives does not have the authority to overrule the decision of any local governmental unit.

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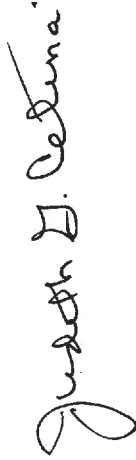
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But Dr. Cetina further indicated there was another side to the story as the County's Microfilm Center is experiencing higher costs and a scarcity of parts when purchasing microfilm and maintaining equipment. Mr. Brian O'Malley from the Fiscal Office, then elaborated on the financial issues entailed in operating a microfilming department as a viable enterprise in the preservation of permanent records. He also pointed out that there are now other means of ensuring their longevity. Dr. Cetina mentioned the PDF-A, an archival format that embeds all fonts used in digitizing documents and does not use encryption. The record thus becomes self-contained, with the information necessary to display the documents years from now in the same manner as originally created. John Sheffler and Mike DiMarino then joined the conversation remotely, answering questions about the new formats, as well as Cuyahoga County's own capabilities through its On Base system to make certain that the permanent records would remain safe and accessible for years to come.

The Fiscal Office's next step, according to Mr. O'Malley, would be to amend its retention schedule to remove microfilm as a medium for permanent records in the future. And Dr. Cetina added that once the County no longer provided microfilm services it would lead other offices and agencies to change their retention periods accordingly. But the Fiscal Officer Michael Chambers made it clear that the anticipated changes would not happen overnight or without further discussion. The Commission members saw the merits of using new technologies, although they lacked the guaranteed abilities inherent in the use of microfilm.

Following a very robust conversation, upon the motion of Vanessa Bradfield, seconded by Michael Chambers, the meeting was adjourned by the unanimous consent of its members.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith G. Cetina, Ph.D. CA

Acting Chair and Secretary

Cuyahoga County Records Commission