

2014 Annual Report - Records, Archives and Information Management Services (RAIMS)

The Records and Archives Center continues to be a popular place for storage of permanent and non-permanent records. During 2014, we received 1471 cubic feet of records from the various departments and were able to destroy 695. Factors that influenced this increase were the renovation of offices, an increased retention period for some of the fiscal records that involved Medicaid services and the creation of new departments. With the sale of the Health Facility to a private agency we received for storage the entire County's records related to the Health Facility including personnel, financial and clients. Many of the incoming documents are listed as permanent which means they can only be destroyed after being converted to electronic and microfilm formats. The County Clerk and Payroll are already striving to become paperless. Both create electronic records and the RAIMS Microfilm Section produces computer-generated microfilm from them. Although the State permits the creation of permanent electronic records under rigid guidelines, constant changes in software and hardware could end in disaster. Therefore the use of electronic records for accessibility and microfilm for preservation is a perfect blend.

The Microfilm Section of our department, consisting of Kris Martin, Robin Cuppernell and Debbie Sawin, imaged and microfilmed 1,048,000 documents. As a result of the completion of our DSS project of ten years Debbie retired at the end of June. This position was then abolished. Without this compression of records, the Records and Archives Center would have added 350 additional cubic feet to storage; all of it for permanent retention. Compression of permanent records is absolutely essential in order to retain sufficient storage space for the future needs of the County. One of the microfilmers is still working on a backlog of nineteenth century records. This is a preservation task to prevent the use of fragile paper records by researchers. We have also taken on some special scanning projects from the Real Property Tax Departments.

The various departments asked Donna McCormick, the RAIMS records clerk, to climb the shelves for 2,186 file retrievals which eventually are returned and put back in storage. In addition there were 1,980 inter-filings. These are documents that need to be added to existing file folders, mostly from the County Clerk, the DA and DSS. Donna is also in charge of shelving incoming boxes, notifying departments when records are due for destruction, and for pulling document boxes to shred the content. We were fortunate to acquire movable shelving in our open space area through a capital improvement project. This increased our storage capacity from 1080 boxes in that area to 4400 boxes.

We sponsored several workshops to improve the skills of records managers from western New York and invited all county staff members to attend. We also held in house training for Ontario County staff in how to transfer records to RAIMS and made visits to different departments in order to review their records to make sure they comply with state mandated retention schedules. To continue with our public service, Brooke Morse,

Assistant RMO, answered 178 email reference questions and 76 telephone inquiries. We also served 256 in-house researchers. Brooke was instrumental in the success of our exhibit. She researched and wrote the content of sections of the exhibits and produced the handouts and brochures. Brooke and our volunteers spent many hours processing the indexes for the historical records series that will be scanned and uploaded on the software Laserfiche. The money for this project was funded by a New York state grant.

In October to celebrate National Archives Month, the staff including the County Historian, Dr. Preston Pierce constructed and displayed an exhibit "A Change of Plans: the development of the County Complex. The exhibit exemplifies the many historical collections we house in our facility and it traced back how our County offices and services emerged throughout the years.

We were awarded a Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund grant in the amount of \$53, 086 in order to in order to scan 7 historical record series for RAIMS and the County Clerk's Office and included in the grant is monies to purchase the software; Laserfiche.

The RMO continued to add public records and new users to DocuShare. Although some departments are already active participants in adding useful information, more departments need to become involved in the future. She also coordinated the retrieval of the County's Health Facility records before the sale of the facility was completed.

One additional time consuming task is FOIL. It does not only occupy the Records Access Officer 55% of the time, but has become a significant burden to the County Attorney's Office, particularly Kris Thorsness, the DA Michael Tantillo and the Sheriff's records center, especially Colleen Rice. My thanks go out to all of you.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the RAIMS staff for all their work, the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator and staff for their support of the Department of RAIMS.

THE STAFF:

Rosemary Switzer, Records Management Officer and Records Access (FOIL) Officer

Dr. Preston Pierce, County Historian (PT)

Brooke Morse, Assistant Records Management Officer

Donna McCormick, Retrieval Clerk

Robin Cuppernell, Microfilmer

Kristine Martin, Microfilmer

Debbie Sawin, Microfilmer

Elizabeth Alcivar, Clerk (PT)