

Records Retention/Management – yearly update

Last year, the Select Board approved a Records Management Policy along with a Records Retention Plan. Following the policy, we have accomplished the following over the past year:

- SecureShred was onsite at the former storage unit to destroy 63 boxes of records. Special thanks to Bruce and Guthrie for cleaning out the space and breaking down/relocating the metal rack system. Bruce also made space in his office for the 4 remaining boxes that needed to be retained.
- Throughout the year, 6 large totes of materials were removed from the vault and destroyed by SecureShred.
- The general files are in the process of being moved from the vault to the bookcase in the office.
- The file cabinet in the vault has been cleared out and will be used to store financial records until they need to be purged.

Disposition Logs of all documents destroyed/recycled have been created and added to over time. These documents can be found in the Records Management Notebook in the Clerk's office. I do not have any recommendations for changes to the Retention Plan at this time.

While this has freed up a bit of space in the vault, we have a long way to go, so this is an ongoing project. All election materials (including ballot bags) have notes/tags that describe the destroy date based on our policy and plan.

While not a part of the records retention plan, it was obvious that there were a number of outdated and/or unwanted electronic components and other items accumulating in the building. In February, we gathered those items and arranged for destruction of hard drives through SecureShred and recycling of electronics and other items through ReStore in Barre.

Land Records Fees and Preservation Fund

The Legislature passed a law changing fees for land records and requiring establishment of a records preservation fund in each town. General recording fees go up on July 1 from \$10 per page to \$15 per page. \$4 of each page recorded will be retained in the preservation fund for preserving, restoring and/or digitizing documents. Other fee changes include:

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
Property Transfer Tax Returns (PTTRs)	\$10	\$15
Recording of Plats/Maps	\$15	\$25
Vault time (Examination of Records)	\$2/hour	\$4/hour

Beginning in January, 2020, land owners creating a new subdivision or property line change will be required to file a map with the Town Clerk. Current fees have been in place since 2008.

Notary Public Changes

To prevent fraud and enhance credibility, legislation was passed last year to create a new process for appointing Notaries Public through the Office of Professional Regulation. All Notaries are assigned a commission number that must be used on documents and have a two-year term. Every renewing notary beginning in 2021 will be required to perform 2 hours of online training. Log books must also be kept (which we already do). Some clerks will only notarize town documents due to these restrictions. Others refuse to notarize Wills and Powers of Attorney. Denise and I do not restrict by document type, so we've seen a slight uptick in requests for this service.