

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

959



FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE: May 14, 2003

SUBJECT: Report and Recommendations on County Archives

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file the attached report (Attachment A), and approve implementing its recommendations;
2. Direct the Executive Office to return in the Proposed Budget with recommendations necessary to restructure the Records Center budget to begin achieving these recommendations;
3. Direct the Executive Office and Human Resources Director to study and return within 120 days to the Board with recommendations to reclassify the positions in the Records Management and Archives Program to incorporate additional qualifications, duties and classifications;
4. Direct the Executive Office to return to the Board within 120 days with a recommended ordinance codifying necessary record handling procedures and retention schedules; and,
5. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute the attached agreement (Attachment B) extending the scope of professional services for R. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, C.A., to provide additional assistance to the Executive Office with these efforts, and provide professional advisement to other departments as needed until permanent professional positions with adequate expertise are hired and established; authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute change orders as necessary for up to ten percent (10%) of the total contract amount.

Denise C. Harden

Denise C. Harden
Principal Management Analyst

FORM APPROVED
COUNTY COUNSEL

FINANCIAL DATA:

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------|-----|
| CURRENT YEAR COST: | \$12,365 | IN CURRENT YEAR BUDGET: | YES |
| NET COUNTY COST: | \$0 | BUDGET ADJUSTMENT: | NO |
| ANNUAL COST: | \$111,475 | IF YES, FOR FISCAL YEAR: | |
| SOURCE OF FUNDS: | Records Center & Clerk-Recorder resources | | |

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.

Executive Officer Signature:

Samuel A. Noble

Purchasing:
M. De C.
ASST Director

BY *Jan. Johnson*
MAY 14 2003

Policy
 Policy

Consent
 Consent

Per Department:
Per Executive Office:

Prev. Agn. ref.
12/17/2002 #3.1
02/17/2001 #3.0

Dist.

AGENDA NO.

9.6

BACKGROUND:

On December 17, 2002, the Board of Supervisors directed the Executive Office to conduct a study and return to the Board within six months with findings and recommendations on the County's archival needs. Accordingly, in early January 2003, the Executive Office and the Purchasing Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP). In mid February, an evaluation committee comprised of Executive Office, Purchasing Department, Records Management staff and one member of the County Archives Commission, evaluated the bids and selected Mr. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram as the most responsive, most qualified, and most cost efficient bidder. In late February, Purchasing awarded the purchase order and Mr. Armstrong-Ingram immediately began work with the Executive Office.

Mr. Armstrong-Ingram proposed an approach to this study using a method developed in recent years termed "functional appraisal." Using professional standards of what archival records county governments should produce given a classic set of jurisdictional responsibilities and information provided by County departments, this approach enabled Mr. Armstrong-Ingram to work quickly with departments to validate what records they do produce, how they handle and store those records, and how they preserve their archival records. Mr. Armstrong-Ingram concluded his survey of all County departments in late April, and completed and delivered his report to the Executive Office in early May.

Mr. Armstrong-Ingram's findings and conclusions confirm those previously made by the Executive Office. Chiefly:

- The need to reprioritize and refocus the program to meet both the immediate storage as well as long-term preservation needs for County records;
- The need to restructure the program's staffing and budget to reflect these priorities;
- The need to reclassify existing positions supporting the program to ensure staff have an adequate array of knowledge, experience and qualifications;
- The need to formalize practices and procedures at the highest possible level to ensure compliance and to minimize risk and liability; and,
- The need for qualified, professional leadership of the program.

The report concludes the program management chose to move away from governmental records management and archiving services to a commercial records storage model to assure a consistent revenue stream, which resulted in loss of focus on the Board's original mission for the program. Addressing the archiving needs of the County therefore requires restructuring and redirecting the focus of the program. This is necessary both to assure proper continuity of the flow of records, and to liberate current resources and redirect them toward more effective long-term purposes.

Central to the report's recommendations are streamlining the classification of existing technical staff and adding qualified professional staff. Reclassifying technical staff was already part of a larger reclassification study performed by Human Resources, so the groundwork for that is complete. Adding limited archival duties to the technical classification will allow greater range of flexibility in assigning existing staff, and will provide them more

equitable and appropriate compensation. In addition, the County currently has no classifications for professional archivists. Creating new classifications, or adapting similar existing classifications, will allow the County to recruit and hire qualified individuals with the credentials necessary to properly handle, manage and direct the archival functions of the County.

A key finding is the County likely does not need to continue investing resources to store a substantial amount of the administrative records currently housed at the two County records centers, in addition to those stored by departments in office space or with third party vendors, since they are not of long-term value. Such records identified include obsolete timesheets, departmental accounting documentation, etc. By establishing general and departmental retention schedules, the County can legally dispose of obsolete records and redirect resources currently used to handle and to store them toward properly caring for records of indefinite term value. Such financial restructuring requires the particular knowledge and skill of a professional cost accountant dedicated full-time to the program to ensure it can achieve the Board's goals in a way that is financially sound, both for the program and the departments it serves.

The report concludes the County can achieve its initial archiving goals without General Fund subsidy. Based on the findings to date, the Executive Office concurs with this conclusion, recognizing that further financial modeling will be necessary once restructuring is underway, and the sources and uses of existing resources are better understood. Key to the Board's objectives may be re-examining existing fee structures and their uses to assure going forward that adequate financial provisions are made for, and properly channeled toward, long-term care of records underlying individual and corporate rights, such as maps, plans, deeds, certificates, etc., which comprise the majority of the County's records of indefinite term value. However, for the substantial amount of the County's existing long-term records damaged over time, some creative means of raising outside resources may be necessary to provide for their recovery and care.

The report makes note of the unfavorable conditions found at the Indio "vault," in which some of the County's microfilm masters are stored, including those of the Clerk of the Board. When this situation was verified, the Executive Office immediately contacted Facilities Management, and corrective actions were undertaken within hours. The Executive Office also discussed with Facilities Management long-term options to address climate control for that room, and will pursue long-term solutions as part of the overall follow up to this report.

The report notes the apparent continued misconception of the program management that they do not possess sufficient authority to pursue archiving as part of their duties, and it further documents that this is not, in fact, the case. The report notes in detail the progression over time establishing and strengthening the program's mandate to protect and preserve the County's permanent records. These findings and conclusions are consistent with those of the Executive Office. Board Policy A-43 was quite clear on this point, and was made more so by the Board in January 2003. There should be no doubt at this time that Records Management is charged by the Board to address the County's archival needs, and the program's management should make this a central focus of their management objectives.

The report observes that the Records Management and Archives program is currently attached to the Assessor-Clerk-Recorder's Office, and raises the question of whether that is the most appropriate arrangement. Since the Department raises that issue with frequency, it is worth noting the Executive Office currently does not support separating this program from the Department for a number of reasons. Among those reasons are that

organizationally the program is not sufficiently mature to stand on its own and, as this study makes clear, for some time to come will continue to require strong departmental-level leadership. Until the unit has a record that demonstrates it can stand alone organizationally, and has an established history of financial independence, the Executive Office will not consider separating it from the Department.

Pivotal to the report's recommendations is that departments are not only willing, but eager to cooperate, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive response to this research project, for which the Executive Office extends many thanks to all who gave so freely and enthusiastically of their time and resources over the last three months. Throughout the study, departments repeatedly voiced their urgent need for comprehensive records management and archiving services, and willingly opened their doors to us to demonstrate that need. Clearly, lack of enthusiasm and cooperation on the part of departments is not an obstacle to achieving the Board's goals.

In conclusion, the Executive Office concurs with and endorses the independent findings, conclusions and recommendations made in the attached report. On April 30, 2003, Mr. Armstrong-Ingram presented the Executive Summary of the report to the Archives Commission, which also endorsed the findings and recommendations, and unanimously requested the Executive Office present this report to the Board as quickly as possible. Consequently, the Executive Office recommends that the Board approve implementing those recommendations, beginning with inclusion in the Proposed Budget of the budgetary restructuring outlined above. The Executive Office also recommends retaining the continued services of Mr. Armstrong-Ingram to ensure proper professional guidance remains available to see this project through until qualified professional staff are hired and established.