



City of Saratoga Springs

Title: City Archives Records Handling and Researchers Policy

Date of Origin: July 19, 2016

City Council Approval: July 19, 2016

Date of Review: Annual

Mission Statement: The mission of the Saratoga Springs City Archives is to identify, collect, preserve and ensure long-term public access to records, papers and information that document the history, evolution and progress of the government and community of Saratoga Springs, New York with the intent to chronicle and convey the knowledge of its culturally rich and diverse background.

Policy: The City Archives acquires and preserves records created by, for and about the community of Saratoga Springs. The primary/archives collection consists mostly of official records of the local government such as assessment and tax rolls, fire and police blotters, maps and minutes, City Council resolutions, and local ordinances. The secondary collection is comprised of the community records which are non-governmental historical records that originated with and were kept by private individuals, organizations and institutions including photographs, cassettes, slides; scrapbooks; journals; books; town, village and city directories and other materials concerned with or documenting the history of the community.

The City Historian's Office of the City of Saratoga springs acquires, preserves and makes accessible records and archives that document the history of the City of Saratoga Springs and its predecessors, the Village and Town of Saratoga Springs. The city Historian's Office seeks donations of records and archives that chronicle the history and progress of Saratoga Springs. The collections are not limited in format. Manuscript, printed, published, graphic, cartographic, photographic, microfilm, audio-visual materials and electronic media are collected.

This policy is applicable to both the primary and secondary collections of the City Archives and the City Historian Office.

Responsible Party:

§6.3A of the City Charter stipulates that the Commissioner of Accounts shall have the powers, responsibilities and duties of the City Clerk as mandated by State law and outlined in Section 7.1 of the City Charter.

§7.1.2 of the City Charter entitled "City Records" states the City Clerk shall receive, file, index and archive as custodian of record for all City documents, records and other instruments required by law to be filed and maintained by the City.

According to Chapter 182 of the City Code Article II §182-11 E, the Records Management Officer has the responsibility of establishing a City Archives and maintaining an adequate repository for the proper storage conservation and processing and servicing of archival records.

On July 18, 1988 the City Council approved a resolution to add the duties and title of Records Management Officer to that of the Office of the Commissioner of Accounts. Therefore, the responsible party for the records handling and research policy of the City Archives is the Commissioner of Accounts as the City's Records Management Officer.



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Access Protocols:

Researchers may call for an appointment or simply walk in. Research hours are available every day by appointment. Walk-ins are welcome Monday through Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. However, conferences and commitments outside the office may affect the availability of access, so a voice mail message of the weekly hours will be made available at 518-587-2358.

The City's official Guide to the Archives is available on the City's web site at www.saratoga-springs.org. However if desired, a list of available maps, documents and material pertinent to the research may be provided upon request.

Research Protocols:

1. All guests and researchers are required to sign in.
2. Smoking is strictly prohibited within the building and within fifty feet of the premises..
3. Each researcher requesting access to the City's Archives must complete a "Researcher Registration Form".
4. When making an appointment by phone or email, the researcher must provide name, address, a contact phone number and the purpose and subject of the research.
5. Researchers must wear white cotton gloves when handling fragile documents or photographs and when so directed by staff. Researchers may bring white cotton gloves or they will be provided by staff.
6. **Only pencils** may be used by researchers or staff within confines of the City's Archives. No writing utensils that utilize ink, including pens, markers or highlighters or other writing tools are to be used on or near the documents.
7. No tracings of photos, maps or other documents may be made.
8. The City Historian/Archivist or designated staff has the responsibility of retrieving and re-filing materials requested by each researcher. Researchers may not under any circumstances, retrieve or re-file any material within the City Archives.
9. Researchers shall abide by the following basic rules when requesting access to the City Archives:
 - a. A researcher shall only be given access to one folder, box, or volume at a time for research purposes.
 - b. Researchers are prohibited from changing the existing order of documents, chronological, numerical, alphabetical or as otherwise indicated, in a folder or box.
 - c. Items, especially books and binders, are never to be placed face down on any surface.
 - d. Researchers must consult staff if an item appears to be misplaced or out of order.
 - e. Researchers should never lean or press down on archival materials.
 - f. visitors may not bring food or beverages into the Archives.



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g. Coats, purses, briefcases, backpacks, bags, luggage and sacks are not allowed in the research area; they must be placed in the designated area prior to starting research.

10. Malicious damage or theft of any materials from the archives or secondary collections may be subject to both civil and criminal liability.

Request to Exhibit of City Archive Documents: Original documents owned by or in official custody of the City may be used in exhibits at the discretion of the City Historian/Archivist subject to requirements as may be established by the City Council.

Request to Loan City Archive Documents: No records or materials will be loaned from the City Archives or City Historian's office without approval of the City Council.

Request to Obtain Copies of City Archive Documents: Only staff may make photocopies of archival material upon request.

All copies provided must be stamped with the City Historian's official stamp.

Copying fees: The price per page for photocopying is:

8 ½" x 11" = \$.15 per page 11" x 17" = \$.25 per page

8 ½" x 14" = \$.20 per page

Staff must provide receipts for copy fees if requested.

Request to Obtain Digital Copies of City Archive Documents: Digital scanning of images including digital photography may only be done by City staff or their designees. Staff must copy the document, stamp the document as property of the City of Saratoga Springs and then scan that copy to send it digitally to the requestor unless the document is digitally watermarked accordingly.

Any copies, paper or digital, released from the City Archives must bear a stamp or watermark that they are "From the collection of the City Historian of the City of Saratoga Springs".

Copyright Protocols: Researchers shall have the individual responsibility of obeying all copyright laws and the responsibility of obtaining copyright clearance when applicable to the publishing, reproduction and/or distribution of archival material. The Copyright Act of 1976, Title 17 of the United States Code authorizes libraries and archives to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction only for the purpose of private study, scholarship or research. If a researcher violates those conditions, they may be individually and personally liable of copyright infringement. The City and its designated staff reserves the right to refuse a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of the Copyright Act of 1976.

Genealogical Research Protocols:

Birth, death, and marriage certificates and the indexes related to birth, death and marriage certificates are NOT subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and



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are **NOT open to public inspection**. Access to vital records maintained by local registrars is subject to Public Health Law 4173 and 4174 and the NYS Health Commissioner's Rules and Regulations Sections 35.1 through 35.8.

Record searches, copy retrieval and reproduction of genealogical records may only be conducted by the local registrar, the deputy registrar or an authorized employee thereof. No other person including members of the public, historians, archivists, genealogists, employees of other municipal departments may search, copy or in any other way handle vital records or indexes of the vital records including all records and indexes covered by the years authorized for genealogy research.

All genealogy requests should be directed to the City Clerk's Office in the Accounts Department at 518-587-7098 extension 2548.

Rules for genealogical searches and copies are as follows:

GENEALOGY COPIES:

Information from records of birth, death and marriage may be provided by the local registrar for genealogical research purposes subject to the provisions of Section 35.5 of the New York State Health Commissioner's Rules and Regulations. Such information must be provided in the form of an uncertified copy or transcript and must include the statement "For genealogical purposes only". If the record is not on file, an uncertified statement that the search disclosed no record is provided to the applicant.

Information may only be released for genealogy research subject to the following requirements:

1. Birth Certificate:

- a) No information shall be released from a sealed birth certificate.
- b) The birth certificate has been on file for at least seventy five (75) years AND
- c) The person to whom the birth certificate relates is known by the applicant to be deceased.

2. Death Certificate: The death certificate has been on file for at least fifty (50) years.

3. Marriage Certificate:

- a) The marriage certificate has been on file for at least fifty (50) years AND
- b) The bride and groom are both known by the applicant to be deceased.

The time periods specified for each of these genealogy categories may only be waived if the applicant is a verified descendant or has been officially designated to act on behalf of a descendant of the person whose record is being requested. A descendant is defined as a person in the direct line of descent such as a son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, etc. The local registrar must require proof of official designation and direct line ancestry when a waiver of the waiting period is requested.



City of Saratoga Springs City Archives Collections Development Policy

Date of Origin: 07/19/2016
City Council Approval: 07/19/2016
Date of Review: Annual

FUNCTION: The City Historian's Office of the City of Saratoga Springs acquires, preserves, and makes accessible records and archives that document the history of the City of Saratoga Springs and its predecessors, the Village and Town of Saratoga Springs. The City Historian's Office seeks donations of records and archives that chronicle the history and progress of Saratoga Springs.

The collections are not limited in format. Manuscript, printed, published, graphic, cartographic, photographic, microfilm, audio-visual materials and electronic media are collected.

PROTOCOL: No objects or artifacts are collected or accepted.

No documents, records or related materials are accepted into the Archives without approval of the City Historian.

Records donated from a City office or department only require a transfer request form signed by the Records Management Officer, the Department Head, and the City Historian.

The City Historian retains the right to refuse collections offered as donations and in such case will recommend other potential repositories.

A completed Deed of Gift form is required for each document or archival collection received as a gift.

Each donation must be placed on a meeting agenda of the City Council because the City Council must vote to accept each and every donation to the City.

The City Historian's Office does not duplicate the work of the Saratoga Springs Public Library or the Saratoga Springs History Museum.

Documents, records and related materials cannot be disposed from the Archives without written approval from the City's Records Management Officer via a signed Destruction Request Form.

Records, documents or materials transferred from the Archives require written approval from the City's Records Management Officer through a signed Transfer Request Form.

ARCHETYPAL RECORDS/DOCUMENTS COLLECTED: The following records and documents shall be collected by the City Historian:

- Town, Village, and City private, association and business records and/or documents specific to a particular aspect of the history and development of the community of Saratoga Springs.
- Town, Village and City government records that document the history and progress of the government and community or are otherwise important to the people of Saratoga Springs.
- Records and correspondence relating to City policy and development, particularly Council members.
- Records of defunct Town, Village or City departments, boards, commissions, and other agencies.
- Records with historical or other continuing value to the City, its residents, researchers, and historians.

Saratoga Springs City Archives
Researcher Registration

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Research Affiliation: _____

Purpose of Research: _____ (Article) _____ (Book) _____ (Thesis/Dissertation),
_____ Business-Related _____ (Personal Research) _____ (Other)

Subject of Research: _____

Rules for Use of the Saratoga Springs City Archives:

Any infringement of these rules will be sufficient cause for withdrawal of research privileges:

Research Protocols:

1. All guests and researchers are required to sign in.
2. Smoking is strictly prohibited within the building and within fifty feet of the premises..
3. Each researcher requesting access to the City's Archives must complete a "Researcher Registration Form".
4. When making an appointment by phone or email, the researcher must provide name, address, a contact phone number and the purpose and subject of the research.
5. Researchers must wear white cotton gloves when handling fragile documents or photographs and when so directed by staff. Researchers may bring white cotton gloves or they will be provided by staff.
6. **Only pencils** may be used by researchers or staff within confines of the City's Archives. No writing utensils that utilize ink, including pens, markers or highlighters or other writing tools are to be used on or near the documents.
7. No tracings of photos, maps or other documents may be made.
8. The City Historian/Archivist or designated staff has the responsibility of retrieving and re-filing materials requested by each researcher. Researchers may not under any circumstances, retrieve or re-file any material within the City Archives.
9. Researchers shall abide by the following basic rules when requesting access to the City Archives:
 - a. A researcher shall only be given access to one folder, box, or volume at a time for research purposes.
 - b. Researchers are prohibited from changing the existing order of documents, chronological, numerical, alphabetical or as otherwise indicated, in a folder or box.

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Researcher Registration

- c. Items, especially books and binders, are never to be placed face down on any surface.
 - d. Researchers must consult staff if an item appears to be misplaced or out of order.
 - e. Researchers should never lean or press down on archival materials.
 - f. Visitors may not bring food or beverages into the Archives.
 - g. Coats, purses, briefcases, backpacks, bags, luggage and sacks are not allowed in the research area; they must be placed in the designated area prior to starting research.
10. Malicious damage or theft of any materials from the archives or secondary collections may be subject to both civil and criminal liability.

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the above rules when using the archival collections of the Saratoga Springs City Archives.

Signature

Date