

Public Record Requests
Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2014

Attendance:

Becky Boone	Betsy Russell	Brian Kane
Cally Younger	Dan Chadwick	Dan Blocksom
Jeremy Pisca	Julie Hart	Lorna Jorgenson
Mike Jung	Seth Grigg	

Agenda:

1. Agency Response Updates
2. Access Idaho Discussion Update
3. Brainstorm Public Records Request Law and Appeal Process
4. General Comments
5. Next meeting Information

Discussion:

1. Agency Response Update
 - a. Roughly 22 responses
 - b. Questions on survey included; how many requests do you typically receive, what are your response times, etc.
 - c. Rough draft handed out of potential project including agency responses and needs for Public Record Requests areas of improvement.
2. Access Idaho
 - a. Cally and Jeremy met with Access Idaho to discuss modernizing public record requests in Idaho
 - b. DEQ developed a modern public records request process that is on their website and easy to access. Something similar could possibly work state-wide.
 - c. Discussion on how this process could be implemented for all agencies, what this would cost, who needs to be involved, reporting features, etc.
 - d. Came up with the idea of a “test group” consisting of agencies who typically receive large amounts of requests.
 - e. Where would money come from to fund this test group and what is the goal our state is working toward were questions which stemmed from this “test group” discussion.
3. Brainstorm Public Records Request Law and Appeal Process
 - a. Majority of group agreed that the Public Records Request Law needs to be updated or rewritten.
 - i. Statute is not clear
 - ii. Should devote time to shortening definitions, improving parts of statute that are disconnected, and general clarification of statute.

- iii. It seems as if everyone is unified in wanting to clean this law up... multiple people, organizations, agencies in agreement.
- iv. Group decided to gather suggestions on what they want to see taken out of statute, clarified in statute, or deleted from statute and bring these suggestions to Brian Kane before the next meeting.

b. Appeal Process

- i. Although group agreed that the statute must be addressed first, the group also agreed that an independent level of review should be looked into.
- ii. Should this process be a commission setting? Under the authority of the Ombudsman alone? Both working together?
- iii. Consensus again was to gather suggestions and information from other states on their independent levels of review such as Utah, Washington, and Iowa.
- iv. Cally to put together a PowerPoint of other state systems.
- v. Next meeting the group will look into the different systems and pick and choose what the groups want to work in Idaho.
- vi. Other questions regarding appeal process included timeliness of commission responses, differentiating circumstances, and technological advances.

4. General Comments

Overall, everyone seem to be in agreement that the Public Records law needs to be updated and that an independent level of review process for denied requests is a good plan to go forward with.

The group was unified in bettering public record request law and processes to make it easier and more efficient for those requesting records and for agencies who frequently deal with record requests. A long term goal that was discussed was the idea of a state server that could potentially hold all public records making it easy to access records for individuals or organizations and also making it easy for agencies to release records, track requests, and provide transparency.

5. Next meeting

- a. Who should be included?
 - i. Group agreed that at this stage no one else should be included, want to work through some kinks and get a general idea put together before including legislators and others.
 - ii. Want to make meetings more open, possibly including public access and public commentary.
 - iii. Agreed to put meeting minutes online for public to access.
 - iv. Next meeting tentatively set for October 20, 2014. Please have suggestions for statute change submitted to Brian Kane a week prior to meeting.