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Debra A. Patrick, CMC - Berlin City Clerk
2011 Restoration, Conservation & Microfilming of Early Berlin Records – Phase I

1. Grant Abstract

This project will consist of preserving, filming and scanning to CD the first five volumes of Berlin's City Council Minute Books dating back to the first City Council Meeting in 1897. Unfortunately, the ink from the handwritten minutes is fading and before long these records will be totally lost. These books are in desperate need of being preserved and scanned but due to Berlin's current budget constraints, this work cannot be considered within our city budget. The entire project is estimated to cost roughly \$9,972.00. The award of this grant would allocate the onset of restoration work making the volumes available for public review for researchers, historians and the scholars of our community.

2. Proposed Project Summary

- The City of Berlin is seeking the maximum amount of \$10,000 of grant funding available to restore, film and digitize to CD's our first five City Council Minute Books.
- The intellectual content of our materials is important due to the many facts that are stored in the books. Berlin is home to several historical landmarks, many of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These recorded facts are located in our volumes. Our forefathers discussed the establishment of city streets and neighborhoods. The planning and development of our city is featured in the many discussions council had throughout their meetings.
- Berlin has played a significant role adding to the rich historic and cultural significance of the State of New Hampshire through the large influx of foreign immigrants who moved here to work in the paper mill. Italians, Norwegians, Swedes, French Canadian, Russian and Irish people created a diverse melting pot of various cultures, languages and customs. The Scandinavians formed the first ski club which is still the oldest ski club in the country. At the turn of the century, Berlin could claim to have the largest newsprint plant in the world selling to customers such as the Boston Globe, the Boston Sunday Herald, the New York Tribune and New York News. Our local paper mill was bought and sold many times throughout Berlin's history and continued to persist into the twenty-first century as one of the oldest sites of uninterrupted paper making in the country which put Berlin on the map within the State of New Hampshire.

- The City of Berlin owns the books we would like to have preserved. Per city ordinance, Chapter 2, Sec. 2-147 "All ordinances which shall be passed by the city council shall be endorsed and recorded by the city clerk in the order in which they shall be passed in a book to be kept for that purpose, entitled Record of Ordinances of the City of Berlin, which book shall be preserved in the office of the city clerk, subject to the inspection of the citizens of the city."

3. Current Condition of Materials

- Due to the nature of inadequate storage conditions throughout the years, the sustainability of these volumes is compromised. For many years the books were stored in a musty, moldy vault in the basement of City Hall. These records are in jeopardy of being permanently destroyed unless steps are taken to begin the preservation process. The ink from our handwritten history is quickly fading and will soon disappear unless efforts are taken to preserve and film the pages.
- Throughout the years, many citizens have made inquiries to research the historic facts contained in the books and were frustrated that a hands-on approach was not allowed. Citizens were not allowed to touch the books themselves due to the fragile state of the books and pages.
- In view of the fact that the volumes are in such a delicate condition, staff must carefully open the books to research the records for the individuals. With limited staff available, it is not always convenient to do the work in a timely manner which is an inconvenience to the individuals who request the research.

4. Threat to Materials Addressed

- The work on the materials will consist of taking the volumes apart to initiate the restoration process. While the volumes are apart, they will be filmed and scanned onto CD's. The final restorative process is the preservation of the pages. The books will then be rebound and ready for public perusal.
- The Browns River Marotti, Company has recommended for the conservation of our records to include deacidification, mending and reinforcement of paper as necessary, resewing, rebinding or archival grade polyester encapsulation as appropriate.
- The qualifications for The Browns River Marotti Company are extensive. They have been in the record restoration business for many years. Their primary work consists of archival preservation and imaging. They are a well established, reputable business that does work throughout the country.

- The City of Berlin will continue maintenance of these records by ensuring the storage vault has a dehumidifier and is free of dust and mold per the record storage recommendations. A press release will be published in the local newspaper notifying the public that the records are available for public viewing.
- The public benefit from this work will be the ability to allow public access to review these records with a hands-on approach. Scholars will now have the advantage of conducting full research projects on their own at their own pace.

5. Digitization.

- Digitization is an additional activity necessary for the complete conservation of the materials. Digitization will benefit the preservation of the volumes by making the records more accessible to more people thus increasing public access to the records.
- The file format that will be used for the final digital product will be a PDF file.
- The digital files will be stored on a CD-ROM disk. To maintain access to the files in the long term we will have the files available on our City web site. An index will be created for online access.

6. Budget

- The budget for the conservation of the City Council Minute Books is a simple breakdown as follows:

| Preservation | 35mm security film | 2 duplicates (50.00 each) | Scan to CD |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Vol 1 - \$ 1540.00 | \$200.00 | \$100.00 | \$125.00 |
| Vol 2 - 1512.00 | 200.00 | 100.00 | 125.00 |
| Vol 3 - 1571.00 | 200.00 | 100.00 | 125.00 |
| Vol 4 - 1524.00 | 200.00 | 100.00 | 125.00 |
| Vol 5 - 1525.00 | 200.00 | 100.00 | 125.00 |
| Totals: \$7672.00 | \$1000.00 | \$500.00 | \$625.00 |
| | | | |
| Total investment | \$9,797.00 | | |
| Shipping @ \$35.00 vol. x 5 | \$175.00 | | |
| Total with shipping | \$9,972.00 | | |

Upon completion of the work as proposed, the vendor will expect full payment for services rendered.

Respectfully submitted,

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