

OHIO HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes: January 31, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Fred Previts (ex officio), Liz Plummer (ex officio),
Ron Davidson, Margaret Roulett, Cindy Hofner,
Robin Heise, Tina Ratcliff, Meghan Hays, Virginia
Dressler, Russ Pollitt, Tami Kelly, Michelle
Sweetser, and Bill Modrow

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Stephen Badenhop, Burt Logan (ex officio)

OHC STAFF PRESENT: Todd Kleismit

I. **Welcome**

Davidson called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. **Consent Agenda**

- a. October 25, 2019 Minutes: Ratcliff motioned to approve as amended the minutes and was seconded by Plummer. Minutes and consent agenda approved.
- b. Ohio Electronic Records Committee Report: Approved; all in favor.

III. **Strategic Discussion**

- a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair: Hays nominated Badenhop for vice chair, seconded by Hofner. All approved. Heise nominated Ratcliff for chair, seconded by Modrow. All approved.
- b. Ohio History Connection Update: Kleismit reported that the Ohio History Connection will be sponsoring Ohio Open Doors again this year. It was previously sponsored in 2016 and 2018. This event encourages historic homes and other buildings to open their doors to the public from September 11 to September 20. The Ohio History Center's 50th Anniversary is this year so the Ohio History Connection may be offering something different this year. Kleismit asked members to think about how their organizations and communities could participate, even if only for a 2 hour segment on one of the days. The Ohio History Connection helps promote the event and Steve George and the State Historic Preservation Office are the contacts. Members should let either Kleismit or Previts know if they have any questions or would like more information.

Kleismit shared that progress continues with the World Heritage designation. Last spring the Licking County court decided in the Ohio History Connection's favor on purchasing the lease on the Octagon Earthworks held by the Moundbuilders Country Club, which has been operating a golf course on the Octagon mounds. The Country Club can still appeal the decision. Kleismit said he thinks it could still be another three to three and half years before they are inscribed on the World Heritage list.

Kleismit shared that Statehood Day is Wednesday, February 26. Heise has been involved with the planning and it is expected to be well attended. Governor DeWine will be receiving the Ohio History Leadership award in the morning. Following that information will be shared on the three legislative priorities. One priority is the state's Capital budget, which will be introduced sometime in February. Another priority pertains to officially designating Poindexter Village as an Ohio History Connection site. A bill doing so easily passed the Senate and is now in the House. Two buildings remain from the housing complex built in the early 1940s. One building will be a museum while the other will be community space. The third Statehood Day priority pertains to enacting legislation to better protect human burial sites around the state. Statehood Day will also feature a panel discussion on Women's Suffrage. It will be moderated by Ann Fisher and the Ohio History Connection's Megan Wood will be on the panel. Plummer added that OHRAB will have a table at the event. She and Previts will be there and distribute the new electronic records preservation brochure created by Roulette. Kleismit added that there will also be a display of archival material pertaining to the history of Women's Suffrage in Ohio.

- c. OHRAB budget: Previts shared the 2019 and 2020 budgets with the board. Ratcliff mentioned that she completed the Records Management Challenge online training module and that Pari Swift did a really good job putting it together. Previts added there is a link posted on OHRAB's website to the training. He said that for the 2020 budget the Citizen's Archivist Award and the Professional Development Scholarships are new projects. Davidson noted that the overall grant from the NHPRC is a little lower than last year with \$31,670 in 2019 and \$30,720 in 2020. Davidson also asked about the due date for the Professional Development Scholarships. Ratcliff answered that the deadline is February 15. She will try to promote it again.
- d. OHRAB membership: Davidson shared that there is one gubernatorial appointment vacancy on the board. The board discussed seeking a member from southeastern Ohio. Plummer suggested Ernie Thode, a retired genealogist from southeast Ohio. Davidson said he will contact Thode and also check with Janet Carleton at Ohio University for possible candidates. The board also discussed the upcoming reappointments of Ratcliff as the

representative of the Miami Valley Archives Roundtable and Roulette as an at-large appointment.

ACTION ITEM: Pollitt will send Thode's contact information to Davidson.

ACTION ITEM: Davidson will contact Thode and Janet Carleton.

- e. Committee and Organizational Updates: Ratcliff shared Hays presented the 2019 Achievement Awards to the Lakewood Historical Society and the Clerk of Council for the City of Westlake. Hays mentioned that the local media was present for the Westlake award and that Council Clerk Denise Rosenbaum was recognized in front of the city council for the project. The Lakewood Historical Society award was presented during a roundtable annual meeting. The Lakewood Historical Society had acquired a medical building and turned it into a mid-century museum.

Ratcliff mentioned that she has started to receive applications for the professional development scholarships. She added that the History Day Awards will be given at the end of April and the call for nominations for the Citizen Archivist Award will be in July.

Davidson reported on the regrant program and shared that the final reports for the 2019 projects are due today. He said the announcement for the 2020 regrants will be sent out on February 3. Previts said that he will update the OHRAB website on February 3 and will let the board know when that is done so the members can send out the announcement. Board members discussed the various listservs and organizations it could be shared with. Davidson stated that the application period will be almost two months long and that this year there is added information on technical requirements. Pollitt mentioned that the Columbus Metropolitan Library and other public libraries offer scanning services that could be used by applicants. Davidson mentioned that Previts will be speaking at the Ohio Township Association annual conference next week which may lead to some applications.

Heise talked about the archival fellowships and the project to identify manumission records. She shared a draft of a one page document discussing manumission records and where they could be found. Previts suggested adding a few sentences talking about why OHRAB is compiling this information. Roulette asked about sharing sample images of the records and Heise said she could add some sample images. Pollitt suggested contacting some of the African American genealogy organizations and Plummer mentioned she has a contact with the Franklin County organization. Pollitt recommended providing a list of resources online that could be used to develop educational programs. He said that he will also provide a Heise with

a list of microfilm held by the Columbus Metropolitan Library that could help with the project. Heise said that she plans on having a training session in Greene County for the fellowship recipients and Previts stated that the payment terms will be clarified. Kelly suggested having the recipients sign off on a receipt for their on-site visits and will send Heise a copy of the form that she has used.

Previts reported that the electronic records preservation rack card has been printed. The board has 2,500 copies. Previts will take some to distribute at the Ohio Township Association annual conference next week. Pollitt said he will share it with the Ohio Genealogical Society board and suggested distributing it at the Ohio Genealogical Society annual conference. Previts will also post the card on the OHRAB website.

Heise mentioned that she and other members of the County Archivists and Records Managers Association (CARMA) had been notified by Amanda Rindler, the Local Government Records Archivist at the Ohio History Connection, that the Ohio Department of Health's Vital Statistics Office was telling the county health departments that they no longer needed to keep their death records. Heise said that the State Archives still recommended keeping the records. She later had a phone conversation with a staff member of the Vital Statistics Office and referred the staff member to Rindler.

ACTION ITEM: Previts to let board members know when the 2020 regrant application has been posted to OHRAB's website.

ACTION ITEM: Pollitt to send Heise a list of the microfilm held by the Columbus Metropolitan Library pertaining to manumission records.

ACTION ITEM: Kelly to send Heise an example of a site visit receipt.

[Adjourned for lunch at 12:03; Reconvened at 12:51 p.m.]

- IV. New Business:** Davidson said that the current strategic plan goes through December 31, 2020 so the board should begin revising the plan for January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023. Davidson said that the current plan has three major goal categories, each with one or two objectives. There are several action items for each objective. The board discussed goal 1: increase citizen engagement with Ohio's historical records. Members decided this goal was still relevant. Modrow suggested emphasizing records documenting diverse and under-represented communities and the board agreed with this revision. The board also decided to include the fellowship program as an action item under goal 1 and made revisions to the History Day and citizen archivist action items.

The board expanded goal 2, changing it from promoting investment in electronic records to “records in all formats.” Members also discussed changing the action item pertaining to educating officials about electronic records management. Under goal 3, the board added a new action item pertaining to the professional development scholarships. The board completed the following draft of the 2021 to 2023 strategic plan:

Goal 1: Increase citizen engagement with Ohio’s historical records.

Objective: Strengthen statewide awareness and support of Ohio’s historical records and archival collections, including records documenting diverse and under-represented communities.

Action 1: Use OHRAB’s website and social media to publicize institutions, grant recipients and projects undertaken to further access and preservation of historical records.

Action 2: Support and publicize Ohio’s History Day by creating an electronic resource for Ohio’s teachers and students. To encourage the use of primary sources in Ohio’s classrooms, present an award for the best use of Ohio’s historical records in a History Day project.

Action 3: Continue to promote the Ohio Citizen Archivist program. Collaborate with institutions to create projects such as crowd-sourced transcription, indexing and preservation projects as well as training on how to read and use primary sources. Continue to promote and recognize the achievements of archival volunteers with the Ohio Citizen Archivist award program.

Action 4: Present OHRAB Achievement Awards recognizing archival programs that have made significant achievements in the management, preservation, access, advocacy and use of Ohio historical records. Encourage Achievement Award recipients to capitalize on their award through the promotion of their archives.

Action 5: Sponsor and provide training to increase citizen’s awareness and use of historical record collections and institutions. Collaborate with groups such as the Ohio History Connection (OHC) and the Ohio County Archivists and Records Manager Association (CARMA) to create outreach training for records custodians.

Action 6: Promote and encourage the awareness and use of materials documenting under-represented Ohioans by sponsoring a fellowship to locate overlooked resources, such as manumission records.

Goal 2: Promote reliable and sustainable investment in Ohio's records in all formats.

Objective 1: Advocate for long-term management, preservation and access to Ohio's records.

Action 1: Provide recommendations to the State Archives on emerging best practices for digital preservation.

Action 2: Educate state and local officials and the public about the benefits of well-funded electronic records management and preservation programs.

Action 3: Use opportunities, such as Statehood Day, to directly advocate for records issues with state legislators.

Objective 2: Educate citizens, lawmakers, public officials and other stakeholders about the dangers of ignoring the long-term problem of electronic records preservation.

Action 1: Use OHRAB's website and social media to publicize electronic records that are at risk of being lost as a result of poor electronic records preservation practices.

Action 2: Develop short presentations and handouts to be given by board members at conferences and meetings to make citizens, lawmakers, public officials and other stakeholders aware of the threats to their electronic records.

Action 3: Collaborate with the Ohio Electronic Records Committee (OhioERC), CARMA, the Ohio Digitization Interest Group and other subject matter experts to publicize the challenges of electronic records management and preservation.

Goal 3: Foster the advancement of historical records preservation and access in Ohio's repositories.

Objective 1: Increase the number and quality of grant applications to the NHPRC from Ohio's repositories.

Action 1: Promote and share information about NHPRC grant opportunities through archival and records management listservs, regional archival association meetings and other methods of advocacy.

Action 2: Encourage prospective grant applicants to contact OHRAB for advice and recommendations prior to submitting applications to the NHPRC.

Action 3: Provide grant guidance through mentoring and web-based grant writing workshops.

Objective 2: Seek funding for historical records preservation and access in Ohio repositories.

Action 1: Promote and administer a re-grant program for projects that improve the preservation of and access to Ohio historical records.

Action 2: Provide scholarships to records professionals for educational and networking opportunities.

OHRAB will approve the 2021-2023 strategic plan at the next board meeting.

V. Closing

Ratcliff motioned to adjourn; Heise seconded; all in favor at 1:40 p.m. The next meeting will be held Friday, April 17th at the Ohio History Center in the 3rd floor Cardinal Classroom from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.