

# OHIO HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Minutes, October 27, 2023

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tina Ratcliff, Robin Heise, Virginia Dressler, Tami Kelly, Michelle Sweetser, Lisa Smilnak, Chris Shaw, Meghan Hays, Linda Swanson, Ernest Thode, Bill Modrow, Fred Previts, Connie Conner

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Stephen Badenhop, Megan Wood

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## I. Welcome

- a. Ratcliff called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m. after Previts was able to send out a new link for the meeting on Teams.

## II. Consent Agenda

- a. Conner noted punctuation changes to the minutes of the July 14, 2023 meeting.
- b. Ratcliff pointed out the tentative 2024 meeting dates included in the consent agenda: January 26, April 26, July 26, and October 25.
- c. No changes to the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan were entertained.
- d. Reports of the Ohio Electronic Records Committee and Ohio County Archivists and Records Managers Association were sent out separately because the meetings occurred after the packet was sent out. Kelly motioned to approve and Dressler seconded. Minutes were approved.

## III. Strategic Discussion

- a. OHRAB Budget: Previts indicated that there are funds left over that could be used as mileage reimbursement for the OHRAB fellowship recipient JeMiah Baht Israel to use to visit the counties she was researching. Ratcliff indicated that there was one achievement award and two citizen archivist awards with plaques costing \$80 each. There is also a remaining scholarship to be awarded. Previts suggested and Shaw made a motion to move all remaining travel funds to the archival fellowship fund to reimburse for mileage for visiting repositories. Kelly seconded the motion, which was approved. There has been no word from NHPRC regarding the 2024 funding so next year's budget was not discussed.
- b. Membership: The Governor has not yet approved Helen Conger's appointment to the Board. Thode will step down after the January 2024 meeting to take care of family business. He suggested possible replacements from Monroe and Washington counties. Badenhop's appointment expires next year so the Ohio County Archivists and Records Managers Association will select a replacement. Ratcliff suggested as a potential member Eira Tansey, who spoke at the July 2024 National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators about the work of state historical records advisory boards.
- c. Chris Hurtubise, communications director of the America 250 Ohio Commission, gave a presentation on the work of the commission. There are 29 appointed commissioners who meet quarterly and Douglas Priebe and Michael Coleman are co-chairs. Key goals per the Ohio Revised Code are to lead to inspire, partner to expand, and support to

- foster participation. Themes are celebrations, Ohio originals, education, inclusive engagement and highlighting seldom-told Ohio stories. America 250-Ohio communities will be supported by the commission and be eligible for grants on a \$5,000 Trillium and \$50,000 Buckeye level. Ohio Humanities is the partner for these grants which currently have deadlines of October 2023 and January 2024. Among the activities planned by the commission are: distributing passes to fourth graders for free admission to history museums; Scott Hagen painting barns as he did for the Ohio Bicentennial; marking the grave sites of Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Ohio; and compiling a statewide database of Ohio stories. Hurtubise mentioned that OHRAB can help the commission by providing information on and promoting any planned activities, staying informed, finding stories and volunteering for activities. Kelly asked about a resolution template and Hurtubise will send a link with her presentation. Heise mentioned that she shared information on the commission's grant opportunity on OHRAB's Facebook page.
- d. Committee reports: Ratcliff shared that the Awards Committee gave two Citizen Archivist awards. One recipient was Patty Ark at the Clark County Historical Society who was indispensable during their disaster. The other recipient was Chris Shell, a volunteer at the Cummings Center at the University of Akron and an expert on its postcard collection. The Archives Achievement Award recipient is the Bay Village Historical Society, which conserved portraits featuring donors of village land. The 2024 History Day award will have the same categories as last year: documentaries and papers using primary sources.
  - e. Sweetser reported that the Advocacy committee continues to post on Facebook and she and Conner will work on updating the board's brochure.
  - f. Ratcliff reported for Badenhop that all the regrant interim reports have been received and are posted on OHRAB's website. The final reports are due January 31, 2024. Dressler will chair the regrant committee when Badenhop's term ends.
  - g. Hays shared about the open house held by the Shaker Heights Historical Society to highlight its OHRAB grant-funded project of organizing institutional archives. Intern Rachel Sykes, a student at Drexel, explained the importance of the archives. Hays suggested having Sykes and the historical society's board president present to OHRAB. Ratcliff mentioned that a hybrid in-person/virtual OHRAB meeting at the Shaker Heights Library is being considered in spring 2024.
  - h. OHRAB Archival Fellow, JeMiah Baht Israel, reported on her work to recover and provide access to manumission records in southeastern Ohio and address the issue of archival silences that disproportionately affect under-represented populations. She searched census records to identify names that could then later be looked for in county records. Baht Israel shared that she found more information in the census records than she expected. However, she didn't find any manumission records searching online. Baht Israel also interviewed David Butcher, curator of People of Color Museum in Stewart, Athens County, Ohio, who is trying to find documentation of his enslaved grandmother.

#### **IV. New Business**

Ratcliff suggested discussing at a future meeting how the board could help teachers with History Day. Modrow mentioned developing a succession plan for the chair and vice-chair positions as Ratcliff will be leaving the board March 31, 2026 and Badenhop will be leaving March 31, 2024.

- V.     **Closing:** Heise motioned to adjourn. Shaw seconded. All approved and the meeting concluded at 11:40 a.m.