

OHIO HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Minutes, July 26, 2024

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tina Ratcliff, Robin Heise, Helen Conger, Virginia Dressler, Lonna McKinley, Bill Modrow, Brenda Ransom, Chris Shaw, Lisa Smilnak, Linda Swanson, Fred Previts, Connie Conner

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Megan Wood, Meghan Hays, Tami Kelly, Michelle Sweetser

I. Welcome

- a. Ratcliff called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Helen Conger and Lonna McKinley were welcomed to their first meeting as gubernatorial appointees to the Board and all members introduced themselves.

II. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of the previous meeting were included in the meeting packet for review.
- b. Heise moved to approve the minutes and Modrow seconded the motion.

III. Strategic Discussion

- a. OHRAB Budget: Previts reported that \$1,600 of travel funds remain. Ratcliff suggested discussing the funds during new business. She also shared information on the budget process, including the NHPRC grant application process and the funding limit of \$40,000 per year or \$80,000 for two years, which necessitated the submission of a two-year grant application to the NHPRC for 2025-2026.
- b. Committee and Organizational Updates: Ratcliff reported that Awards Committee member Smilnak travelled to Bay Village to present the achievement award and was given a tour and update of the project. Dressler mentioned that Grants Committee members should remind their mentees to turn in interim reports by August 31. Heise shared that the Advocacy Committee has been publicizing awards and activities on social media. Heise also reported that the fellowship program for students to search for manumission records operates biennially. More funds have been requested for the fellowship in the 2025 budget. So far over 2,000 manumission records have been located. It is challenging because there were no standards for how manumission records were to be kept by the counties. Results by county have been reported on the OHRAB website.

IV. New Business

- a. Conner suggested that the \$1,600 in surplus travel funds could be used to fund regrant projects that did not receive full funding because details needed to be clarified. Mentors could suggest projects for funding. Modrow moved that the Grant Committee explore options for spending the surplus and Heise seconded. All approved. Dressler offered another possibility to use the funds to make archival preservation kits available to historical societies. If the Grants Committee is unable to spend the funds, Previts will check with the NHPRC to see if it is permissible to use surplus funds to distribute preservation kits.

- b. Shaw asked if others involved in the America 250-Ohio program were having difficulty getting responses from commission staff. Heise shared her experiences and information about upcoming Lunch and Learn sessions. Ratcliff referred to the intent in our strategic plan to support America 250-Ohio and suggested having the America 250-Ohio staff speak again at our October meeting.
- c. Dressler indicated that the meeting of Cultural Heritage and Ohio Symposium (CHAOS), will be held at the State Library of Ohio on June 9, 2025. The keynote speaker will be from the Greater Ohio Policy Center and discuss the changing demographics of Ohio.
- d. Ratcliff reported that Wright State University had ceased to collect and preserve local government records and will be contacting the records creators about returning them. She shared that WSU's local government records collection accounted for approximately 25% of their space.
- e. Ratcliff reflected on a thirty-year-old project "To Outwit Time" by the Statewide Preservation Planning Committee which held several meetings around the state to develop a plan for archival preservation. OHRAB, the Ohio Preservation Council, the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio History Connection and other entities were involved.
- f. The next OHRAB meeting will be held virtually on October 25.

V. **Closing:** Modrow moved to adjourn and Heise seconded. All approved the motion and the meeting concluded at 11:00 a.m.