

OHIO HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Minutes, July 25, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:	Tina Ratcliff, Helen Conger, Virginia Dressler, Bill Modrow, Brenda Ransom, Chris Shaw, Lisa Smilnak, Greta Suiter, Linda Swanson, Fred Previts, Connie Conner
BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:	Robin Heise, Tami Kelly, Lonna McKinley, Michelle Sweetser, Megan Wood

I. Welcome

- a. Ratcliff called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. at the Gahanna City Hall.

II. Consent Agenda

- a. Ratcliff referred to the board meeting packet which included the consent agenda and a report from the Ohio Electronic Records Committee. Shaw moved to approve the minutes and Dressler seconded. All approved.

III. Strategic Discussion

- a. OHRAB Budget: Previts reported that Ratliff, Shaw and he met with Ohio History Day staff to discuss spending the \$1000 funds provided by OHRAB for regional study days. Previts addressed concerns about federal funding, indicating monies for 2026 are secure because we opted to apply for a two-year grant.
- b. Sophia McGuire, Deputy Clerk of Council for the City of Gahanna and host for the meeting, gave the board a summary report of Gahanna's 2024 OHRAB grant project to scan 11 volumes of council proceedings from the Village of Gahanna. From May to June of 2024 Scanworks digitized minutes, ordinances and resolutions from 1881 to 1970 which had previously been duplicated in poor quality microfilm and digital format. The next step was to make the records searchable. The city intends to transcribe the records and preserve the original records off-site. Gahanna has also been experimenting with ChatGPT for transcribing. They now have a SharePoint site for their transcribed minutes. Some highlights in the minutes include the 1922 transition from gas to electric power and the first female council member, Laura Fisher.
- c. Committee and Organizational Updates: Ratcliff shared for the Awards Committee that two Citizen Archivist nominations have been received so far, and the recipient will be announced in early October. The announcement for applications for the Archival Achievement Award will be distributed the first week of August. One of the recipients of a professional development scholarship has submitted her report and reimbursement paperwork.

Dressler noted for the Regrant Committee that interim grant project reports are due at the end of August.

For the Advocacy Committee, Conner mentioned Ohio-America 250 events that the board could support, such as the July 2026 Homecoming theme. A possible genealogy workshop was discussed, perhaps with the Ohio Genealogical Society. Dressler shared that she will be distributing OHRAB's brochure at the Ohio Preservation Council Symposium on August 1.

Dressler shared that Gaylord donated 45 of their older family history kits which could be distributed once all of the OHRAB preservation kits have been requested. She considered the potential for using Ohiolink courier system as locations to pick up preservation kits. Dressler shared a draft of a five question application form to request a kit.

Ratcliff reported that the Ohio History Day funds will be distributed to regional coordinators to use for student study days. The coordinators will submit receipts and a report on how the funds were used. The coming year's theme is "Revolution, Reform and Reaction." Ratcliff will reach out to repositories in Ohio to see what collections they might have that fit with this theme.

Ratcliff reported that the CARMA/OhioERC/OHRAB Digital Initiatives and Standards Committee met on July 8 with Stephen Badenhop chairing the group. Its purpose is to establish standards for digital programs as microfilm film and equipment service becomes more difficult to obtain. Subcommittees were formed on authenticity, third party and cloud, minimum standards, microfilm, and security. The group will reconvene in the fall and plans to have the standards publicly available by the end of 2026.

IV. New Business

- a. Ratcliff reported that the Ohio Supreme Court recently released its updated Rules of Superintendence. This includes a provision that the Ohio History Connection will be notified before disposing of records with a retention period of greater than ten years and the record was created more than fifty years ago (this provision had been removed in a draft of the rules).
- b. Dressler gave an update on the Cultural Heritage in Ohio Summit. The Ohio Museums Association will be coordinating advocacy efforts and the Ohio Humanities Council will be taking over the symposium planning.
- c. Dressler shared that the Ohio Preservation Council's symposium will be held August 1 at the Columbus Metropolitan Library. Registration ends today.
- d. Ratcliff mentioned that the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA) will be hosting its Fall Online Forum on October 31. OHRAB decided to move its meeting to October 24.

V. Closing: Modrow moved to adjourn and Shaw seconded. All approved the motion, and the meeting concluded at 11:30 a.m.