

OHIO HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Minutes, January 30, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tina Ratcliff, Helen Conger, Virginia Dressler, Brenda Ransom, Chris Shaw, Lisa Smilnak, Linda Swanson, Michelle Sweetser, Fred Previts, Connie Conner, Greta Suiter, Tammi Kelly

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Megan Wood

I. Welcome

- a. Ratcliff called the virtual meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Consent Agenda

- a. Ratcliff referred to the board meeting packet which included the consent agenda and reports from the Ohio Electronic Records Committee and Ohio County Archivists and Records Managers Association.
- b. Shaw moved to approve the consent agenda and Minutes of the October 24, 2025 meeting. Ransom seconded. All approved.

III. Strategic Discussion

- a. Dressler agreed to be nominated as chair if no other member volunteered. Shaw moved to nominate Dressler and Smilnak seconded the motion. The board voted to elect Dressler as chair. Ransom agreed to continue serving as vice chair. Shaw moved to nominate Ransom as vice chair and Dressler seconded the motion. Ransom was voted to be the vice-chair.
- b. OHRAB Budget: Previts summarized the financial activity for the last quarter. The Archival Achievement and Citizen Archivist Awards were purchased and were slightly over budget. One host of a regional research day requested \$300 for Ohio History Day support. The remaining \$700 will be available for regional Ohio History Day research events in 2026. The 2027-2028 budget is to be submitted this year.
- c. Membership: Previts shared that there are currently three vacancies on the board. The Society of Ohio Archivists endorsed Sophia McGuire as its representative. Kelly moved to accept McGuire as a member of the board. Sweetser seconded the motion and all agreed. The two remaining vacancies, which are gubernatorial appointments, were then discussed. The board suggested inviting Adam Wanter from the MidPointe Library and Toni Vanden Bos from Wright State University to apply and Previts will contact them.
- d. Committee and Organizational Updates: Ratcliff reported for the Awards Committee that the Citizen Archivist Award was given to John Emler, a volunteer with the Licking County Records Center and Archives. She also reported that the Williams County Public Library Local History and Genealogy received the Archives Achievement Award, which Sweetser presented to them. Shaw sent out the announcement for Professional Development Scholarship applications on January 15. The application deadline is March 1. With Ratcliff ending her term on the board, a new cochair of the Awards Committee is needed. Kelly agreed to serve as co-chair.

- e. Regrant Committee: Dressler has updated the regrant guidelines and the grant announcement will be posted on February 2. A link to the announcement should be directed to Betsy Hedler so that it can be shared with the Ohio Local History Alliance. Final reports from 2025 grant recipients are due January 31 and some have already been received.
- f. Advocacy Committee: Sweetser is trying to monitor America-250 events throughout the state to promote on the board's Facebook page. Members are encouraged to share information about local activities with her.
- g. Preservation Kits and Gaylord Family History Kits: Ratcliff thanked Dressler and Previts for their work on the preservation kits. Forty kits were distributed and the recipients attended a preservation webinar given by Marcela Estevez, the Associate Director of Conservation and Collections Care at the Ohio State University Libraries. One kit was lost during shipping and Dressler is working to replace it.
- h. CARMA/OhioERC/OHRAB Digital Initiatives and Standards Committee: Ratcliff, Previts and Dressler are members of three different subcommittees developing guidelines for the long-term preservation of digital records. The Standards Committee has met twice and has an upcoming meeting. A couple of drafts have been made. The Storage Committee has not made as much progress.
- i. Ohio Preservation Council: Dressler reported the council is discussing a possible statewide survey of preservation needs.

IV. New Business

- a. Fellowship: Swanson volunteered to lead the fellowship activities and Dressler and Conner offered their support. The history of the program was reviewed.
- b. Support of the Ohio History Connection: Ratcliff sent a letter to Megan Wood, Chief Executive Officer of the Ohio History Connection, offering support for the organization. She was joined by Ginnie Dressler for the Ohio Preservation Council, Jennifer Long Morehart for the Society of Ohio Archivists, and Jennifer Haney Conover for the County Archivists and Records Managers Association in a meeting with Wood, who was open and appreciated the support. Ratcliff and Dressler were invited to attend Statehood Day. Ratcliff encouraged board members to attend as well.
- c. Other news: The Ohio Museums Association hosts statewide advocacy round table meetings in February and September. ICA Art Conservation has a list of 250 tips for preservation. A Shaker Heights levy passed to use property taxes to support local history. Ohio Humanities Council has a strategic plan to advocate and for and fund the humanities.
- d. Next meeting will be a hybrid meeting on April 24 at the Grove City City Hall.

- V. **Closing:** Shaw moved to adjourn and Dressler seconded. All approved the motion, and the meeting concluded at 11:20 a.m.