

**COVERT TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024, Noon  
Covert Historical Museum, 33805 M-140 Hwy, Covert, MI 49043  
(269) 764-8986**

**MEETING AGENDA**

Call to Order  
Roll Call Attendance  
Approve Agenda  
Approve April 30, 2024 Draft Minutes  
Public Comment

**ONGOING BUSINESS**

Guest Speaker Series Status  
Exhibit Renovations (New Exhibit Ideas, Rotating Exhibit, Kid-Friendly)  
Fundraising Efforts  
Media & Communication Update

**NEW BUSINESS**

Review Week 1  
Volunteer Roles  
Donation Policy

Adjourn

## **COVERT HISTORICAL MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 30, 2024, Meeting

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Daywi Cook at 1:05

Members Present: Daywi Cook, Mia Bennett, Marjorie Clayton, Patrice Jackson, Christy Zwenger

Approval of agenda and minutes: Daywi made motion. Mia seconded.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jean Robinson brought the "open" flag for George to put up.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Building Repair:** George is stabilizing the front porch to make it safe to use.

**The Safe:** Laura is still in its search. Daywi confirmed that the Township will pay for it. Daywi suggested finding other options for Laura to pursue.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Programming:** 1) Allen Mingo, former Covert resident, to be possible guest speaker at the Alumni Reunion in June.  
2) A consideration was made to offer stipends to the guest speakers.  
3) The Museum will host 3 guest speakers for the season.  
4) Discussion of who to have as our guests included: Paul DeYoung, Register of Deeds, Van Buren County; former librarian in Grand Rapids (Kathy to reach out to her.); someone from the Lorena family; and local Native Americans.  
5) Pancake Breakfast: Daywi will share more info as the time comes.  
6) Memorial Day Parade: Jean Robinson to drive in the parade. Christy to carry banner.

**Reunion:** Sell A Stronger Kinship for \$20 and put the surplus \$10 from the sale to the Museum. Daywi is getting details on if and how the Museum can sell items.

**Library Partnership:** Daywi is open to ideas. She also suggested the Museum posting an exhibit there.

**Newsletter/Brochures:** Jean Robinson suggested linking up with the library on a newsletter. Laura will make copies of the current one to put out in local areas: South Haven Visitor's Center, Covert Campground, etc.

**Museum Exhibits:** Renovations are necessary. We will start by making an inventory of what we have and go from there.

**Fundraising Efforts:** Daywi will get the donor list and send out letters. Grant ideas were mentioned as well.

**Donation Letter:** Mia is fine tuning the third paragraph of the letter. Donation policies are to be discussed at May's meeting.

**Volunteers:** New volunteers should go through Laura and alert her of their availability.

Volunteer Teams thus far:

**Tuesday Volunteers:** Ladonna, Mia, Marjorie, Mae, Kathy (as an alternate)

**Friday Volunteers:** Jean, Patrice, Christy, Marge, Daywi (as her schedule opens)

**Media and Communication:** Facebook, Website, and Email are under Township control. Anyone interested in writing Facebook posts was encouraged.

The Township Email is more secure than our former one. Labels will be created with the new email address to put over the old one on our brochures.

**Monthly Museum Meeting Day:** The third Tuesday at noon at the Museum will be our monthly meeting day for the 2024 Season.

Christy made the motion to adjourn at 3:30. Mia seconded.

Next meeting is set for Tuesday, May 21, 2024, 12:00 p.m. at the Museum.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christy Zwenger

## Re: Non Solicitation

Supervisor <Supervisor@coverttwp.com>

Thu 5/9/2024 11:42 AM

To: Mia Bennett <miasbennett@gmail.com>

Hi Mia,

My research shows that we are not permitted to sell items for fundraising. This is an excerpt from Michigan Township Associations Learning portal:

*"Townships have authority to spend public funds when a statute (state law) expressly authorizes or fairly implies that a township can do a specific program, activity or service.*

*When townships are looking for different revenue sources, fundraising projects are often considered. The problem with traditional fundraising, when you are buying something to sell or raffle off, is that **there is no statute that authorizes a township to use public money to buy the prizes or the raffle tickets or the items for sale.***

*But a township can always just ask for donations. Cut out the middle man! Come up with a wish list and let people know that the township is looking for donations. Sponsors and donors can provide townships with valuable support."*

There may be an opportunity to still offer the books for sale at cost to simply provide them to the public, with a suggested donation. OR have them donated. I will reach out to our attorney.

Thank you,

Daywi Cook

Covert Township Supervisor

O: (269) 764-5137 | C: (269) 767-6800

Covert Township, 73943 Lake St, PO BOX 35, Covert, MI 49043

Coverttwp.com

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**From:** Mia Bennett <miasbennett@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 5:05 PM

**To:** Supervisor <Supervisor@coverttwp.com>

**Subject:** Non Solicitation

Hello Daywi

Please follow up on whether or not vendors would be able to sell books at the museum (public, governmental property). Or would this fall under non solicitation?? If so, would a license to sell be needed?

If the museum sells books, would we be required to collect sales tax???

Just a few questions that come to mind.

Thanks

Mia

Sent from my iPhone

## **ROLES / COMMITTEES (DRAFT)**

### **Advisory Committee**

Advisory Committee members are responsible for overseeing the organization as well as the presentation, preservation and programming for the exhibits within the museum. Major duties revolve around working with the Township to develop and implement policy and procedures. Members often assist with writing exhibit scripts and preparing grant applications.

### **Tour Guide**

Museum tour guides walk patrons around the museum and provide information on the exhibits.

### **Archivist (Archivist Committee)**

Museum archivists will use the museum policies to assess and recommend the acceptance of a donated item or artifact and relevance of an exhibit. They will provide input to ensure donated items and exhibits preserve the vision and mission of the museum. They will also assist in determining how exhibits should be displayed.

### **Registrar (Registrar Committee)**

The registrar is responsible for making sure that items donated are fully documented and accounted for and for making the museum's resources available to visitors. Duties may include responding to research requests, cataloguing objects, or creating finding aids.

### **Donor Relations (Donor Relations Committee)**

This position involves interacting with those who donate to the museum. They may also help plan fundraiser events, collaborate on marketing initiatives to bring in donations and often complete a variety of administrative tasks, including sending donor request letters, thank you letters, the museum newsletter and answering donor questions.

### **Outreach Coordinator (Outreach Committee)**

The Outreach Coordinator is responsible for marketing and public relations initiatives that attract visitors. Outreach coordinators will collaborate with the Township and other museum volunteers to plan special promotions and create advertisements and media engagement about an upcoming event or new exhibit.

### **Education Coordinator (Education Committee)**

The Education Coordinator will assist in developing and planning a museum's educational events, such as seminars, lectures, guest speakers, patron events and school programs. Recently many education departments have taken their programs out of the museum and into the schools in order to reach a broader audience. By creating materials that connect the museum's message with some element of a teacher's curriculum, both teachers and students have the opportunity for an enhanced lesson, and the museum can increase its visibility and attendance.

### **Historian**

The Historian will provide knowledge and insight to ensure accurate and well-written exhibits, and will be a resource to answer questions about Covert's history.

*Collections Donation Fact Sheet*  
Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library preserves and presents to the public the artistic, cultural, literary and spiritual heritage of the people of Antioch (Syria), thereby seeking to increase awareness and understanding of Middle Eastern culture, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and the unique contributions of Arabic-speaking people to American life and to the world at large.

## **GIFT POLICY SUMMARY**

- The Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library (AHML) accepts gifts of books, journals, artifacts and other items which support its mission as stated above and are judged by its Collections Committee to be a potentially significant contribution to the overall collection.
- Potential donors will submit a list of items to be considered for donation, accompanied by a completed Collections Donation Information Form and photographs of their potential donation.
- The Collections Committee will determine the acceptance, classification, housing, exhibition and/or circulation policies of all gift items. If a donation is a collection or group of items, it may not be possible to keep such collections intact, as most will be integrated into existing collections.
- The AHML will handle duplicates or unwanted items as outlined in the Temporary Custody Receipt, which will be provided to donors when items are submitted for consideration.
- AHML staff is not authorized under IRS regulations to assign a monetary value to said gifts or donations for income tax purposes.

### **How can I donate objects to the Museum/Library collection?**

If you think your donation supports the AHML's mission as stated above, please read this Fact Sheet in its entirety and complete the attached *Collections Donation Information Form*. This form provides information about the item(s) and will help us to determine suitability for inclusion in the collection. It is important for you to be as detailed as possible. Please include a photograph of the artifact or collection. If possible, take the photo alongside a ruler. Please mail or email the completed form to:

Collections Committee, c/o Julia Ritter, Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library, 140 Church Camp Tr., Bolivar, PA 15923; [julia@antiochianvillage.org](mailto:julia@antiochianvillage.org)

*All offers must be submitted in writing by completing the Collections Donation Information Form below. We are very sorry that we cannot consider a donation without a completed form.*

### **What happens after I submit the Collections Donation Information Form?**

After we receive your form and photograph(s), we will review the item(s) and assess the suitability to the AHML's mission. We will also consider our ability to properly care for the donation, as well as our ability to make it accessible to the public. A staff member may contact you for more information, but in most cases we will make a decision based on the information you have provided on the Collections Donation Information Form. If we are interested in your item(s), they will be accepted into *Temporary Custody* until we are able to make a final decision.

### **What is Temporary Custody?**

Potential donations to the museum and/or library will first be placed into Temporary Custody, where they are held until the Collections Committee has considered whether to accept them into the collection. Potential donors will sign and submit a *Temporary Custody Receipt* when they leave or send their item(s). Our Collections Committee, which meets every six months to review proposed donations, is



made up of staff, scholars, and members of the clergy. You will be contacted within 180 days of receipt to let you know the outcome of our review. Potential donations will be considered for inclusion in the Permanent Collection, or one of four other collections which enhance research, educational or exhibition activities at the Antiochian Village: the Archdiocese Department Archives, the Education Collection, the Reference Collection, and the Decorative / Prop Collection.

### **What happens after the Collections Committee makes a decision?**

If the Collections Committee has decided to accept items for donation, a *Deed of Gift* transferring ownership of the items will be sent with your acceptance letter, and the item(s) will be officially accessioned into the collection. An acceptance of a donation does not mean the item(s) will be immediately put on display. An item may be accepted if it compliments a future exhibit or display, or if it would be useful to scholarly or public research.

If we are unable to accept all or some of your proposed donation, we will follow the instructions you provided on the Temporary Custody Receipt, either returning them to you at your expense or disposing of the item(s) as the staff sees fit.

### **What will we do with unwanted materials?**

Not every item in a potential donation will be of sufficient historical value to the library or museum. Because of our limited space and scope, the Collections Committee must review the contents of each potential donation to determine what material is of truly substantive nature and what other items are routine, duplicative, or may not fit the needs of our collection. Through the Temporary Custody Receipt, you will be asked to indicate whether you would like unwanted items returned to you at this time. Otherwise, according to standard museum & library procedures, unwanted materials will be transferred to a more appropriate repository, or disposed of as the staff sees fit.

### **What is a Deed of Gift?**

A Deed of Gift is a legal document that transfers ownership to the Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library, under the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. It is considered irrevocable. Before offering an item, please be certain that all interested parties understand the implications of signing a Deed of Gift. Family members should be in agreement about the decision to make the donation, and who has the legal authority to sign the Deed.

After a Deed of Gift is issued, and as the content or focus of the collection evolves, the Collections Committee has the right to decide in the future to remove (deaccession) an item from the collection.

### **What about appraisals and tax deductions?**

Under IRS regulations, our staff is not authorized to appraise gifts or to assign a monetary value to said gifts or donations for income tax purposes. The responsibility for appraising donations remains with the donor. IRS policy states that any tax deduction claim for a contribution of property to a charitable organization, *the total claimed value of which exceeds \$5,000*, must include a written appraisal of the donated property from a qualified appraiser. To find a licensed appraiser in your area, you can request a referral from the following organizations: the American Society of Appraisers ([www.appraisers.org](http://www.appraisers.org)); the International Society of Appraisers ([www.isa-appraisers.org](http://www.isa-appraisers.org)); or the Appraisers Association of America ([www.appraisersassoc.org](http://www.appraisersassoc.org)).

### **Questions?**

If you have any further questions about this process, please contact Julia Ritter at 724-238-3677 x 425 or [julia@antiochianvillage.org](mailto:julia@antiochianvillage.org). We appreciate your support, and your interest in our collection.

# ***Collections Donation Information Form***

Please return completed form to:  
Collections Committee, c/o Julia Ritter, Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library,  
140 Church Camp Tr., Bolivar, PA 15923

## ***Donor Contact Information:***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the *Collections Donation Fact Sheet* and understand the general policies and procedures for donations to the Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library (AHML).

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***A. Object Information***

Please list the item(s) that you are interested in donating, with a detailed description and a photograph of each one (photo taken alongside a ruler, if possible). Use reverse side or attach separate pages as necessary, including the following information:

Name/Kind of Object(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Owner (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Object: \_\_\_\_\_ Measurements (length x width x height): \_\_\_\_\_

Condition:     \_\_\_ excellent     \_\_\_ very good     \_\_\_ good     \_\_\_ fair     \_\_\_ poor

Condition details: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***B. Historical Background:***

Please provide any historical information about the item(s). Use reverse side or attach additional pages as necessary.

1. How was the item used? (by whom? when? where?)
2. When and where was it made and/or purchased?
3. Is there cultural significance to the item(s) (i.e. ceremonial, traditional, etc.) or other information you'd like to share?

## ***C. Family History Information:***

Please answer as completely as possible. Use reverse side or attach additional pages as necessary.

1. When did your family (or item's owner) come to the U.S., and where did they come from? What year / country?
2. Where in the U.S. did the family settle, and how did they make their living?
3. Where do offspring, if any, currently reside, and what are their occupations?
4. Are there significant events in this immigration story, or other details which you believe are important to share?