

COLLECTIONS POLICY

LAKE MINNETONKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ARTICLE I

MISSION & RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1.1 – Mission.

To identify, collect and preserve records and objects directly relevant to the history of the Lake Minnetonka area and to make said records available to the general public for research.

Section 1.2 – Responsibilities of the Board.

The Board of Directors of the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society (the Board) shall have oversight approval of all Collections Committee (CC) policy decisions.

Section 1.3 – Responsibilities of the Collections Committee.

The CC shall be responsible for operational oversight of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collections. Any action by the CC requires agreement of the majority of committee members. Meetings and communication among the CC may be conducted in person or through electronic or telephonic means. The CC may recruit volunteers to work on collection maintenance and access. The CC may recommend policy motions to the Board for final approval. The CC must include a liaison member of the Board.

ARTICLE II

DEFINITIONS

Section 2.1 – Accession.

Specific activities that log new materials into a collection after acquisition.

Section 2.2 – Appraisal.

- The act of assessing an item's relevance for a collection using identified criteria, or
- Providing an estimated financial value of an item, usually for tax purposes.

Section 2.3 – Acquisition.

A transaction by which ownership/title to incoming records/objects is transferred to the receiving institution.

Section 2.4 – Collection.

An assembly of materials, regardless of media type, that is gathered and maintained because of its historical significance, operational importance, or educational value to the person(s) or organization which created or gathered the materials.

Section 2.5 – Curation.

All aspects of professionally caring for an archival collection and the records and objects it contains, including but not limited to: acquiring, accessioning, cataloging, maintaining, preserving, restoring, exhibiting, deaccessioning, and disposing of the collections, its objects and records, and any associated documentation.

Section 2.6 – Deaccession.

Activities related to the formal decision made to dispose of objects/records no longer deemed suitable for the collection.

Section 2.7 – Disposal/Disposition.

The act of removing an object/record from the collection after the formal deaccession decision has been made. Disposal may be done by returning the item to the original donor, transferring ownership of the item(s) to another entity or individual through donation or sale, or throwing the item(s) away.

Section 2.8 – Loans.

Instances where objects/records are temporarily brought into (incoming) or sent out of (outgoing) the owning institution for the purposes of exhibition, conservation, or research.

Section 2.9 – Object/Record.

A single item or document that is part of the collection. This may include, but is not limited to: historical photographs, documents, maps, blueprints, videos, publications, and three-dimensional artifacts.

Section 2.10 – Collection Management System.

Software used by the collections staff to organize, control, and manage materials in a collection.

**ARTICLE III
SCOPE**

Section 3.1 – Scope.

The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collection (the collection) consists of materials directly connected to the history of the Lake Minnetonka area. Record types include, but are not limited to, photographs, documents, maps, blueprints, videos, publications, and three-dimensional artifacts. Additionally, the collection includes Lake Minnetonka Historical Society administrative records and public relations materials.

Section 3.2 – Items to Acquire.

The primary focus for acquisition will continue to be archival material, photographs, documents, maps, blueprints, videos, publications, and three-dimensional artifacts that document the history of the Lake Minnetonka area, as well as materials produced by Lake Minnetonka Historical Society and its predecessors. The geographical scope of the collection will continue to include the Lake Minnetonka area.

**ARTICLE IV
TERMS OF ACQUISITION & DEACCESSION**

Section 4.1 – Acquisition Criteria.

New items may be acquired through donation, bequest, purchase, field collecting, transfer from other institutions, or any other transaction that passes title of the materials to the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society. Collection additions shall be relevant to the mission of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society and help document and/or interpret the history of the Lake Minnetonka area. Materials should have historical value, the potential for exhibition or research, or aesthetic qualities for exhibit or education purposes. Materials shall only be accepted for the collection with the intention that they will be retained permanently unless a change in circumstances forces a reappraisal. Materials shall not be

accepted unless clear title can be granted by the donor. An object accepted for the collection should not be a duplicate of one already owned, unless the new acquisition is in superior condition, is better documented, or provides the means of making an important comparison.

Section 4.2 – Ethics of Acquisition.

No object/record shall be added to the collection that cannot be documented, stored, protected, and preserved under conditions that are in keeping with accepted archival standards and ensure its availability for research and/or exhibition purposes. Pursuant to Article VII, Section 3, no person associated with Lake Minnetonka Historical Society may provide potential donors with a financial appraisal of their materials. Staff or volunteers may provide informal assessments of an object/record's informational value as a public service only.

Section 4.3 – Deaccession Criteria.

Materials in the collection shall be kept permanently as long as they continue to serve the purposes and activities of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society and its mission, contribute to the integrity of the collection, and can be properly stored, preserved, and used according to accepted archival standards. If such conditions can no longer be met, materials may be considered for deaccession and disposal.

Section 4.4 – Ethics of Deaccession.

Deaccession shall be in the best interest of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society, the public it serves, and the materials in question. Materials to be disposed of shall not be given or sold privately to a Lake Minnetonka Historical Society staff person, volunteer, board member, member, or associate unless arrangements can be made to ensure that such an act cannot be interpreted as a possible conflict of interest or attempt to profit at Lake Minnetonka Historical Society expense. Board members, staff members, and volunteers are required to hold the collection needs of the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society above their own. Any funds which might be raised through the disposition of an item shall be used for the direct benefit of the collection. Deaccessioning is to be undertaken to improve and refine the museum collection, and will not be undertaken to generate funds for the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society. The collection shall not be viewed as a liquid asset.

**ARTICLE V
ACQUISITION & DEACCESSION PROCESSES**

Section 5.1 – Acquisition Process.

Proposed acquisitions to the collection shall be brought to the CC for discussion. Proposed acquisitions require affirmative agreement from the majority of the committee members to be accepted. A Temporary Custody Form shall be signed by a prospective donor before a proposed acquisition is brought to the CC. If the CC accepts a donation, a member of the CC shall fill out a Deed of Gift Form for the donor to sign. Proposed acquisitions that are rejected by the CC shall be returned to the donor or disposed of as the donor directs. Upon affirmative accession, a Deed of Gift form shall be signed by the donor.

Section 5.2 – Acquisition Restrictions.

The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society will endeavor to acquire objects free of all restrictions regarding use or disposition. The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society will not guarantee the exhibition of any donation, and the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society's Deed of Gift form will specify the lack of such a guarantee. An instrument of conveyance such as a Deed of Gift or a bill of sale will accompany all

donations and purchases, and will be retained permanently by the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society as part of the collection records.

Section 5.3 – Acquisition Budget.

A budget may be provided by the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society for purchases. Proposed purchases that exceed the designated budget shall be approved by the board of directors.

Section 5.4 – Unsolicited Donations.

Unsolicited donations shall be evaluated and considered by the CC in relation to the collection as a whole. Materials deemed to be unsuitable for the collection should be returned to the donor, and may be accompanied by suggestions of alternative organizations for deposit. Unsolicited materials left with Lake Minnetonka Historical Society without contact information shall be considered to be voluntarily abandoned after thirty (30) days, and as such may be disposed of at the CC's discretion.

Section 5.6 – Inventory.

Once accepted into the collection, staff or volunteers shall complete an inventory of the new donation. Inventories shall include basic information about the scope of the donation such as:

- Volume – how much material is there, how many boxes, how many artifacts
- Subject matter – is the new material administrative, family history, transportation history, architectural materials, event materials, et cetera
- Dates –the rough date range of the material in the donation (i.e., what are the oldest and newest dates found during a quick review of the material)
- Condition – what shape is the material in (e.g., are photos fading or stuck together, is there evidence that the materials have been wet, is there mold or mildew visible, does it smell musty, are papers torn or smudged)
- Location – where the new material shelved in the storage area
- Interesting notes – did the inventory reveal any significant information about the donated materials that would be good to know before the material is officially cataloged (e.g., are key individuals named, are important events documented, is the story particularly compelling, et cetera)
- Name – who completed the inventory

Section 5.7 – Cataloging.

Once an item has been inventoried, it should be properly cataloged with an assigned number and description. The preferred cataloging system shall be determined by the CC.

Section 5.8 – Storage.

Lake Minnetonka Historical Society will make all reasonable efforts to maintain the collection according to archival best practices regarding storage within financial capacity. Such best practices currently include:

- Stable temperature and humidity levels – approximately 68° Fahrenheit and 45% Relative Humidity if possible. Recognizing that close adherence to 68°and 45% may not be feasible, Lake Minnetonka Historical Society should aim to maintain its storage environment in as stable a manner as possible, minimizing extreme fluctuations in either temperature or humidity levels.
- Appropriate archival storage enclosures that prevent deterioration and minimize damage to the collection materials. Whenever possible, care should be taken to ensure that materials are stored in archivally-appropriate enclosures for the specific type of material (e.g., photographs in sleeves,

paper materials stored in archival boxes filled so as to prevent slumping and curling, maps and oversized paper in flat file storage or in archival tubes).

- Persons handling the collection materials shall have been trained by archives staff and/or have read the training materials so as to ensure that the materials will not be damaged through mishandling.

Section 5.9 – Collection Management System.

Once an object/record has been properly cataloged and stored, information about the object/record or a scan of the object/record itself shall be entered into a collection management system. The preferred collection management system of the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society shall be determined by the CC and approved by the Board. Microsoft Excel is considered a universal back-up for any collection management system used by Lake Minnetonka Historical Society.

Section 5.10 – Deaccession Process.

Materials in the collection deemed to be unsuitable to remain in the collection shall be brought to the CC for possible deaccessioning. Deaccessions require affirmative agreement from the majority of the committee members. If the CC decides to deaccession an object/record, a member of the CC shall then fill out the appropriate forms. This may include items which:

- are not within the Organization's scope of collecting
- are in poor condition
- are poorly documented
- are duplicates of items in the collection
- are of doubtful provenance or authenticity
- pose a danger to health and safety
- cannot be properly stored in a way that ensures the object's preservation

Section 5.11 – Disposal.

Once deaccession has been agreed to, there are several possible disposal methods to choose from. Materials may be:

- Offered back to the original donor only if the Deed of Gift requires it.
- Offered to an appropriate institution.
- Retained as part of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society education materials and used accordingly.
- Disposed of in an ethically responsible way, via sale or donation to charity if at all possible.
- Thrown away if no other means of disposal are feasible.

Section 5.12 – Accession Files.

All completed forms and additional materials related to materials in the collection shall be placed in an accession file. Accession files for items that have been deaccession shall be reclassified as deaccession files.

ARTICLE VI FORMS

Section 6.1 – Deed of Gift.

The Deed of Gift transfers ownership of the materials from the donor to Lake Minnetonka Historical Society. The Deed of Gift form will be filled out by a member of the CC or a staff member following acceptance by the CC and presented to the donor for their signature.

Section 6.2 – Loan Agreement.

A written loan agreement shall be signed by and at the discretion of the President of Lake Minnetonka Historical Society and a rightful third-party representative for all incoming and outgoing loans. Loan agreements should name the venue of the proposed display location and shall include an expiration date.

Section 6.3 – Transfer Acknowledgement Form.

Materials created or maintained by a Lake Minnetonka Historical Society volunteer, member, or designee through the pursuance of his or her Lake Minnetonka Historical Society related activities and retained in his or her private possession, shall transfer said materials to the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collection by means of a Transfer Acknowledgement Form. Since ownership of the materials already lies with Lake Minnetonka Historical Society, the Transfer Acknowledgement Form officially moves the care and responsibility for the materials to the CC and acts as a receipt that the materials were deposited in the collection and are no longer in private custody. In this instance, no agreement of the CC is required.

Section 6.4 – Deaccession Form.

If the majority of the CC agrees that an object/record should be deaccessioned, a member of the CC shall complete a Deaccession Form. The form shall list the materials considered for deaccession and include reasons why the CC believes that deaccession is an appropriate step. As necessary, supporting information shall be appended to the Deaccession Form. The form shall be signed by a member of the CC and added to the item's accession file.

Section 6.5 – Temporary Custody Form.

When potential donations are brought to Lake Minnetonka Historical Society, a member of the CC or staff person shall provide the prospective donor with a Temporary Custody Form. The donor shall fill out the fields in the Temporary Custody Form to the best of their ability.

ARTICLE VII MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 7.1 – Access to the Collection.

The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society collection shall be made available for public research during regularly scheduled hours as determined by the CC. Lake Minnetonka Historical Society archives staff or other designated volunteers shall have the sole authority to retrieve materials for public research. No member of the public shall have direct access to the collection.

Section 7.2 – Loans.

The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society may loan items from its collection to other parties and may borrow items from other parties. The board of directors must approve all borrowing and all loans. In

general, loans shall be for public exhibition and for educational purposes. The Lake Minnetonka Historical Society will extend the same care to borrowed objects as it does to its own, and will require the same care for objects loaned to others. Objects borrowed or loaned for more than a year shall be reviewed annually by the board. All loans will be accompanied by a Temporary Custody Form.

Section 7.3 – Appraisals.

No person associated with Lake Minnetonka Historical Society may provide potential donors with a financial appraisal of their materials. Donors requiring an appraisal for tax purposes should be referred to the American Organization of Appraisers or the Appraisers Association of America to identify an appropriate professional. Staff or volunteers may provide informal assessments of an item's informational value as a public service only.