

Deaccessioning and Disposal Policy and Procedure

At times the Bushwhacker Historical Museum or the Old Jail Historic Site may have collected or received material that is clearly outside the scope of our mission, that may have deteriorated beyond useful life, or that could be better used by other educational institutions. Deaccession and disposal are two different things. Deaccession is the formal change in recorded status of the object. Disposal is the resulting action taken after a deaccession decision.

All deaccessions and disposal decisions will be made by the Acquisition and Collection Committee.

The criteria used by this committee to make thoughtful and justifiable decisions, with reference to the Bushwhacker Historical Museum and The Old Jail Historic Site's mission and collection mission statements, is as follows.

The artifact

1. Is not within the scope or mission of the museum.
2. Is beyond the capability of the museum to maintain.
3. Is not useful for research, exhibition, or educational programs in the foreseeable future.
4. Duplicates other artifacts in the collection.
5. Is a poor, less important, incomplete, or inauthentic example.
6. Is physically deteriorated/or of hazardous material.
7. Is subject to contractual donor restrictions that museum is no longer able to meet.

The following steps will be used in the committee's decision making process.

1. Written curatorial justification outlining the decision criteria that apply.
2. Verification of official legal title.
3. Physical examination to help establish appropriate means of disposal, including possible sale or destruction.
4. An appraisal for objects of value that might be sold or traded.
5. Outside opinions for items of value, especially if there is any uncertainty about provenance or authenticity.

6. Internal review of all curatorial staff to assure full awareness of the plan to dispose of a collection item.
7. Director and governing board approval. Some decision may be delegated to the director or curator depending on the value of the objects.
8. Working with external stakeholders. There is no obligation to notify the donor if the gift was unrestricted and the museum owns the material free and clear. However, the staff may wish to confer with members of the local community or the original donor to assure concurrence and avoid possible public outcry when the deaccession is made.

The following methods of disposal may be used by the committee depending on the type of artifact and the needs of the museum.

1. Donation of the objects to another museum, library, or archive for educational purposes.
2. Exchange with other museum or nonprofit organization.
3. Education and research programs.
4. Physical destruction.
5. Repatriation.
6. Private sale
7. Public auction

The museum staff members will take the following steps to assure proper record keeping.

1. Fully document the justification and review process, as well as disposal, and include transfer of title.
2. Notify the IRS by filing Form 8282 in cases where objects have been disposed of within two years of the date of a donation that was reported to the IRS on Form 8283.
3. Assure that appropriate records are made in the museum's annual audit process.
4. Produce an annual report on deaccession activity.
5. Give credit to the original donor via a fund name that is applied to any purchases made with the proceeds of sales.
6. Retain all records permanently.

The deaccession and disposal record forms that will be used will be generated by the museum's software program.