

<b>Approval Date:</b>	October 13, 2020	<b>Policy Number:</b>	P-75-27-C
<b>Motion:</b>	20-10-297		
<b>Supersedes:</b>	P-75-27-B		
<b>Title:</b>	Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre: Deaccessioning Collections		
<b>Board Review:</b>	Museum Board; September 16, 2020		

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to guide the staff of the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre in removing objects from the collections, both artifact and archival. .

### **Definitions**

**Archival Value:** “The enduring worth of records based on the documentary evidence of information they contain, that justifies their ongoing preservation in archival care.” (Laura Millar, *Archives Principles and Practices*, 2010)

**Archives:** “(1) Documentary materials created, received, used and kept by a person, family, organization, government, or other public or private entity in the conduct of their daily work and life and preserved because they contain enduring value as evidence of information about activities and events. (2) The agency or institution responsible for acquiring and preserving archival materials, and making those items available for use.” (Laura Millar, *Archives Principles and Practices*, 2010)

**Collection:** (1) Archival: Also known as an ‘Artificial collection’ “a body of archival, documentary or resource materials with different sources or provenance, deliberately brought together and organized to facilitate management use.” (2) Museum: A group of related objects and the information resources associated with them, collected according to specified criteria based on the museum’s mandate. A museum collection is accumulated and identified for purposes of preservation, research, exhibition and programming.

Laura Millar, *Archives Principles and Practices*, 2010; *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums*, Third Edition, Alberta Museums Association, 2014

**Deaccession:** (1) The process, formally approved by the museum’s governing authority, of permanently removing an object from the museum’s collections. All deaccessions must be documented in the collection records. (2) The process, formally approved by the archives' governing authority, of permanently removing an object from the archival collections. All deaccessions must be documented in the collection records.

*Standard Practices Handbook for Museums*, Third Edition, Alberta Museums Association, 2014; Laura Millar, *Archives: Principles and Practices*, 2010

**Fonds:** “This consists of the whole or body of documents, regardless of form or medium, created or accumulated by a particular individual, family, corporate body, or other agency as part of life and work

and retained because those materials have ongoing archival value as evidence of those functions and activities.” (Laura Millar, *Archives Principles and Practices*, 2010)

General research files: Are those files which contain newspaper clippings and other notes about specific people, places or events, but are not accessioned as part of the permanent Archival or Museum collections.

Intrinsic Value: “The worth of a unit of archival material that is associated with the unit’s physical qualities; its content, structure, and context...These qualities are inherent in the material itself and mean that keeping the archives in their original physical form is the most acceptable form of preservation.” (Laura Millar, *Archives Principles and Practices*, 2010)

Museum: “Is a non-profit permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment.” (*Standard Practices Handbook for Museums* Third Edition, Alberta Museums Association, 2014).

Permanent Collections: Refers to artifacts and archival material that has been accepted in the public trust as outlined by the Artifact Acquisitions & Incoming Loans Directive and Archival Acquisitions Directive.

Public Trust: “Describes the obligation shared by the museum’s governing authority and its staff to serve the public interest. Trustees and Staff are accountable to the public in all museum’s activities.” *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums* Third Edition, Alberta Museums Association, 2014

Recognized Museum Program: An accreditation program for museums in Alberta. The program evaluates whether or not Institutional Members of the Alberta Museums Association (AMA) are operating as museums according to the AMA’s member-approved definition of a Museum.

## Policy

As an Alberta Museums Association (AMA) Recognized Museum, the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre (PRMAMC) accepts the definition of the International Council of Museums and will maintain the standards established in the Alberta Museum Association (AMA) *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums* Third Edition, 2014, as well as the Alberta Museum Association *Deaccessioning and Disposal of Collections Overview*

([http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning\\_checklist-2015.pdf](http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning_checklist-2015.pdf)). As a member of the Archives Society of Alberta and a professional archival institute, the Peace River Archives and Mackenzie Centre will adhere to the Code of Ethics for Archivists in Canada.

**In order to maintain the significance of the Museum and Archives’ collections, selective disposals may be required from time to time in instances where objects have lost their physical integrity, authenticity and usefulness for public and research purposes, or where the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre is not able to adequately care for them.**

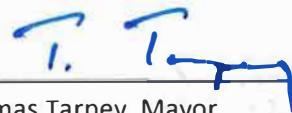
The Deaccessioning Policy outlines the process for assessment and removal of artifacts and archival material from the permanent collection. It is heavily reliant on The Alberta Museums Association’s *Deaccessioning and Disposal of Collections Overview*

([http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning\\_checklist-2015.pdf](http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning_checklist-2015.pdf)).

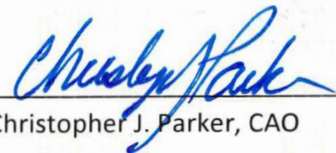
All decisions must first fit within this policy.

1. Deaccessioning items from the collections of the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre must adhere to (should only be done under) one or more of the following criteria conditions:
  - 1.1. The item(s) in question are connected to a geographic region outside the Museum or Archival Collections Mandate and the removal of said item(s) would not destroy or alter unfavourably the intrinsic value of the fonds or collection.
  - 1.2. The item(s) in question do not have any known provenance. It should be researched very carefully before invoking this circumstance in case the provenance was not properly recorded but may be known by previous board members, the donor, staff or members of the community. Every effort should be made to locate the provenance of an item before deaccessioning.
  - 1.3. The item(s) in question have deteriorated beyond the point of the Museum and Archives capability to preserve them. Careful consideration should be given to whether conservation monies can be spent to restore the item or whether another institution may have the resources to care for the item.
  - 1.4. The item(s) in question pose a risk to the rest of the collection due to mold or pest infestations.
  - 1.5. The material is a duplicate or duplicates information already held in the collection in another format where items sufficiently represent that history (person, place, event, business, organization).
  - 1.6. The item(s) in question has little to no historic value and is more appropriate for the Education Collection or Prop Collection.
  - 1.7. The archival item(s) is a reproduction from another institution which verifiably has the original, and/or has little or no archival value and is more appropriate for the (a) library collection; (b) accession file; or (c) general research files.
2. A Deaccession Form is required for each item to be deaccessioned. Please see the Deaccessioning Procedure for more information and a copy this form.
3. Three levels of recommendation and approval are required before an object can be removed from the collection. This allows for greater accountability when removing an object from the permanent collection.
  - 3.1. The Museum staff member makes the recommendation for deaccessioning to the Museum Board.
  - 3.2. The Museum Board, as a Committee of the Whole, makes their recommendation for deaccessioning to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).
  - 3.3. The CAO, as per Bylaw 1971 is the proxy designated by Town Council, legal owners and operators of the Museum and Archives, to sign on their behalf.
4. The Museum and Archives may dispose of deaccessioned items by internal transfer, external transfer, repatriation, public sale or intentional discard.

- 4.1 Internal Transfer: Item(s) which would fit into either the Education Collection, Library Collection, or be of use in the general research files should first be internally transferred into these collections before leaving the institution. (See Education Collection Procedure, Library Collection Procedure, and Research File Procedure for more information on these collections.)
- 4.2 External Transfer: Item(s) should be offered to other public institutions first within Alberta and then Canada. If any other Museum is interested, the items may be transferred to their custody.
- 4.3 Repatriation: Cultural groups who feel they have reasonable grounds to request the repatriation of an item should bring a formal proposal to the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre Advisory Board. Each case will be given thoughtful and careful consideration. Final approval of any repatriation will rest with Peace River Town Council following a researched recommendation from the staff and Advisory Board.
- 4.3.1 Objects in the collection will *not* be repatriated to individuals but can be repatriated to Aboriginal governments or cultural institutions.
- 4.3.2 Staff Members at the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre will make all reasonable efforts to aid in investigating any claims for repatriation of item(s).
- 4.3.3 Legal counsel may be sought in issues of contentious repatriation of objects, as well as advisory support from the Alberta Museums Association and the Canadian Museums Association.
- 4.4 Sale: In cases where the item is in good condition but is not of interest to any other public institutions, it may be sold publicly for market value. The proceeds of the sale may only be used for further acquisitions of artifacts for the collection or to care for the collection as per *The Alberta Museums Association's Deaccessioning and Disposal of Collections Overview* ([http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning\\_checklist-2015.pdf](http://www.museums.ab.ca/media/36701/deaccessioning_checklist-2015.pdf)).
- 4.5 Intentional Discard: In cases where the item(s) is being deaccessioned for reasons of deterioration or risk due to mould or pests, the item may be discarded without offering the item to other institutions. If an item is being discarded, the accession number must be completely removed from the item. The item can then be completely destroyed in the presence of at least one other staff member of the Museum or the Town of Peace River.



Thomas Tarpey, Mayor



Christopher J. Parker, CAO