

Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library Association

Gift Acceptance, Naming, and Recognition Signage Policy

Last Updated: NO DATE

Committee Review: 4 October 2023

Board Review:

Board vote:

In Effect:

Preface

~~It is a long-standing and honorable custom for not-for-profit institutions to name or apply recognition signage to existing and proposed tangible and non-tangible assets in honor of benefactors and others who have made exceptional contributions to the institution and its mission or to the broader local, national or international community.~~

~~Naming or recognition signage provides meaningful opportunities for the recognition of outstanding contributions by those who serve as inspiration for future generations of the institution's community. Further, by recognizing exceptional contributions to the institution, or the mission of the institution, the association with such extraordinary individuals strengthens the institution and its sense of heritage and connection to the community it serves. The ceremonies held to mark such recognition represent significant events in an institution's history.~~

~~The naming of an institution's assets is of considerable significance to an institution for several reasons:~~

- ~~— The choice of persons selected for such recognition reflects how an institution perceives itself, its mission and its values;~~
- ~~— The institutional assets available for naming or recognition signage are limited while the number of individuals/corporations who could potentially be honored is much greater — the limited number of naming or recognition signing opportunities must therefore be used judiciously;~~
- ~~— Names are usually attached to a particular asset in perpetuity or for the life of the asset, while recognition signage is usually affixed for an agreed upon length of time;~~
- ~~— Care must be taken to ensure consistency in the tribute paid by the Association to its benefactors and other meritorious persons.~~

~~This Policy has been drafted as a means of ensuring that the above reasons, and the process and principles that guide the naming opportunities within the Susquehanna County Historical Society & Free Library Association's (SCHS&FLA) whose components are the central library, libraries in Forest City, Susquehanna and Hallstead Great Bend plus Outreach Services and the Historical Society are upheld. Application of recognition signage must be clearly articulated, understood and uniformly applied by all those involved.~~

~~The SCHS&FLA and the Board of Trustees are entrusted to upholding the best practices for fair and transparent donor relations.~~

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for Naming opportunities and Recognition Signage for the physical recognition of gifts to support the [Susquehanna County Historical Society and Free Library](#)

Association (Association) and affiliated programs. These guidelines are intended to provide structure and baseline definitions for the Association, which in turn will help ensure equitable, consistent opportunities and a standard of stewardship of significant transformational gifts received from generous donors. These guiding principles should allow us to achieve this goal.

Definition of Gift, Naming, and Recognition Signage

- Gift refers to:
 - o a monetary donation including a pledge payable over ~~a number of several~~ years, ~~or~~
 - o furniture or equipment donated to the Association.
- Naming refers to the recognition a donor receives for a gift of (\$5,000) or more.
- Naming may apply to a room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area.
- Naming recognition will be directly reflected in references to the item ~~or~~ place funded by the donor through signage, directional tools, ledgers, and other materials such as media releases, publications, and internal and external communication, as appropriate.
- In negotiating with donors, the Board of Trustees and management need to ensure that donors understand that even when a physical space or fund will be named for them, they do not control the details of the administration and application of gift details including construction, furnishings, etc.
- Recognition Signage refers to a plaque, identifier, or other appropriate method that acknowledges a donor's contribution of \$1,000, or an item of equivalent value to the Association. Recognition Signage does not imply Naming. From time to time, the Board of Trustees may honor the dedication of a former employee or volunteer.

The physical area where the signage resides will preferably have a direct connection with the area funded by the donor. While this is optimal, it is recognized that instances may occur when this option is not viable. In those instances, the Association staff and the ~~Naming and Recognition Signage Committee~~ Board Vice President members will find a suitable space for Recognition Signage.

Gifts of Furniture and Equipment to the Association

Gifts of furniture and equipment will be accepted without donor restrictions when the gift is relevant and useful. Such items will be retained as long as they remain useful to the purposes of the Association.

The Administrator/Librarian has the discretion to request the Board of Trustees to create a committee to review donations of furniture and equipment as needed.

Approval

- All property under the umbrella of the Association has the opportunity to be Named, except entire buildings with the exception of the building itself. Naming opportunities will be offered to donors by the Association ~~per in accordance with~~ this policy.
- It is the responsibility of individuals negotiating on behalf of the Association with potential benefactors to inform them that the acceptance of any philanthropic donation involving a proposal to name is conditional upon final approval ~~of the naming~~ by the Board of Trustees.

- Final approval for Naming a room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area will be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees.
- Final approval for Naming an endowed program will be the responsibility of the Board.

Naming Opportunities and Donations

- Opportunities to Name rooms, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or areas will be presented to individuals, foundations, community groups, and/or corporations identified by the Board of Trustees or Association staff.
- Each Naming opportunity is unique and the desirability, visibility, prominence, and traffic flow of the specific room, center, or area will guide the donation level that is suitable for a Naming opportunity. Likewise, the Naming of a specific room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area does not mean that the programs or physical spaces within an area are included in that Naming opportunity.
- The donation amount for a Naming opportunity for each room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area is subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

Recognition Signage and Donations

- The Recognition Signage will be in the form of a standardized plaque with wording approved by the Naming and Recognition Signage Committee. Donors who collaborate ~~together~~ to contribute a significant amount to the Association will have recognition signage consistent with other recognition signage in size and placement.
- Plaques will contain the name of the honoree(s) and as appropriate, the names of the donors who donated \$1,000 or more. All collaborative donors' names will be placed in a historical file.
- Donors may wish to remain anonymous or decline a Naming Opportunity or Recognition Signage.
- Recognition of gifts to the new Library ~~in the amount~~ of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a donor wall to be located in the lobby of the new Library. Recognition of gifts in other Association locations will be acknowledged in that location.

Time/Duration

- Where a room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area has been Named, the Association will ~~use/continue to utilize~~ the Name as long as the room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or area ~~remains in use to serve~~ its ~~original~~ function at the time of donation. The Board of Trustees may change the function as it deems necessary.
- When the use of the room, furniture, equipment, landscaping, vehicle, or an area is changed or altered such that it must be demolished, substantially renovated, or rebuilt, it is within the discretion of the Board to retain the use of the Name, Name another comparable area, or discontinue the use of the Name. When it is proposed that the use of the Name not be maintained, approval of the Board of Trustees will be required.
- Historic replacement of Naming will be documented in the historical file.

Naming and Recognition Signage “In Memory” or “In Honor”

The Association recognizes that Naming and Recognition Signage “In Memory” or “In Honor of a loved one is a wonderful way to honor a life. Suggested wording will be provided and approved by the Naming and Recognition Signage Committee.

Gifts of Art

- Gifts of Art may have a small plaque to indicate that the art is a donation to the Association. The type of plaque and wording will be consistent with the standards created for such purposes.
- Donations of Art are given with the understanding that the location and timing of display will be made by the Association Art Committee based on space, size, theme, and amount of art available.
- Any donated art not displayed will be appropriately cared for until later use, sold, or other disposition made.

Non-Fulfillment of Pledges

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, naming opportunities may be withdrawn if a donor defaults on a pledge payment or payments.

Change or Modification of Name

Where a donor has been recognized with Naming or Recognition Signage and the donor changes or alters their name, replacing or changing the existing signage will be at the expense of the donor.

Gift Agreements

Whenever a gift requiring naming or recognition signage is negotiated a gift agreement must be created and signed by the donor and the [Vice President of the](#) Board of Trustees.

Pre-Existing Naming Agreements

This policy does not apply to any arrangements that are in existence at the date the policy is adopted.

Exceptions and Revisions

Exceptions and/or revisions to this policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Board as needed to ensure that the policy is reflective of the direction and philosophy of the Association. Any changes to this policy must be approved by the Board of Trustees.