

DATE: March 5, 2026

TO: Sarah Knizhnik, Chair
Operations Committee

FROM: Alyssa Firkus
Director of Education

RECOMMENDATION: Approve and Accept New Acquisitions and Donations to the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Communication, Education, and Outreach

FINANCIAL DATA: The Education Department's FY2026 approved budget includes funding for the acquisition of items for the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's ("Dunn Museum") collections when deemed appropriate. Two items recommended for acquisition would be purchased for less than \$150 and charged to an appropriate line item in the Education Department's collections budget (76413800-643000). The other items are being donated to the Dunn Museum.

BACKGROUND: The Dunn Museum "collects material culture representing the people, places, and events of Lake County, Illinois" (Collection Policies, Scope of Collections, p. 5). The majority of the Dunn Museum's historic collections were acquired by the County of Lake from the privately run Lake County Museum of History in 1965 for the purpose of "preserve(ing) and maintain(ing) for future generations the cultural history of Lake County" (Resolution No. 24, dated October 12, 1965). These collections were officially transferred to the District in 1989.

The Dunn Museum is frequently offered donations by members of the general public. Each donation offer is considered against criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policies. Donations that do not meet these criteria are declined. Since August 2025, the Dunn Museum has received offers for 16 donations, five of which were declined by the Dunn Museum's Collection Committee. Additionally, staff has identified two items that it recommends be purchased to add to the collection.

The acquisitions and donations listed on the attached Exhibit A meet the criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policies and have been reviewed, and are being recommended, by the Dunn Museum's Committee for acceptance into the Dunn Museum's historic collections. There is adequate space to properly store and care for these items. Under the Collection Policies, the Operations Committee is authorized to approve and accept these acquisitions and donations, because they do not require a purchase of more than \$30,000.00.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Chief Operations Officer, Deputy Director of Finance, Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel

MOTION: Motion to approve and accept new acquisitions into the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections as provided in Exhibit A to staff's March 5, 2026, memorandum.

APPROVED:

Date: _____ Roll Call Vote: Ayes: ____ Nays: ____
 Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays: ____

New Acquisitions Inventory

March 5, 2026

Donations:

1. Box of greetings cards sent to Vukovich family of North Chicago.
2. Director's chair used at Essanay Studios, Chicago (1907-1918).
3. Twenty souvenir spoons from 1892-1917 related to Waukegan, Zion and Great Lakes
4. Four Lake County plat books from 1958, 1965, 1967,1970
5. 1954 Evinrude outboard motor, made in Waukegan and used on the Chain of Lakes.
6. Three Stevenson pins, two Adlai Stevenson II and one Adlai Stevenson III
7. 158 photographs related to Tronson & Runyard Public Address Services, Lake Villa. Many Lake Co. locations and events featured
8. Portrait of Walter LeFils of Lake Forest and photo of him in front of his tailor shop
9. Photograph of flour and feed store in Highland Park
10. Photograph of two women holding Zion Banner publication, Dowie related
11. Photograph of Grand Army of the Republic #374 Civil War veterans in horsedrawn wagon

Purchases:

1. Charger made by the Fansteel Company of North Chicago – to be purchased for not to exceed \$100
2. Catalog featuring Fansteel item – to be purchased for not to exceed \$50