The Mob Museum - Institutional Code of Ethics

Board Approved – September 14, 2016

Overview

The Mob Museum, the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, established as the 300 Stewart Avenue Corporation, advances its mission and conducts its day to day activities with high ethical practice, consistent with a nonprofit organization that performs educational services and historic preservation for the benefit of the public. Fiduciaries, employees, volunteers, advisors, and others professionally associated with the Museum recognize that compliance with applicable laws and adherence to organizational policies is only a minimum standard of behavior. Rather, it is essential to maintain individual and collective integrity, free from conflicts of interest, and to operate in a manner that instills public trust and confidence.

Members of the organization are encouraged to refer to the following reference points that inform and reinforce the concepts outlined within the Institutional Code of Ethics:

- The Mob Museum Mission Statement
- The Mob Museum Statement of Core Values
- 300 Stewart Avenue Corporation Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Policy
- The Mob Museum Employee Handbook
- The Mob Museum Collections Management Policy

In addition, members of the organization are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the American Alliance of Museum Code of Ethics, attached at end of this document.

Museum Formation and Purpose

The Mob Museum assumes responsibilities and pursues goals that are standard for nonprofit institutions that serve the public through collecting, preserving, sharing, and interpreting history. In addition, there are several considerations that are unique to The Mob Museum as a result of its specific background and purpose.

Relationship to the city of Las Vegas

The 300 Stewart Avenue Corporation was formed through the facilitation of the government of the city of Las Vegas, which served as the primary investor in the rehabilitation of the Museum building and the creation of the Museum exhibition. A primary purpose of this investment was to contribute to the
growth and economic redevelopment of the downtown area. As such, the organization recognizes that its actions must be congruent with the interests of the City, participative in and supportive of ongoing economic development efforts in the surrounding area, and thoughtful with respect to matters of access and inclusion for members of the local community.

The Historic Building

The Museum occupies and has been entrusted with the care of the former U.S. Post Office and Federal Courthouse, a property listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Beyond its formal historic designation, this building holds special meaning for many longtime residents of Las Vegas. The building is regarded by members of the organization as the Museum’s “preeminent artifact” and cared for accordingly. Modifications to the building and its presentation must be planned and implemented with the input of the City, the National Park Service, and other stakeholders and experts as appropriate for the given circumstances.

Museum Subject Matter

The Mob Museum’s mission is to advance the public understanding of the history and impact of organized crime. In pursuit of this mission, the Board and Staff of the organization have committed to providing authentic, credible, and broad examinations of relevant topics and issues. It is recognized that subject matter addressed within Museum experiences is inherently sensitive and, at times, may be controversial. The organization cannot be deterred from delivering on educational and historical topics that it deems important to its mission solely because the topics may be uncomfortable to segments of the public. However, the organization and its members will not present exhibits, programs, or other external communications that imply that The Mob Museum is endorsing or condoning criminal activity. Furthermore, the organization considers the privacy of victims and other innocent members of the public who were unintentionally associated with criminals or criminal events.

Governance and Operating Principles

Individual Integrity

All individuals professionally associated with The Mob Museum, irrespective of level and capacity, are expected to comport themselves with high standards of personal and professional integrity. The organization’s Core Values and Institutional Code of Ethics are intended to provide guiding principles through which individuals will make decisions that are in the best interests of the organization and that will maintain the public’s trust and confidence. The organization’s policies and procedures are used to supplement the guiding principles, outlining specific methods by which equity and fairness are consistently achieved. Beyond following these reference points, individuals are expected to
demonstrate sound judgment in choices and actions that are predicated on honesty, accountability, and a strong sense of duty to the organization.

Collective Stewardship and Transparency

As a nonprofit museum, the organization assumes responsibility for offering educational services and historic preservation efforts that efficiently and effectively serve the public good. In doing so, the Board of Directors and Staff are committed to the ethical management of organizational resources and assets. This commitment includes ensuring the appropriateness of employee and volunteer selection and retention, as well as sufficient support and oversight to foster a work environment that is safe and secure, cohesive, respectful, and high-achieving. In addition, the Board of Directors and Staff are charged with the protection and conscientious use of financial resources, physical infrastructure, and equipment. Assets of the organization may not be used to provide benefit to any party without the reasonable expectation of equal or greater benefit returned to the organization.

To the extent possible, individuals within the organization will communicate openly, accurately, and in a timely fashion such that Directors of the Board and Staff are appropriately informed and able to optimize decision-making. The Mob Museum is also committed to providing accurate and complete information about its financial performance and business activities to external stakeholders, including the general public. External disclosures must follow established policies and procedures to ensure appropriateness and consistency of communications.

Board of Directors

Members of the Board of Directors act as stewards and fiduciaries of the organization, providing leadership, oversight, and ambassadorial functions on behalf of the Museum. Collectively, Board members ensure the appropriate and effective use of organizational resources to fulfill the mission and goals of the organization. Board members guide the growth of the organization and strategic direction with a careful balance of risk and reward. This guidance is given with the best interests of the organization in mind.

As fiduciaries and ambassadors of a highly visible organization with a charitable purpose, it is essential that members of the Board of Directors employ high standards of professional conduct and minimize opportunities for real or perceived conflicts of interest. Directors of the Board act in good faith and with loyalty and due care. Individuals are required to exert reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain information and exercise sound business judgment in decision-making that they honestly and reasonably believe is in the best interest of the Museum. Members of the Board may not use their positions for personal profit or advantage, and should not leverage their association with the Museum for personal gain.
The Board of Directors is responsible for the selection, retention, and oversight of the Executive Director & CEO. The Board ensures that the Executive Director & CEO has the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the position and that s/he is held accountable for performance. To support the Executive Director & CEO, members of the Board provide reasonable access through formal meetings of the Board and Committees, as well as on an individual basis. Close relationships between members of the Board and Staff can occur naturally. However, these relationships must benefit the organization and cannot be used to obtain services or expertise from the Staff that is not reasonably justified and related to the work of the Museum.

Executive Director & CEO

The Executive Director & CEO clarifies strategic direction and is responsible for the management and operation of the organization. This individual shares the same duties of loyalty and care as members of the Board of Directors, in addition to accountability for the day-to-day use of organizational resources. In addition, the Executive Director & CEO acts as the primary external representative of the Museum. To fulfill these responsibilities properly, the Executive Director & CEO must employ consistently sound and ethical judgment in decision-making that always considers the best interests of the organization. It is incumbent upon this individual to communicate openly, honestly, and with sufficient detail and frequency such that members of the Board of Directors are equipped with the information necessary to fulfill their individual and collective responsibilities for governance of the organization. The Executive Director & CEO is responsible for ensuring that senior staff understand and act upon their obligation to apply the Institutional Code of Ethics throughout the organization via establishing policies and procedures, providing appropriate training, reinforcing that training through reward and recognition, and giving timely and appropriate attention to rectify behaviors and actions that are inconsistent with the best interests of the organization.

Human Resources

The Museum is committed to a reasonably safe and secure workplace that embraces diversity and inclusion. Members of management are responsible for ensuring that individual staff members follow the policies and procedures of the organization, consistently act in the best interests of the Museum, and receive fair and equitable treatment. Employees and volunteers may not use Museum resources or their affiliation with the organization in a manner beyond the scope of their designated responsibilities and authority. Similarly, members of management should never require staff members to perform acts that are illegal or incongruent with the Institutional Code of Ethics or other specialized ethical directives related to an individual’s area of work. Assets of the organization may only be used for justifiable business purposes in the best interests of the organization. If there is any doubt to the appropriateness of behaviors or actions as related to the Institutional Code of Ethics, it is the responsibility of each member of the organization to seek direction from a direct supervisor, the Director of Human Resources & Finance, or another senior member of management. In the event that an individual believes he or she has no recourse within the organization, a third-party company is provided for the anonymous reporting of legal or ethical breaches. This company, Red Flag Reporting, can be contacted at
Collections, Exhibits and Programs

Collections

The Mob Museum collects objects, images, documents, media, and other archival materials that are relevant to the mission of the organization. The Museum acquires these historically significant items for the purpose of public education and appreciation. Consequently, the Museum will not acquire objects that cannot conceivably be accessed or shared externally. Prior to acquiring a collection item, the Museum must exert due diligence in determining rightful ownership and provenance, as well as the ability to provide appropriate care and maintenance. When the organization becomes aware of items that have significant historical value but do not meet the Museum’s criteria for acquisition, the organization will exert reasonable efforts to assist in identifying a means to appropriately preserve the object within the public domain.

The Museum has adopted a comprehensive Collections Management Policy that is consistent with the best practices within the museum field. This policy informs the approach to collecting, roles and responsibilities, and procedures for acquiring, maintaining, and deaccessioning items. In addition, the organization prohibits members of the Board of Directors, employees, advisors, and volunteers from knowingly competing with the Museum, directly or indirectly, in the acquisition of collection items through purchase, loan, or donation. Similarly, although loans of objects can provide benefit to the Museum, the display of objects within the Museum can also result in enhancing the value of the given object. Therefore, members and affiliates of the organization should not lend collection items to the Museum if s/he is actively planning to sell the item. If the Museum purchases a collection item from an individual professionally associated with the organization, the item must be acquired at an amount less than fair market value.

Appraisals are only to be commissioned for the direct benefit of the Museum, such as for the purpose of insurance or determining purchase price. If the organization is offered for loan or purchase an item that is reasonably believed to have been illegally possessed or fraudulently represented, a member of the organization will contact the appropriate legal authority before responding to the person soliciting the loan or sale.

Deaccessioning items within the collection is to occur with great care and understanding of the potential for loss of public trust. All deaccessions should follow the procedure outlined within the Collections Management Policy. Under no circumstances may members or affiliates of the organization knowingly purchase collection items that have been deaccessioned from the Museum. Income from deaccessioned collection items should only be used for the purchase or care of other museum collection...
objects. Items of significant historical value that cannot be cared for by the Museum should be first offered to other museums.

**Exhibits and Programs**

In pursuit of its mission, the Museum creates and delivers content through exhibits, programs, and other online and offsite experiences. The organization presents its exhibits and programs with a commitment to accuracy and educational and historical integrity. Donors, sponsors, and other individuals and organizations external to the Museum may play critical roles in providing resources and support necessary to implement a given exhibit or program. However, the Museum must retain responsibility and control for all content delivered in its name.

As a public resource, the Museum must exert reasonable effort to be accessible and inclusive of people of diverse backgrounds, as well as those with disabilities. In addition, given that some exhibits and programs contain adult content, including graphic imagery and extreme language, the Museum must ensure that audiences are properly cautioned and able to protect themselves and those in their charge from unplanned or inappropriate exposure to such content.

The organization is committed to providing a consistently high quality guest experience. At times, the Museum experience may be diminished. The organization recognizes that it has an obligation to use good judgment in accommodating guests who have been precluded from an optimal experience.

**Other Audience Contact**

To compete within a still developing area and an extremely competitive entertainment marketplace, the Museum is required to be entrepreneurial and creative in pursuit of promotional activities and ancillary revenue. All business activities must be consistent with the organization’s purpose, goals, and best interests. Any audience contact in the name of the Museum must be thoughtful and well-presented, reinforcing the brand of the organization and in no way detracting from the integrity of its mission as a community resource and an educational institution.