



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 2, 2026
To: Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission
From: Mike Runge, City Archivist
Re: **Fair Market Appraisal, Judge John H. Burns Archival Collection**

The Deadwood Historic Preservation Office is requesting permission to hire Rebecca Madison of Appraisals West to review and provide an estimate on archival materials that once belonged to early Deadwood resident, Judge John Burns. Melrose Treasures Auctions of North Hollywood, California hosted an online auction on July 30, 2026, that contained approximately ten lots of archival materials from the Burns Family.

After some research, preservation staff learned that Burns came to Deadwood in 1876 and opened a law office in today's upper Main Street (see #01, photographs of Burns office, before 1879 fire). The bulk of the archival materials pertain to the Judge Burns family who lived at 67 Stewart Street in Deadwood. Items in this appraisal include photographs, attorney files, personal memoirs, and an account chronicling Burn's involvement on December 29, 1890, Wounded Knee Massacre.

The appraisal will provide city staff and commissioners with fair market value for the archival objects at the auction. If HP/City Commissioners decide to acquire item(s) from the assemblage, the appraisal will aid in determining the monetary value of said items.

This protocol has been performed on other city acquisitions in the past (2004 Julius Deetken acquisition, 2007 glass plate transparencies, 2012 F.L. Brown acquisition, and 2019 Jack Anfinson model scale of Deadwood, 1876).

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant the Deadwood Historic Preservation staff permission to hire Rebecca Madison of Appraisals West to review and provide an estimate on archival materials that once belonged to early Deadwood resident, Judge John Burns. The cost will not exceed the amount of \$1,500.00 and will come out of the 2026 HP Acquisitions Budget.