

**December 8, 2021**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST WHEATON HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COUNCIL OVER ALLEGED MISUSE OF FUNDS**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced a lawsuit against the Wheaton Historical Preservation Council (WHPC) and some of its board members for allegedly misusing charitable funds.

[Raoul's lawsuit](#) was filed in DuPage County Circuit Court against the WHPC, its board president Alberta Adamson, as well as board members Gloria Leetz and Laurie Warfel. The lawsuit alleges that board members illegally transferred over \$300,000 to Adamson and raises concerns about the WHPC's storage of historical artifacts. In addition, the lawsuit alleges the WHPC is not registered with the Attorney General's office, in violation of state law.

"The defendants allegedly took advantage of people who donated to the Wheaton Historical Preservation Council believing their donations would support the preservation of their community's history," Raoul said. "I filed this lawsuit to ensure that board members are held accountable, and my office will continue to hold individuals accountable for using charitable funds for their own benefit."

The WHPC is a nonprofit organization responsible for preserving the history of the city of Wheaton, Illinois, including by maintaining a museum and collection of historical artifacts. Since the WHPC closed and sold the museum in 2017, the collection has been stored at a city-owned facility that is not accessible to the public. Raoul's lawsuit is the result of an investigation the Attorney General's office opened after receiving complaints about the preservation of historical artifacts and misuse of funds, including a \$120,000 proprietary loan the council made to board president Alberta Adamson. The Attorney General's office requested information pertaining to the historical artifacts, the loan to Adamson, and the council's continued expenditure of funds after the museum was closed and sold. To date, the WHPC has failed to provide additional information.

According to the Attorney General's lawsuit, the WHPC continued to fundraise and spend money even after the museum closed. The Attorney General's lawsuit alleges Adamson has received approximately \$300,000 from the WHPC since 2017. According to the Attorney General's office, Adamson and Warfel attempted to characterize the \$120,000 loan to Adamson in 2017 as reimbursement for a debt the WHPC owed. In addition to the loan, Adamson allegedly received \$72,000 in 2018, which was characterized as rent paid after WHPC sold its property. Most recently in 2021, the WHPC allegedly paid Adamson approximately \$109,303 for unknown purposes. Raoul's lawsuit also alleges that the WHPC was not registered with the Attorney General's office, although state law requires charitable organizations operating in Illinois to be registered.

The Attorney General's lawsuit seeks to remove Adamson, Leetz and Warfel as WHPC board members. The Attorney General's office is also seeking full accounting of the organization's funds and is asking the court to hold the WHPC liable for all misused funds or those for which they are unable to account. Raoul's lawsuit seeks additional injunctive relief.

Bureau Chief Barry Goldberg, Deputy Bureau Chief Kristin Louis, and Assistant Attorneys General Michelle Millstein and Matthew Shapiro are handling the case for Raoul's Charitable Trust Bureau.