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MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR &
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Sabrina B. Landreth
City Administrator

SUBJECT: AAMLO Chief Curator Recruitment
Update

DATE: April 17, 2018

INFORMATION

The national search for a permanent Chief Curator of the African American Museum & Library at Oakland (AAMLO) will follow the selection of a permanent Director of the Oakland Public Library (OPL).

BACKGROUND

In October 2017, the former OPL Director appointed an Interim Chief Curator (Susan D. Anderson) of AAMLO while an executive search firm, The Hawkins Company, initiated a process for selecting a permanent Chief Curator. Recognizing that stakeholder engagement is a critical component of the recruitment process for the AAMLO Chief Curator, The Hawkins Company was asked to conduct a stakeholder engagement process that included gathering feedback about the desirable attributes and experience sought by the community.

The Hawkins Company developed an online survey and facilitated two public community meetings that were held on March 21 and March 22, 2018. Twenty-one people completed the online survey and thirty participants attended the community meetings. The community identified notable qualities for an AAMLO Chief Curator through this process including:

- A demonstrated passion, commitment and understanding of African-American culture, history, identity and community. Many people requested that the Chief Curator be African-American.
- Belief in constant outreach and ongoing dialogue with the community.
- Values and engages youth, adults and seniors; and provides exciting programming to these groups.
- Effective communicator and listener; friendly, charismatic and approachable.
- Experience with historical artifacts and exhibition development techniques.
- Experience with community engagement; someone who is accessible and has worked with the African-American community.

The community feedback was insightful, informative and clear. It emphasized the crucial role that AAMLO fills within the City of Oakland, and even more importantly, for the Oakland community and African-American patrons.

NEXT STEPS

As this process was underway, the OPL Director (Gerry Garzon) retired and an Interim Library Director (Jamie Turbak) was appointed in early March 2018.

The City is committed to honoring and fulfilling the mission of the AAMLO. After hearing the feedback from the community on the AAMLO Chief Curator recruitment, the City Administrator has decided to move forward with the OPL Director recruitment now, and place the AAMLO Chief Curator recruitment on a temporary pause while the new Director is being selected. This management decision to select a permanent Director of the Oakland Public Library prior to the AAMLO Chief Curator position is an intentional effort to ensure that the mission and vision for the AAMLO and its programs are aligned between the permanent Library Director and the AAMLO Chief Curator, who is supervised by the Director.

Pausing on the permanent hire of the AAMLO Chief Curator position also gives the opportunity for the community to inform the recruitment process for the permanent Library Director, who is responsible for providing the leadership and effective management of the Oakland Public Library, including the AAMLO.

For continuity, the City Administration is engaging The Hawkins Company to conduct the recruitment for the permanent Director of the Oakland Public Library. The timeline for the search process is expected to take between four to five months. The City Administrator's Office will oversee the recruitment that will include stakeholder input, including community and internal staff, in the process. The recruitment for the AAMLO Director position will resume following the placement of a permanent Library Director.

City Administration is deeply committed to a timely and transparent process that results in matching the high-quality attributes and experience that the Oakland community seeks, expects and deserves with the placement of a Library Director and AAMLO Chief Curator who will be committed to the best interests of AAMLO as defined thus far by the community.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

SABRINA B. LANDRETH
City Administrator