



City Manager's Department

City of Arts & Innovation

March 3, 2017

Burt Logan
Chair, Accreditation Commission
American Alliance of Museums
2451 Crystal Drive, Suite 1005
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chair Logan:

Please accept this letter of explanation for a few items of misunderstanding in the American Alliance of Museum's November 1, 2016 accreditation report for the Riverside Metropolitan Museum (RMM).

The AAM report states that "By Municipal Code, the City Council has operational control over the museum in areas that should be in the hands of the Director. Hence there is a lack of appropriate delegation of authority to the museum director. In addition the Council redundantly approves what they have appointed the Board to do (Riverside Municipal Code – Chapter 2.12). This is not an efficient model."

This is an inaccurate read of the code. The RMM is a California chartered city municipal museum, meaning it is a city museum, fully funded by tax dollars. The museum is one of twelve city departments. The museum director is one of twelve department heads. All of them report to the City Manager, who in turn reports to the City Council. The City Manager has authority over all administrative/operational aspects of all city departments. The Council is the legislative body that makes policy, and it controls the City's budget. The Council has no operational control over the museum.

The City Council appoints boards and commissions, such as the Museum Board, the Library Board, or the Planning Commission. All of the City Council's boards and commissions are advisory to the City Council – they make recommendations to the City Council. The Council then considers the recommendations and votes on them. The process provides for expanded community input and additional vetting to better inform Council decisions. While this may seem inefficient, it is not redundant.

The AAM report also states that the Museum Board "seems generally uncomfortable with fundraising." That is because City Boards and Commissions in California do not function as fundraising entities. Hence the Museum Board is not a fundraising board. However, the museum is fortunate to have the Riverside Museum Associates, an independent organization that does raise money for the Museum. They have been active and successful for many years, and provide much needed funds to the museum annually.

I hope this letter clarifies the role of the City Council, the Museum Board, as well as the Riverside Museum Associates. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Alexander Nguyen
Assistant City Manager
Acting Museum Director