



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: APRIL 3, 2018**

FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: RETROACTIVE APPROVAL OF THE DEACCESSION AND REPATRIATION OF MUSEUM COLLECTION ITEMS TO THE IONE BAND OF MIWOK INDIANS, CALIFORNIA IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FEDERAL NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT

ISSUE

Retroactive approval of the deaccession and repatriation of Museum collection items to the lone Band of Miwok Indians, California in compliance with the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council retroactively approve the deaccession and repatriation of human remains representing 27 individuals and 29 associated funerary objects from the Riverside Metropolitan Museum permanent collection to the lone Band of Miwok Indians, California, which occurred on April 23, 2010.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION

On June 9, 2009, the Riverside Metropolitan Museum Board (Board) unanimously approved to forward to City Council for its approval the deaccession and repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects to the lone Band of Miwok Indians, California.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

This action is recommended in compliance with the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), 25 USC 3001 et seq. NAGPRA was enacted on November 16, 1990, to address the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to native American cultural items, including human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony (National Park Service).

BACKGROUND

In 1933, human remains representing a minimum of 27 individuals and 29 associated funerary

objects were removed from the Augustine Mound, in the Cosumnes River area, south of Elk Grove, Sacramento County, California, during excavations by Dr. Paul Walker in association with the Sacramento City College. Walker's widow donated the human remains and associated funerary objects to the then-named Riverside Municipal Museum in 1959. The 29 associated funerary objects included the following:

1 lot of glass beads	1 steatite awl fragment
1 lot of stone and bone objects	1 stone polisher
3 antler flaking tools	1 lot of clay objects
1 deer scapula saw	1 stone pestle
1 bone scraper	2 projectile points
1 bone fish hook	2 obsidian tools
4 bone awls	1 lot of obsidian lithics
4 bone earlobe tubes	1 lot of shell pieces
1 lot of shell beads	1 lot of carbonized textiles
1 brass button	

Traditionally, the Plains Miwok occupied an area that included the lower reaches of the Mokelumne and Cosumnes Rivers, and both banks of the Sacramento River from Rio Vista to Freeport. The Plains Miwok are represented today by the Buena Vista Band of Me-Wuk Indians and the Lone Band of Miwok Indians, California. Consultation with the Lone Band of Miwok Indians, California, determined that they are linked prehistorically to the Slough House, Cosumnes River area. Based on ethnography and consultation with the Lone Band of Miwok Indians, California, it has been determined that Slough House in the Cosumnes River area was within the historically documented territory of the Plains Miwok. Riverside Metropolitan Museum staff determined that there is a preponderance of evidence in favor of the Lone Band of Miwok Indians, California's claim to the Riverside Metropolitan Museum objects.

On April 23, 2010, the Museum repatriated the human remains and associated funerary objects to the Lone Band of Miwok Indians of California. Tribal members traveled to the Museum to meet with Curatorial staff for the ceremony and transfer of human remains and associated funerary objects. Transport was provided by the Lone Band of Miwok Indians of California. Museum Argus records were updated with the transfer information. The Camellia Cemetery on Jackson Highway 16, where the human remains and associated funerary objects were repatriated, is six miles from Slough House, where the human remains and associated funerary objects originated.

DISCUSSION

The term "deaccession" refers to the procedure of formally removing an object from a museum's permanent collection, after which the object may be considered for sale, exchange, gift, transfer to another entity, transfer to a collection other than the permanent collection, or—in the case of irretrievably deteriorated objects—disposal.

Riverside Metropolitan Museum policy requires that City Council approve deaccession and repatriation recommendations provided by the Board. The reason for the interval between the Board's approval of this item in 2009 and submission of this item to the City Council lies with a series of administrative transitions of staff that occurred at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum

after the Board voted on this item in 2009. As a result of these transitions, this item was not forwarded to the City Council for approval, as required, before the deaccession of these objects occurred. The Museum is rectifying this oversight by bringing this item before the City Council today to retroactively approve the deaccession and repatriation of these objects.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Museum Director
Approved by:	Alexander T. Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Certified as to availability of funds:	Adam Raymond, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Metropolitan Museum Board Minutes – June 9, 2009
2. Miwok Letters to RMM
3. RMM Letter to Miwok
4. Museum Argus Records