



# Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

*City of Arts & Innovation*

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**TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD**

**DATE: JANUARY 22, 2020**

**FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT**

**SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REGARDING BOARD STANDING RULES, STRATEGIC PLAN, MUSEUM RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, HISTORIC HOUSES, STAFFING, COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

## **ISSUE:**

Receive and file the Director's Update regarding the Board Standing Rules, Strategic Plan, museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, marketing and communications, and community support.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Museum of Riverside Board receive and file the Director's Update regarding the Board Standing Rules, Strategic Plan, museum renovation and expansion, historic houses, staffing, collections, exhibitions and programs, marketing and communications, and community support.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Board Standing Rules**

A process to update the Museum of Riverside Board's (Board) Standing Rules began with a recommendation at the Board meeting on May 9, 2018 to expand the Board size from nine (9) to eleven (11) members, clarify gift acceptance details, and adopt other additions, deletions, and text corrections in the Standing Rules. The Standing Rules include portions of the City Charter and the Riverside Municipal Code, which required Legal Department review and a specific process for approvals. This process has been completed.

Revisions recommended by the Board were adopted with the exception of the expansion of the Board. The Board will remain at nine (9) members. Revisions to the relevant sections of the Riverside Municipal Code were approved by City Council at its meeting on November 5, 2019; a required second reading occurred at the City Council meeting on November 19, 2019, followed by a 30-day waiting period, which concluded on December 18, 2019. The name of the Board is officially changed to the Museum of Riverside Board. The new Museum of Riverside Board Standing Rules are now current and are included as an attachment to this report.

### Strategic Plan

Actions for which Board involvement and input are requested include:

1. Brainstorm toward the goal of establishing vision and core values statements.
2. Attend Budget Engagement Commission and City Council meetings when the Museum and its sites are under discussion.
3. Provide input on rebranding options.
4. Provide input on content to include in redeveloped website.
5. Participate as able in at least one of the Museum staff's advisory teams (renovation design, rebranding and marketing, program development, the Harada House Project Team, and/or collections committee).
6. Introduce staff and Harada House Foundation board members to potential supporters of the Harada House campaign.

### Main Museum Renovation and Expansion

Renovation planning and solicitation of community input on the direction of the renovation design are on hold until funding issues are resolved. The potential spatial layouts presented by Pfeiffer Partners in October continue to guide our discussions. The plan favored by staff provides 82% of the desired program compared to the functional scope staff originally defined. Staff adopted reductions during the planning process in the interest of cost-savings. This plan exceeds the funding currently allocated. In spite of reductions of program scope, staff are confident that the plan favored offers broad scope for improvement in exhibition and program offerings and is sustainable. Because the proposed building addition would replace old additions, the net gain in square footage is a modest but important 15%.

### Historic Houses

As part of the budget planning process for the 2020-2022 biennium, staff is working with the General Services Department to update the Capital Improvements Project (CIP) list. The CIP list brings together anticipated facility projects with costs exceeding \$20,000, whether a funding source is identified or not. The list includes the main museum's needs, the Harada House and Robinson House rehabilitations, and a range of projects for Heritage House.

The block wall dividing Heritage House from the convalescent home next door, which was repaired under an insurance claim last fall, has already failed. Staff is pursuing a properly engineered repeat repair.

### Staffing

The approved term of hire for the Museum's temporary facilities assistant has ended. As staff work to continue to clear the main museum of collections and equipment that remain, the reliance on staff from General Services, interns, and volunteers will increase. Three (3) interns from CBU are working through the sign-up process for the spring 2020 term. The process of seeking approval for additional staff positions is on hold until the issue of renovation funding is resolved and renovation planning resumes, which must occur before staff can make reasonable projections regarding a reopening date.

### Collections

Discussions are under way to refine collecting scope, a task more complex than it might initially sound. The aim is to complete an initial draft of a Collections Development Plan by the end of this fiscal year. A rented freezer truck is onsite at the airport and contains its first load of encapsulated biological specimens. We are grateful to the Riverside Museum Associates (RMA) for covering the cost of renting this truck. The RMA is also covering the cost of the reupholstery of the parlor furniture from Heritage House, a project that's been years in the waiting.

The Museum is now under contract with Gallery Systems, Inc. to proceed with the transition to TMS Collections software for management of the collection records. A report will be made to the Board periodically on the status of data migration, training, and use of the software. The new software will facilitate improved collection documentation and inventory, as well as providing a path toward offering an online catalog of the Museum's high-demand collections and participating in local, national, and international shared collection databases.

### Exhibitions and Programs

Staff members are drafting an education policy and education program plan, which will include new programs as well as prior programs that continue to promise success. The plan will establish a basis for growth in programming in order to achieve greater reach into the pre-K through 12 audience. Museums are adjunct to the educational system and, with good collaborative relationships with schools, can assist educators in meeting curriculum mandates.

Look soon for a revision to the exhibition cases in the Arlington branch library. Borrowed objects have been returned to their lenders. In their place, historic photos highlighting women in the citrus industry will appear. This selection will align with diverse plans under way among many area cultural organizations to recognize in 2020 the centenary of ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment giving women the right to vote in the U.S.

Weather interfered somewhat with attendance at the Victorian Christmas Open House on December 8, 2019, but an estimated crowd of 1,500 enjoyed the house, grounds, and seasonal décor. This number is down from 2018's attendance of 2,500, which was well above average.

The Riverside Museum Associates' Multi-Cultural Council held its ninth Day of Inclusion at Camp Anza on December 14, 2019. It was a well-attended event honoring many unsung "sheroes and heroes" in Riverside's past and present.

First Sundays continue on the front steps of the main site through the school year, and staff are under way developing new and improved participation in the Insect Fair, scheduled for April 25, 2020.

### Marketing and Communications

Thirty-four students from the advanced graphic design classes at CBU presented a rich array of potential new brands for the Museum at a session at Mind & Mill on December 5, 2019; several of the designs have strong potential. They are under review with staff, the community advisory Rebranding and Marketing Team, and the City's Marketing Department.

### Community Support

Staff express gratitude to the RMA for its support and volunteerism, some of which is noted above, and to the Harada House Foundation for its initial efforts to launch its \$6.5 million fundraising campaign. We are also grateful to donors for gifts made at year-end directly to the City/Museum's restricted funds for Harada House, and to all those who have volunteered time and voiced their support for the Museum's path toward an exciting future.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director  
Certified as to

availability of funds:

Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Approved by:

Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager

Approved as to form:

Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment:

Museum of Riverside Board Standing Rules