



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2020

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Institute of Museum and Library Services to support the digitization of the Moss Kendrix Collection at the Alexandria Black History Museum

ISSUE: Consideration of a grant application to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a \$237,355 grant to fund two limited-term curator positions for two years to process and digitize a nationally significant African American collection.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

- 1) Approve the application to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a \$237,355 grant;
- 2) Approve the acceptance of funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for \$237,355, if the grant is awarded; and
- 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA), is seeking \$237,355 over two years from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to fund two limited-term curator positions to process the extensive Moss Kendrix collection. Curators will catalog and digitize the collection to make the materials available to the public via an online database and online exhibitions. This work is critical to the long-term preservation and public accessibility of the collection. In addition, this nationally significant collection has revenue generating potential for the Museum, both during the pandemic and in the future.

DISCUSSION: Much of the Alexandria Black History Museum's collection is deeply rooted in the history of the City of Alexandria, but some have a national and even international significance - such as the Moss Kendrix

Collection. Known as the father of Black public relations, Moss Kendrix founded the Moss H. Kendrix Organization to promote the African American customer to corporate America. His work led the way for non-stereotypical images of African Americans to appear in national advertising campaigns and had a major influence on the way African Americans were depicted in the media. The Moss H. Kendrix Organization also made American companies aware of the spending power of the African American consumer.

The Moss Kendrix collection contains 30 cubic feet of documents and more than 900 photographs, some unpublished, of African American political and civil rights leaders, celebrities, and sports figures. It serves as a compendium of African American life from 1940-1970 and documents civil rights issues from this period.

FISCAL IMPACT: This grant, if awarded, will provide \$237,355 to fund two limited-term curator positions for two years. A 50/50 split in cost share from non-federal sources is required; allowable costs for cost share include in-kind contributions and staff or volunteer time that support project activities. The in-kind match will originate from the Office of Historic Alexandria.

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Gretchen Bulova, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria