



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: BL2024-305, **Version:** 1

An ordinance authorizing the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by and through the Department of Parks and Recreation, to deaccession the Pre-Columbian collection from the Parthenon.

WHEREAS, deaccessioning is the removal of a work of art, historical object, or artifact permanently from a museum's collection; and,

WHEREAS, during the 1960s to mid-70s, former Parthenon Director Parker received a total of 244 Pre-Columbian artifacts from donors John Montgomery and Edgar York, separately; and,

WHEREAS, according to the archival paperwork, the Parthenon collection of Pre-Columbian art originates from Western Mexico and was acquired during amateur and undocumented excavations done mostly by John Montgomery, and works donated by Edgar York have no documentation regarding their origin; and,

WHEREAS, as the legal owner of the Parthenon and its properties, the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County has final approval for all transfer of property requests and the Board of Parks and Recreation recommends approval of the deaccession; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County that the Parthenon be granted the permission to deaccession these artifacts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by and through the Department of Parks and Recreation, is authorized to deaccession the Pre-Columbian collection from the Parthenon and the Director of Parks and Recreation is authorized to execute the same.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall take effect from and after its final passage, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County requiring it.

Analysis

This ordinance authorizes the Department of Parks and Recreation to permanently remove the Pre-Columbian collection from the Parthenon.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a former director of the Parthenon received a total of 244 Pre-Columbian artifacts separately from donors John Montgomery and Edgar York. According to the archival paperwork, some artifacts were acquired during amateur and undocumented excavations in Western Mexico mostly done by John Montgomery. The artifacts donated by Edgar York have no documentation regarding their origin. The Department of Parks and Recreation is the legal owner of the Parthenon and all of its properties and wishes to deaccession, or permanently remove, the Pre-Columbian Collection. The Board of Parks and Recreation has approved the deaccession. Because these are illegally sourced artifacts, these artifacts will be shipped to the Government of Mexico where the artifacts were sourced.

This resolution would authorize the Department of Parks and Recreation to deaccession the Pre-Columbian

Collection from the Parthenon and authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to execute the same.