

February 21, 2023

New York City Conflicts of Interest Board  
2 Lafayette Street  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Consulting arrangement with former Assistant Commissioner of Programs, Helene Blieberg

Dear New York City Conflicts of Interest Board Members:

As permitted under the Conflicts of Interest Board Rule § 1-07(d), I am writing to notify you that Helene Blieberg, former Assistant Commissioner of Programs at the Department of Cultural Affairs (“Agency” or “DCLA”), will return as a consultant for DCLA within one year after leaving City service. Ms. Blieberg will return as a consultant to continue work similar to the matters she handled during her tenure. Ms. Blieberg will have served as Assistant Commissioner in the DCLA Programs unit for 20 months, ending her tenure on February 24, 2023. DCLA will directly retain her for a short-term, project-specific consultancy for approximately four months from, February 27, 2023 through June 30, 2023. The contract will conform to the stipulations detailed in the City Charter. Commissioner Laurie Cumbo has also acknowledged and agreed to this decision.

Significant reforms made to the Cultural Development Fund (“CDF”) grantmaking process were launched in Fiscal Year 2023 and have impacted the largest applicant pool in the agency’s history. That process is at a critical stage now, as 1,000+ grantees are navigating what the reforms and subsequent awards mean to their operations. At the same time, preparation has begun on the FY24 CDF application and process, set to launch in February/March 2023. The agency’s database conversion from Compass to Salesforce will impact the Programs Unit more than any other unit in the agency and the FY24 materials will be the first using this new database platform.

Ms. Blieberg’s knowledge and oversight of the process and the associated funding work is essential to the success of the Fiscal Year 2023 and Fiscal Year 2024 grant cycles. Ms. Blieberg’s return as a consultant during this time to continue the work she was previously engaged in is beneficial to the Agency and the City.

As a consultant, Ms. Blieberg will assist in these aspects of the competitive review process that is the core of DCLA’s grantmaking: FY23 panel feedback calls and appeals; preparation for the launch of the FY24 CDF grant cycle including planning, revision and writing

of all collateral materials and support/training materials, panel and panelist apportioning, panel production and facilitation, and preparation of rationales for additional modifications to the CDF process. Her work will include assessing the outcomes of the FY23 reforms and recommending adjustments in the CDF's second year of the equity-centered reforms.

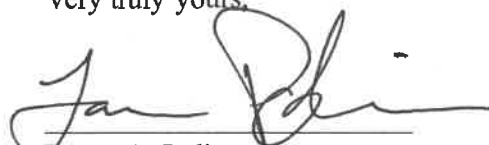
Also included in this consultancy is service as an advisor to the executive team as well as involvement with the search for the next Assistant Commissioner, preparation of a state-of-the-unit overview, and onboarding of a new Assistant Commissioner.

Ms. Blieberg is needed for this role because DCLA is completing the first year of an 'active pilot' in implementing approved reforms to the annual CDF process in intricate ways that only someone instrumental in managing them can assess. In addition to her knowledge of the process, her management and communication skills will allow us to adequately prepare a large and detailed volume of work in the short window available as we plan the FY24 cycle that will launch in February/March 2023. Her understanding of the role of the Assistant Commissioner is unique; her engagement will greatly aid in the search and transition.

Ms. Blieberg will be compensated at the rate of \$73 per hour, which is commensurate with her salary of \$132,870 at the time her tenure at DCLA will end. She will provide services approximately 15-20 hours per week. This work will primarily be conducted remotely with approximately one day per week at DCLA's offices.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (212) 298-8727.

Very truly yours,



Lance A. Polivy  
General Counsel

Acknowledged and agreed to:



Laurie Cumbo  
Commissioner

cc: Ethan Carrier/COIB (via e-mail)  
Christopher M. Hammer/COIB (via e-mail)