



STEVEN M. FULOP  
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2019

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### ***Jersey City to Hire Search Firm for New Public Library Director as the Current Director Will Retire After 50 Years of Service***

*Jersey City's Main Public Library Will be Renamed in Current Library Director's Honor Upon Retirement*

JERSEY CITY – **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** is announcing the search to find a new Director of the Jersey City Public Library System, as Priscilla Gardener is set to retire later this year after 50 years of service. At the 2019 State of the City Address, Mayor Fulop recognized Director Gardner as he announced that the Main Public Library on Jersey Avenue will be renamed in her honor. Moving forward, the City will hire a search firm tasked with finding her successor.

“The new Director will have some big shoes to fill when Priscilla Gardner retires after 50 years of service,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “We’re looking for a dynamic leader who will continue her legacy. We have invested more money into our libraries than any administration in the history of our city, because we know the importance of libraries in the community for people that may not otherwise have access to books and other educational resources.”

Next week, two separate resolutions will be introduced to the City Council. The first will approve the hiring of the search firm, National Executive Service Corps, tasked with recruiting highly qualified candidates to fill this prestigious role. The position will require an experienced leader with the vision and strategic goals to further enhance the library’s programs.

The second resolution will establish a committee responsible for reviewing applications. The 7-member committee will be made up of three members from the Library Board, current Director Priscilla Gardner, one Mayor designee, one City Council member, and one community member. The committee will present their candidate recommendations to the Library Board for final approval.

At his annual State of the City Address at City Hall on Wednesday, Mayor Fulop revealed the renaming of the historic Jersey City Main Public Library in honor of the Priscilla. This

dedication will honor the current Director's legacy and her decades of service within the fabric of the city's history.

"Priscilla remained dedicated and committed to ensuring the Public Library could perform at its best by fighting for the necessary resources which in itself is an inspiration," said **Councilwoman-at-Large Joyce Watterman**, who spearheads the City's Naming Committee.

"Priscilla has helped countless people over her 50 years with the library," said **Senator Sandra B. Cunningham**. "She has expanded the idea of what the library should be. She has given warmth and tenderness to any child that crossed her path. I'm thankful her legacy will continue, not just in the number of years she put in, but through her actions in opening up the doors of opportunity for residents of all ages and expanding their view of the world."

Director Gardner has made a lasting impact on the Library and the Jersey City community in her tenure as Library Director, and throughout her 50-year career. Beginning as a Junior Library Assistant in 1969, Gardner rose through the ranks to become the Library's first African-American Director in 2002. She spent 30 years working at Miller Branch Library, serving as Branch Head there from 1987-1999. Upon her retirement later this year, Gardner will leave behind a legacy of profound contributions to the city.

"I am elated, thankful, blessed, and grateful that the Mayor would bestow this honor upon me before my retirement," said **Priscilla Gardner**. "I never expected this. I have simply tried to be the best Library Director I could be and serve our patrons well."

The new Library Director will oversee the historic Main Library on Jersey Avenue, as well as six regional branches, three neighborhood branches and a Bookmobile, with a wide variety of programming for children and adults.

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