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AGENDA REPORT

TO: DEANNA J. SANTANA
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: Arturo M. Sanchez

SUBJECT: Oakland Youth Commission

DATE: April 16, 2012

City Administrator

Approval

Date

4/17/12

COUNCIL DISTRICT: City-Wide

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Council direct staff to continue with the implementation the 2011-2012 Amended Policy Budget and continue to explore combining the required work of The Youth Commission with other youth groups, which may include but not be limited to The Oakland Fund For Children, And Youth's (OFCY) Planning Commission or The All City Council Of The Oakland Unified School District. This will allow staff to continue with the implementation the 2011-2012 Amended Policy Budget which preserved essential services by streamlining and consolidating functions that have a natural nexus and, generally, reflect common organizational structures in local government.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 31, 2012 the Oakland City Council adopted Resolution No. 83693 C.M.S. amending the City of Oakland's FY 2011-13 Biennial Budget, which was adopted pursuant to Resolution 83444 C.M.S. on June 30, 2011. The amended budget included the elimination of the permanent part time position dedicated to supporting and staffing the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission (OYAC). The motion adopted by the amended biennial budget resolution stated that staff should "[e]liminate Youth Commission and explore combining with other youth groups (OFCY Planning & Oversight Committee will continue and is consisted of nearly half youth members who have decision making authority over nearly \$10 million in youth service funding and establishing youth priorities and as such constitutes the most powerful youth policy vote for the City)."

In response to Staff's recommendation, and the City Council's approval of it, OYAC proposed to continue with support from volunteer staff. Staff has reviewed the proposal for volunteer staffing and has identified significant challenges concerning the management, oversight and ultimately the effectiveness of OYAC, if staffed by a volunteer. Chief among the concerns held by staff is that holding a volunteer accountable for meeting the requirements of boards and commissions which include holding open meetings and public noticing. The amount

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of time required to recruit, retain, develop, and guide OYAC members to meet the requirements of Ordinance 11869 C.M.S. are unlikely to be sustained by a volunteer.

The additional demands for finding appropriate “volunteer staff” and training and orienting volunteers presents challenges for effectively managing the OYAC and diminishes time for other priorities. Additionally the City must provide adequate and appropriate adult supervision and qualified support for the youth participating in the Commission at all times is the only way to ensure the well-being of the OYAC members and that the work required by ordinance and bylaws is completed. In the absence of a paid City employee to support OYAC, it is unlikely that the City will be able to provide the qualified and sustained support needed by the Commission. Discussions with OYAC commissioners have only strengthened staffs belief that volunteer oversight would not provide the appropriate support and guidance.

OUTCOME

Accepting and directing staff’s recommendation will result in the implementation of the FY 2011-2012 Adopted Amended Policy Budget.

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

On February 5, 1985 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 10545 C.M.S. establishing the OYAC’s purpose, functions, governance, and reporting structure, and providing that the City Manager may provide the Commission with staff assistance. On November 29, 1988 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 11058 C.M.S. providing for at least twice a month regular meetings, an annual written report and a status report to the City Council. Ordinance No. 11461 C.M.S., adopted on June 23, 1992, increased the number of youth from 11 to 25, and included appointments by the Mayor of one youth member to represent each Council district, 18 youth at-large, and three (3) adults to be appointed by the Mayor to serve strictly as consultants and advisors to the Commission.

On March 12, 1996 Ordinance No. 11869 C.M.S. was adopted to “incorporate uniform requirements regarding the selection of members, the duties of said members, and the general responsibilities of boards and commissions.” The duties and functions of the OYAC include identifying the needs of the youth of the community and creating citizen awareness of these needs, reviewing and commenting on the policy goals of the council, serving as the policy recommending board for civic/education related matters in which youth have an interest, encouraging improved standards of service for youth, and establishing needed new services for youth, advising the City Council on youth activities and services, and providing review and comment on all community policies, programs and actions that affect youth. The OYAC must adhere to the requirements of the Brown Act and the Sunshine Act; meetings must be appropriately noticed and open to the public. Due to their school requirements, Commissioners typically meet in the evenings.

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On January 31, 2012, the Oakland City Council adopted Resolution No. 83693 C.M.S amending the City of Oakland's FY 2011-13 Biennial Budget, which was adopted pursuant to Resolution 83444 C.M.S. on June 30, 2011. With the adoption of the amended budget the City Council eliminated funding for the part-time Program Analyst I to support the OYAC in the amount of \$37,056. At that time, members of the OYAC addressed the Council and proposed that the City consider volunteer staffing of the OYAC. It is important to note that in recent years the general fund support for staff oversight of the OYAC has been reduced from 2.0 FTE in prior years to one part-time Program Analyst I position in 2011, and ultimately eliminated in January 2012. As a result of the recent funding reduction which resulted in a part time position, the ability to retain staff became difficult. The full time employee who held the position in FY 2010-2011 could not be retained once the position was reduced to permanent part time. The Department of Human Services (DHS) was delayed in filling the part-time position during the fall and during the City's consideration of the revised budget. The OYAC is currently staffed by a position paid for through a small contract of \$5,000.

ANALYSIS

The OYAC is a 25 member body appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. The members of the OYAC are minors between the ages of 13 and 21. Currently, there are 21 appointed members and 11 active members. The Commission meets monthly during the evening hours in City Hall and/or in DHS conference room in 150 Frank Ogawa Plaza. Of the 21 members appointed, the terms of the commission expire as follows seventeen (17) expire as of June 30, 2012, two (2) expire as of October 1, 2012, and the final two (2) expire June, 2013.

The coordinator receives input, direction, supervision, and guidance from DHS staff, and is tasked with assisting the OYAC members with meeting their charge as required by the enabling OYAC legislation. In the past, it has been the responsibility of the Commission staff to draft, publish, and post the requisite notices. Additionally staff has been responsible for recruitment, retention, development, and supervising the youth of the Commission. The coordinator usually had the support of one (1) to three (3) volunteer adult advisor's to attend some of the meetings, provide training, or support the youth to develop recommendations. Volunteer support supplemented the staff effort to ensure meaningful engagement with the youth, and is usually a time commitment of 2 to 5 hours monthly.

After the adoption of the FY 2011-2012 budget the OYAC did not meet in July or August due to a summer recess. The Commission would normally have begun meeting in September. However, both the lack of a staff person to consistently support the OYAC and subsequent concerns about safety and condition of Frank Ogawa Plaza during Occupy events curtailed any plan to organize the OYAC for meetings in October or November. DHS convened the executive committee of the OYAC in December 2011 with the goal of reinstating the monthly Commission meetings. The full OYAC began monthly meetings in January with guidance to reduce its work plan and with the support of the contracted staff.

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The Commission is currently staffed by a consultant/coordinator until June 30th. The current contractor plans for and helps facilitate meetings, through a contract of less than \$5,000, for approximately 8 to 10 hours per week. The contractor's modest scope of work does not include full support or enough hours for the training, recruitment, or support for the development of policy initiatives, OYAC projects, or reports.

The City Administrator's and Department of Human Services' staff's met with the OYAC to discuss their ideas for sustaining the Commission in light of the budget reduction. City staff has met with the Executive Committee, on March 21, 2012, had made themselves available to OYAC commissioners for subsequent meetings, should any have occurred, and met with the full Commission on April 2, 2012 to discuss the Commission's proposal.

At the March 21, 2012 meeting with the executive committee of the OYAC the following was discussed:

The OYAC executive committee held an emergency meeting on January 30th in response to the City's proposal to eliminate the OYAC, and brainstormed about how they could continue their work. As a result of their meeting the OYAC members felt that they could continue their work with a volunteer. The OYAC members felt that they could be self-sufficient and productive with volunteer support, and that their chief goal would be to develop an agenda of issues that they could focus on before the end of this fiscal year.

The OYAC members noted that in the past, staff primarily provided support by proactively providing reading materials, arranging for speakers; researched and presented information on topics and issues of interest to and identified by OYAC; supported their work towards a youth day; prepared the agenda and published, recruited speakers and staff to present to commission; presented ideas and maintained order; developed agenda's designed to follow up on topics and presentations, and to help them hone in on work and timing for items to be completed; and more importantly understood how youth worked.

At the April 2, 2012 OYAC meeting only 5 commissioners were present during the time they requested staff attend their meeting. The two commission co-chairs were present and staff proceeded with attempting to determine whether the OYAC could move forward with volunteer support. At the meeting the commissioners provided staff with printouts of other volunteer staffed youth commissions in the country. They included the town of Darien, Connecticut, Northampton, Massachusetts, and Lompoc, California.

Town of Darien - The Darien Youth Commission is comprised of seven adults appointed by the Board of Selectmen, a full-time Youth Director, and a Youth Advisory Committee (consisting of at least eight high school aged students). The youth director is the staff person who provides support and guidance to the youth commission; it is not a volunteer position.

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Northampton – There is an elected City Councilor and Mayor who act as liaisons to the Youth Commission. The Youth Commission is not required to report to the City in any written manner. Their focus has been generally on fundraisers.

Lompoc – The City of Lompoc’s information on commissions indicates that staff is assigned to staff each of their commissions and/or boards. The Lompoc City information does not indicate that the commission is staffed by a volunteer. “Staff is assigned by the City Administrator or Department Head to assist the advisory groups to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities. Staff is to be considered an information source on City programs and activities and will provide advice, data and suggestions as requested.” (p. 35 City of Lompoc Handbook)

The OYAC members believed that they could arrange for speakers, prepare and publish agendas, conduct appropriate reporting, recruit new members and oversee their training and education regarding legal and reporting requirements. The commissioners indicated that they felt commission staff merely needed to be a chaperone and facilitator. A key point they made is that they felt the current makeup of the board had all the knowledge and tools necessary to conduct the required business of the Committee.

In closing the members of the OYAC expressed commitment to the commission’s purpose and their desires to continue with support from staff with the following qualities and attributes: committed, reliable, sociable, well connected, and the ability to teach, since the youth likened their previous coordinator to a history teacher. They also felt it important to stress that eliminating the commission now will erase what gains the commission has made over the last couple of years, and that should the City at some later point in time decide to add the commission back that commission will have to start from scratch and cover the current commission has already dealt with. The commissioners asked that staff consider the consequences of eliminating a commission designed to serve and give voice to the youth of Oakland.

On April 10, 2012 staff received a letter from the OYAC members, attached to this report as Attachment A, with a proposal on how to continue OYAC. The following three proposals were offered:

- I. *The City of Oakland reinstates the full-time staff position previously held by Chantal Reynolds to oversee the activities of the Commission.*
- II. *The City of Oakland continues to fund the part-time staff position currently held by Fraylanie Aglipay to serve in conjunction with two permanent volunteers (Nyeisha Dewitt and Tatiana Larkin) who have worked with the Commission for three years.*

III. The City of Oakland continues to provide space for the Commission to meet, with no support for any staff position, while the Commission would function solely with the two permanent volunteers.

OYAC member's go on to directly respond to some concerns raised by staff during our discussion with regards to practical considerations and operational issues which can require day to day follow up with both internal City staff and external 3rd party residents in order to coordinate and effectively achieve the requirements of the OYAC. Many of these practical and operational tasks must be handled during regular business hours Monday through Friday while the OYAC members and volunteer adults are at work.

While staff appreciates the perspective, intelligence, and commitment exhibited by the current leadership of the OYAC, we cannot recommend that the Commission continue with a volunteer providing support. As the current members leave the Commission to attend college, the recruitment and development of new members is necessary to sustain the Commission. Current expectations as established by ordinance require a level of staff support beyond the requirements of scheduling and noticing meetings. The Commission requires substantial support to meet these expectations which include regular reports and analysis to the City Council, reviewing and commenting on all city policies, prepare annual goals, and an extensive review of all city policies and programs and their impact on youth. The OYAC bylaws, drafted in 2007, require in relevant parts that:

Section II – Purpose/Duties: A. The commission shall submit regular reports to the City Council committee designated as liaison to the Commission. Regular reports shall be submitted quarterly, or more frequently as directed by the Chairperson of the City Council committee to which the board commission reports.

Section IV – Offices: The elected offices shall consist of 2 chairpersons, government affairs officer, media and public relations officer.

Section IX Staff Role: Commission staff responsibilities are to facilitate the day-to-day operations of the commission and to support ongoing projects sponsored by the Commissioners.

Staff highlights these few sections to underscore the depth and breadth of the scope of work that is desired and expected from the youth commission. Such an extensive and expansive scope of work requires strong and informed guidance from staff that understands procedures and legal requirements, and who can develop curricula to teach and train the OYAC members to meet their requirements. Absent a staff person connected to the City, who is themselves trained in Sunshine and Brown Act requirements, has knowledge and understanding of teaching and

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guiding youth, and who can ably recruit speakers and commissioners alike the OYAC will not be able to meet the legal demands of their existence.

While the current youth feel that they have a good grasp on reporting and general requirements, and can adequately address recruitment retention and training, staff does not believe that is the case. The OYAC commissioners are no doubt intelligent and capable but their schedules are stretched thin with school and homework, taking up responsibilities that may not be able to be taken by a volunteer will include connecting with and arranging for logistics during normal business hours (i.e. Mon-Fri 9-5pm). It will also require review and oversight which the members cannot provide for one another at an appropriate level or depth.

Based on the discussion with the members of the OYAC, staff has made the following assessment:

- If a volunteer could be utilized staff believes it would be difficult to hold a volunteer accountable for meeting the requirements of boards and commissions which include holding open meetings and public noticing. If the volunteer fails to meet the standards and agreements for the voluntary position, the City's recourse is to seek alternative volunteer support. The additional demands for finding appropriate "volunteer staff" and training and orienting volunteers presents challenges for effectively managing the OYAC and diminishes time for other priorities. The lack of accountability and inconsistency of staffing may result in the reduced effectiveness of the OYAC.
- The OYAC coordinator must have selective skills which support a high level of positive and productive engagement with youth. Prior to the elimination of the full time staff person the OYAC was staffed by a full time coordinator who exhibited attributes identified by the OYAC executive committee and who dedicated significant hours to recruitment; scheduling and developing a curriculum for the development of serious and impactful policy discussion for the OYAC; inviting speakers and guests to expand on topics and discussions; and helping guide the youth on the appropriate next steps to take to meet the OYAC stated goals and policies. To support the OYAC, the coordinator must be qualified to mentor and support youth in becoming self-directed leaders, facilitate meetings, teach youth about City government and policy making, provide or identify needed training in leadership skills, advocacy, community organization, facilitation, and planning. The Coordinator must spend considerable time to recruit and facilitate the appointment of members.
- The City has responsibility for the safety and well-being of the members of the OYAC and must provide for the presence of adequate adult supervision at all times. OYAC meetings take place in the evening hours, in City Hall or City buildings, and are open to the public. There is a concern about the difficulty of holding a volunteer accountable for the responsibility of attendance and supervision for 15 to 25 youth, as well as the security for City offices during off-hours.

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In conclusion, staff has concerns regarding the volunteer proposal which include but are not limited to: 1) inconsistent staffing and additional demands for recruiting and training volunteers will adversely impact the management, oversight and effectiveness of the OYAC, 2) the scope of work to support the OYAC is extensive, 3) the safety and well-being of the commissioners requires adequate adult supervision 4) The skill set and qualifications are inconsistent with sustained volunteer support, 5) Labor relations implications. Conversion to a “volunteer position” is likely to result in more frequent turnover and a lack of continuity in staffing, a need for continuous investment in recruiting and training volunteer staff, and persistent gaps in support for key tasks such as recruitment and facilitation of meetings.

POLICY ALTERNATIVES

- 1) The City Council may revisit the decision to eliminate funding for the part-time Program Analyst I in order to provide support for the OYAC. While this alternative would likely provide more consistent support for the OYAC; such a decision would require identification of funds. Frequent turnover and an ongoing investment in recruiting and retraining qualified staff are still factors in the option of retaining the paid part-time position.
- 2) Existing DHS staff will not be able to absorb the duties necessary to retain an effective and operative OYAC, which at minimum requires additional time dedicated to recruitment, training, preparation, and facilitation of evening meetings. DHS is unable to identify a unit which should reprioritize existing duties and functions in order to absorb the staff work necessary to sustain the OYAC.

It is important to note that staff will consider alternative bodies that may subsume the duties of the OYAC and continue to give voice to issues that impact the youth in Oakland. An example of such a body may be the All City Council of the Oakland Unified School District which meets monthly to guide the District’s education policy and provide youth leadership for all District matters citywide.

Additionally eight of 17 appointments to the Kids First (Oakland Fund for Children & Youth) Planning and Oversight Committee (POC) must be youth. These youth represent the voice of Oakland youth relative to the City’s investment in direct services for children and youth. However, staff will need time to consider whether the POC may absorb the broader policy and advocacy mandate for the OYAC; since the members are appointed per the Charter Amendment established by Measure D, which requires a comprehensive process for implementing the Kids First Fund, including the responsibility of the members to provide oversight for strategic planning, evaluation, and grant-making for OFCY. This process is very demanding of the time and attention of both youth and adult volunteers, and is planned and implemented over the course of the year to achieve Kids First outcomes. The Kids First City charter amendment includes a requirement to ensure that Kids First Funds are not used to backfill against general fund cuts.

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Nevertheless, a discussion about opportunities to leverage youth engagement with OFCY will begin in the near term. If staff is unable to find a suitable policy body we will return with an alternate policy recommendation intended to implement the Amended Policy Budget adopted by the Council.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

The Oakland Youth Commission holds open public meetings during its regularly scheduled meeting times which are the first Monday of the month, from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. Staff also met with OYAC executive committee and the full commission.

COORDINATION

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and forwarded this report. Additionally, the City Administrator's Office, DHS, and the Office of Human Resources staff have all provided input concerning consistency with the relevant labor agreement provisions. .

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report. General purpose funds totaling \$37,056 for the part-time Program Analyst I position, which supported the Oakland Youth Commission, was eliminated in January 2012.

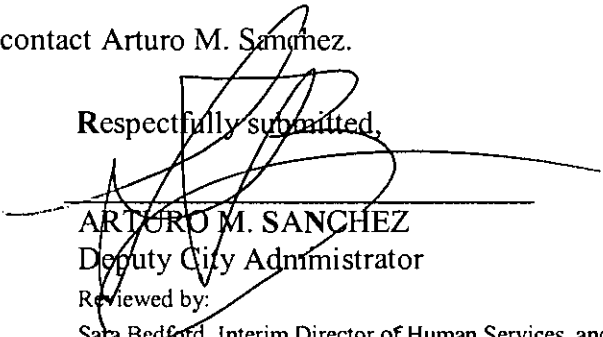
SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The budget reduction results in an economic impact related to the loss of the position.

Social Equity: The OYAC provides a voice of advocacy for children and youth in Oakland.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Arturo M. Sanchez.

Respectfully submitted,


ARTURO M. SANCHEZ
Deputy City Administrator

Reviewed by:
Sara Bedford, Interim Director of Human Services, and
Sandra Taylor, Manager
Children & Youth Services Division

Attachments –

Attachment A -- Oakland Youth Advisory Commission correspondence dated April 10, 2012.

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Attachment A

Oakland Youth Advisory Commission



150 Frank H Ogawa Plaza #4 • Oakland, CA 94612 • (510) 238-3245
E-mail: youthcommission@oaklandnet.com

April 10, 2012

Arturo M. Sanchez
Deputy City Administrator
City of Oakland
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 11th floor
Oakland, CA 94612
Cell: (510) 238-7542

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

Following our conversation at the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission meeting on April 2, 2012, as you suggested, I am writing on behalf of all the Commissioners to outline three alternatives to continue the work of the Youth Commission while acknowledging the budget limitations. The Oakland Youth Commissioners propose the following three options:

- I. The City of Oakland reinstates the full-time staff position previously held by Chantal Reynolds to oversee the activities of the Commission.
- II. The City of Oakland continues to fund the part-time staff position currently held by Fraylanie Aglipay to serve in conjunction with two permanent volunteers (Nyeisha Dewitt and Tatiana Larkin) who have worked with the Commission for three years.
- III. The City of Oakland continues to provide space for the Commission to meet, with no support for any staff position, while the Commission would function solely with the two permanent volunteers.

Please allow me to address some of the concerns you raised in our conversation regarding the full-time staff position for the Youth Commission.

First, you discussed the logistical difficulties of posting the Youth Commission's agenda without the assistance of a full-time staff member. I called the office of the City Clerk on April 3, 2012 and obtained the template for an agenda, as well as the protocols to properly post the agenda. Please see the agenda template attached in the e-mail. We commit to posting Youth Commission agendas in a timely and public manner.

Second, you mentioned the impracticalities of reserving a room for the Commission to meet without the help of a full-time staff member. I called the office of the City Administrator and was able to request a hearing room in City Hall, rather than the conference room where we currently meet. I also confirmed that we do not need to submit the room reservation form before every meeting as this can be arranged for a 1-2 year period. As you know, the room reservation form needs to be submitted through an employee of the Department of Human Services. Since in the future there is a possibility that we may not have a contact in the Department of Human Services, it is our hope that we would be able to obtain the necessary signature through the support of your office. Please see the room reservation form attached in the e-mail.



Third, you voiced some concern about how the Youth Commissioners would arrange for individual speakers and organizations to collaborate without a dedicated full-time staff member. Commissioner Tahmasebi and I work with an organization called the Junior Statesmen of America where we served as the Political Fair Coordinators for three Northern California conventions with over 1,000 high school-aged student delegates. We have a database of over 200 Bay Area organizations including local political parties, non-profits, student-run initiatives, and more. We were able to arrange for over 70 of these organizations to host informational booths at each respective convention in less than a month. Having completed this task three times throughout the academic year, with only two of us taking responsibility, I am confident that with the help of 20 Commissioners we would be able to organize occasional guest speakers.

We hope that you will find one of the three alternatives consistent with the interests of the City.

I understand the City's limitations in allocating funding for a full-time staff position. However, in recent years, the Commission has been nothing less than a group of motivated, impassioned, and committed youth leaders and it is our hope that the City will support us in continuing our work with Oakland youth. Allow me to familiarize you with the Executive Subcommittee of the Youth Commission, in their own words:

Eric Grant

My name is Eric Cant, I am a senior at McClymonds High School and I am the Co-chair of the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission. I have served on the Youth Commission for three years. Next year I will be attending Alabama A&M University. I am reachable via e-mail at: rich.will.live@gmail.com

Lilly Tahmasebi

My name is Lilly Tahmasebi and I attend the Head Royce School as a junior. I am currently the Co-chair of the Commission and have served as a commissioner for two years. I have been and will continue to dedicate my time and efforts towards maintaining the Oakland Youth Commission. Please contact me on my cell at: (510) 415-8991 or via e-mail at: l.tahmasebi.hr@gmail.com

Seydina Seek

My name is Seydina Seek and I am a sophomore at Skyline High School. I have served on the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission for three years, and am specifically interested in Media and Public Relations. Feel free to contact me with any questions at: seyoscck@gmail.com



Bahar Ostadan

My name is Bahar Ostadan, I reside in Oaldand, and I am a junior at Lick-Wilmerding High School in San Francisco. I have served on die Oaldand Youth Advisory Commission for two years, specifically interested in pursuing after-school programs to supplement tie public school system as well as fostering civic engagement and global responsibility in Oakland youth. I am available via phone at (510) 813-1192 or e-mail at: baharostadan@yahoo.com

Other active Commissioners include Amina Michele (Bishop O'Dowd High School), Sabah Harris (Oakland Technical High School), Folarin Nobles (Skyline Senior High School), Olivia Noelle (Head Royce School), Nia Patrick-Cole (Oakland Technical High School), Paul Michael Irvin (Skyline Senior High School), and Alex Amangbo (St. Mary's High School).

In an effort to raise awareness throughout the Oakland community about the Youth Commission's position, a group of Youth Commissioners attended the City Council meeting on April 3, 2012 to speak at open forum. We spoke to City Council President Ignacio De La Fuente and City Council member Rebecca Kaplan in an effort to gain support before the official decision will be made. We produced a hard copy petition to circulate around the greater commurity. Just during die period before tie City Council meeting began, we solidified over 30 signatures from concerned individuals hoping to revitalize the Youth Commission. We then launched an online petition in order to appeal to a larger youth audience. In just two days of circulation, over 40 individuals signed the petition, with this number growing on a daily basis.

Flaving previously worked with the San Francisco and Berkeley Youth Commissioners, I contacted the Chairpersons of both commissions to solicit their support. An alarmed San Francisco Youth Commissioner proposed a resolution in support of a full-time staff member for the Oaldand Youth Commission. The San Francisco Youth Commission will vote on this resolution during their full-Commission meeting on April 16, 2012.

City government youth commissions are integral to many other cities outside the Bay Area. On my way to the City Council meeting last week, I noticed tie large banner posted on Oakland City Hall advertising the New York Times ranking of Oaldand as tie 5th best place to visit in 2012. The only other U.S. cities ranked on this list are Tahoe, California (#30), Chattanooga, Tennessee (#25), and San Diego California (#14). After doing some preliminary research, I confirmed that each of these three cities has a fully functioning youth commission with a city-funded supervisor. We hope that consistent with its stature, the City of Oakland serves as a role model for other cities by empowering its youth and maintaining an active Youth Commission.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

Bahar Ostadan on behalf of tie Oaldand Youth Advisory Commission