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# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Sabrina B. Landreth  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Maraskeshia Smith  
Assistant City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** AAMLO Chief Curator & Library  
Director Recruitments

**DATE:** September 26, 2018

City Administrator Approval

Date:

9/27/18

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The Status Of Hiring Of The Chief Curator Position At The African American Museum & Library At Oakland (AAMLO) And The Director Of Library Services Position At The Oakland Public Library (OPL).**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oakland Public Library (OPL) Director of Library Services and African American Museum & Library of Oakland (AAMLO) Chief Curator positions are currently both filled with interim assignments. Recruitment efforts for both positions are underway and coordinated so that the appointment of a new permanent OPL Director occurs by December 2018 and that the new Director can appoint a new permanent AAMLO Chief Curator in December 2018, or no later than January 2019.

## BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

On April 17, 2018, the City Administrator distributed an Informational Memorandum, available to the public, that provided a status update on the national search for a permanent AAMLO Chief Curator.

On May 10, 2018, the Rules and Legislation Committee scheduled an "Informational report from the City Administrator on 1) The status of hiring and programming at the African American Museum & Library, and; 2) Procedure for discarding books, including responding to recent issues regarding numerous rare African American-oriented books being discarded", as requested by Councilmembers Kaplan and Gibson McElhaney. Staff prepared and presented this report to the Life Enrichment Committee on June 26, 2018. The item was discussed and continued to a future date. On September 13, 2018, the Rules Committee separated the subjects of the June 26, 2018 report and requested that an update be provided on the hiring of the Library Services Director and the Chief Curator.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Life Enrichment Committee  
October 9, 2018

This informational report is a response to the Rules and Legislation Committee action regarding the status of hiring the Chief Curator position at the AAMLO and the Director of Library Services position at the OPL.

## **ANALYSIS / POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The AAMLO was established under the OPL in the mid-1990s. AAMLO is dedicated to the discovery, preservation, interpretation and sharing of historical and cultural experiences of African Americans in California and the West for present and future generations. The facility in which AAMLO is housed is the former Charles S. Greene library and is an historic 1902 Carnegie building. The programming is rich and can be found on the City's website at <http://oaklandlibrary.org/locations/african-american-museum-library-oakland>; and AAMLO is fortunate to have the support of dedicated volunteers through the Stewards of the African American Museum & Library of Oakland (SAAMLO).

Currently, the OPL Director of Library Services and AAMLO Chief Curator positions are both filled with interim assignments. While the recruitment process for selecting a permanent Chief Curator was initiated in February 2018, the process was paused to ensure that the mission and vision for the AAMLO and its programs are aligned between the permanent Director of Library Services and the AAMLO Chief Curator, who is supervised by the Director. Both recruitments are being conducted by The Hawkins Company, an executive search firm.<sup>1</sup>

### *AAMLO Chief Curator Recruitment Process*

The Hawkins Company developed an online survey and facilitated two public community meetings that were held on March 21 and March 22, 2018. Twenty-one people completed the online survey and 30 participants attended the community meetings. The community identified notable qualities for an AAMLO Chief Curator through this process including:

- A demonstrated passion, commitment and understanding of African American culture, history, identity and community. Many people requested that the Chief Curator be African American.
- Belief in constant outreach and ongoing dialogue with the community.
- Values and engages youth, adults and seniors; and provides exciting programming to these groups.
- Effective communicator and listener; friendly, charismatic and approachable.
- Experience with historical artifacts and exhibition development techniques.
- Experience with community engagement; someone who is accessible and has worked with the African American community.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hawkins Company is also currently engaged to conduct the search efforts for a permanent Chief of Violence Prevention in the Department of Violence Prevention and a Deputy Director of Real Estate and Development in the Economic Workforce Development Department.

The community feedback was insightful, informative and clear. It emphasized the crucial role that AAMLO fills within the City of Oakland and, even more importantly, for the Oakland community and African-American patrons.

The Hawkins Company, working with staff, has resumed the recruitment process. The job announcement is being finalized and expected to be released the first week of October. The first screening of applicants is expected to occur in early/mid-November with first-round interviews occurring during the month of December, resulting in a short list of final candidates being recommended to the permanent OPL Director.

#### *OPL Director Recruitment Process*

The Hawkins Company developed an online survey and facilitated four public community meetings that were held on June 14 and June 15, 2018. These meetings were held at various locations throughout the city including the 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue Branch, César Chávez Branch, Rockridge Branch and AAMLO. The online survey was available to both library employees as well as the public, and were incorporated into the development of the job profile and evaluation criteria.

The job announcement was released in July with the first screening of applicants occurring in late August 2018. Throughout the job announcement's release, The Hawkins Company actively sought out candidates with the most potential for success as the City of Oakland's Library Services Director. The first-round interviews are scheduled for early October that will result in a short list of final candidates being recommended to the City Administrator. Barring any complications, it is expected that a permanent OPL Director will be appointed by December and complete the hiring of the permanent AAMLO Chief Curator.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This is an informational report with no fiscal impact.

#### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

Community and employee input as to the characteristics and qualities for the ideal AAMLO Chief Curator and OPL Director of Library Services was incorporated into the respective recruitment processes through an online survey tool as well as open meetings at various locations throughout the city.

#### **COORDINATION**

No other City departments were involved in the writing of this informational report.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** No specific, additional economic opportunities have been identified.

**Environmental:** No specific, additional environmental opportunities have been identified.

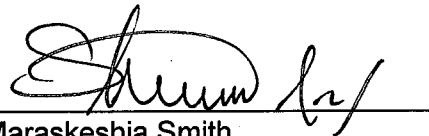
**Social Equity:** The services and programs of the OPL and African American Museum & Library of Oakland are available at no charge to all residents of all ages and races to acquire knowledge and develop skills they need toward equity in educational, employment, housing, entertainment and engagement opportunities.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The Status Of Hiring Of The Chief Curator Position At The African American Museum & Library At Oakland (AAMLO) And Director Of Library Services Position At The Oakland Public Library (OPL).

For questions regarding this report, please contact Maraskeshia Smith, Assistant City Administrator, at (510) 238-6903.

Respectfully submitted,



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