

# CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

REBECCA KAPLAN  
Council President  
atlarge@oaklandnet.com

(510) 238-7008  
FAX: (510) 238-6910  
TDD: (510) 839-6451

To: Oakland City Administrator and Colleagues  
From: Council President Rebecca Kaplan  
Date: June 23, 2020  
Subject: Budget -- Grant-funded positions being used in City government functions

---

Dear Oakland City Administrator Reiskin,

I am writing to express concerns and seek information about grant funds and donor funds related to City of Oakland projects and programs, and how such funds are tracked and accounted for, and positions and job duties assigned in a manner to ensure benefit to the public and appropriate and effective oversight.

There was a recent public listing on a job board (**See Attachment A**) for a position in a non-profit "OPFI," which is described as having extensive control and input over City of Oakland core functions, including homelessness response and information technology functioning, and yet which reports to an outside organization, and does not appear to be incorporated into the City's administrative structure and laws and processes. See excerpt:

Below are examples of several key initiatives underway at OFPI which may continue over the next few years:

- **Oakland Broadband Project:** Lead fundraising and support City staff in designing, building and deploying fiber infrastructure to bridge the digital divide.
- **Oakland's Opportunity Zones:** A two-year, \$400,000 grant hired Oakland's first Chief Opportunity Zone Officer (COZO). The COZO is employed by NVF, through the Oakland Fund. As such, the Fund manager will liaise to support the COZO as necessary and work with NVF to track funding for the position/program.
- **Homelessness:** A two-year, \$1 million grant will hire a Senior Policy Advisor on Homelessness in the Mayor's Office with additional funding for the Fund and policy advisor to explore, test and evaluate solutions to address Oakland's homeless problem.
- **COVID-19 Relief Fund:** Oversee remaining collection and allocation of subgrant dollars to nonprofit partner organizations that support critical facilities and supplies needed to protect the health of all Oaklanders in the face of COVID-19.

It is described as an executive director position for the “Oakland Fund for Public Innovation.” What is this organization? What is its relationship to the City of Oakland government? According to the job posting, the executive director will help coordinate and plan major city projects. Can anyone in the Administration confirm whether this is true? Has the Administrator authorized delegating these city functions to the control of this entity?

An issue of additional concern is that the outside organization will allegedly be responsible for organizing the Oakland broadband project, which should be under the purview of the Information Technology (IT) Department of the City. It is vital that funds for needed public projects, including those to protect our cyber-security and provide public access to needed internet services that have become all the more vital during COVID-19, be devoted to the right place so they can be implemented.

The position is also described as handling homelessness. Oakland already has a Homelessness Administrator, Daryel Dunston, who was announced in this position on April 21, 2020 by City Administrator Ed Reiskin. As Homeless Administrator, Mr. Dunston “over[sees] the City’s interdepartmental focus on homelessness solutions and stakeholder engagement, as well as facilitating the development and implementation of programs and services designed to mitigate the homelessness crisis in Oakland.” The question becomes what would the homeless resource person for this other organization do? Would Mr. Dunston supervise their work? Our City needs to improve, not worsen, the focus of our homelessness resources.

The issue of delegation of city authority was recently before this Council in another matter. We were given a City Attorney opinion, dated May 19, 2020, in which we were told that Section 503 of the city Charter does not give the City Administrator the authority to delegate his authority to a person outside of city staff.

“Under the clear and unequivocal language of Charter section 503, the City Administrator has authority to delegate his/her authority to hire and fire employees under his/her jurisdiction only to subordinate employees, namely “directors or other department heads responsible to him/her.” By using the word “may”, the Charter plainly defines the circumstances in which the City Administrator has permission to delegate his/her authority . As such, the Charter clearly limits the City Administrator’s authority to delegate his/her appointing authority to subordinate employees identified in Charter section 503”.

This quasi-governmental organization is not a City department that this Council has approved, yet it is setting itself up to perform governmental functions. To whom would it be answerable? How would the funds be tracked and reported? When constituents have problems with its form or function, who will take responsibility? Did you give permission for this executive director to have responsibilities that coordinate with city departments and agencies in your purview?

Where are donor funded positions listed in the budget? I am requesting that you provide for us, along with the budget, content of all grant and/or donor funds to be properly tracked and accounted for, as well as included in the budget.

Best wishes,



Rebecca Kaplan  
Oakland City Council President

City Council  
June 23, 2020  
File # 20-0406

# ATTACHMENT A

Company reviews Find salaries

What Job title, keywords, or compan

Where Oakland, CA



## This job has expired on Indeed

Reasons could include: the employer is not accepting applications, is not actively hiring, or is reviewing applications

## Executive Director

Oakland Fund for Public Innovation - Oakland, CA

Responded to 51-74% of applications in the past 30 days, typically within 4 days.

### Executive Director

#### Background

"Oakland has a rich tradition of social innovation and a strong legacy of resilience. Resilience in Oakland means tackling systemic, interdependent challenges, such as equitable access to quality education and jobs, housing security, community safety and vibrant infrastructure to better prepare us for shocks like earthquakes and stresses like climate change. To achieve this, we need to leverage our collective resources by fostering a culture of responsive and trustworthy government, data-driven decisions centered around residents' needs and robust, smart infrastructure development."

- Mayor Libby Schaaf, *Resilient Oakland Playbook*

#### Now is A Critical Moment to Redesign Government and Create Partnerships

The global COVID-19 pandemic has brought Oakland's resilience and its ability to bounce back from acute shocks and chronic stresses into sharper focus. Governments at all levels have a unique opportunity to rethink how they deliver critical infrastructure and services. During this time of declining economic activity and public revenue, local governments are increasingly engaging the private and non-profit sectors to tackle critical and complex issues, and provide better public services for its residents.

With increasing and diverse demands for government services, traditional governmental models are challenged to address the increasingly complicated and interrelated issues facing municipalities in the twenty-first century. Cross-sector collaborations can support innovation, flexibility, and increased impact. Examples of these types of partnerships can be seen across the nation, at all levels of government.

#### About the Oakland Fund for Public Innovation

Cities around the world have established "Funds" to help leverage City investments and/or help advance Mayoral strategic priorities and on-going efforts.

The Oakland Fund for Public Innovation (The Oakland Fund) was created in 2017 to support innovative approaches to pressing needs and challenges in the City of Oakland. It is strategically positioned to leverage the resources and strengths of both the public and private sectors, and supports city priorities. Hosted by New Venture Fund (NVF), an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving as fiscal sponsor, The Oakland Fund is committed to transparency, accountability, and evaluating the outcomes of its initiatives. The fund has been run by 1-2 staff members and an advisory board since its inception.

#### Role of the Executive Director

The OFPI Executive Director will liaise and work directly with the Office of the Mayor, taking strategic and operational direction from OFPI's Advisory Board. As an employee of New Venture Fund, s/he will serve under the President of NVF. The President of NVF is not expected to give direction or provide oversight, as such direction is provided by OFPI's Advisory Board.

We are seeking an experienced and action-oriented Executive Director to take OFPI to the next level of impact and governance. We are seeking a highly collaborative leader, able to

coordinate across City departments, with an ability to network and build trust with stakeholder partners. Fundraising experience is a plus.

The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director include the following:

- Lay out a bold vision to create and support public-private partnerships that spur innovation and responsive, trustworthy government; establish programmatic and operational structure;
- Grow The Oakland Fund's impact through operationalizing the vision. Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence and program evaluation; recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve targeted goals;
- Fundraise, cultivate and manage donor relationships; track donations.
- Work closely with the Office of the Mayor, including all its Policy Directors;
- Manage strategic partnerships with city agencies, non-profit organizations, and private sector partners to further programmatic goals in alignment with the Mayor's vision;
- Manage existing fund priorities and support their success, including the Oakland Opportunity Zone Office, Homeless Policy Advisor, and Broadband Infrastructure Project;
- Establish a strong working relationship with board advisors and capture their insights, talents and assets to enhance The Oakland Fund's goals; schedule advisory board meetings as needed.
- Manage The Oakland Fund in a fiscally responsible manner; work closely with the Mayor's Office and NVF to review budgets, establish clear goals, priorities, and guidelines for programs;
- Oversee all aspects of The Oakland Fund's financial and administrative operations;

Below are examples of several key initiatives underway at OFPI which may continue over the next few years:

- **Oakland Broadband Project:** Lead fundraising and support City staff in designing, building and deploying fiber infrastructure to bridge the digital divide.
- **Oakland's Opportunity Zones:** A two-year, \$400,000 grant hired Oakland's first Chief Opportunity Zone Officer (COZO). The COZO is employed by NVF, through the Oakland Fund. As such, the Fund manager will liaise to support the COZO as necessary and work with NVF to track funding for the position/program.
- **Homelessness:** A two-year, \$1 million grant will hire a Senior Policy Advisor on Homelessness in the Mayor's Office with additional funding for the Fund and policy advisor to explore, test and evaluate solutions to address Oakland's homeless problem.
- **COVID-19 Relief Fund:** Oversee remaining collection and allocation of subgrant dollars to nonprofit partner organizations that support critical facilities and supplies needed to protect the health of all Oaklanders in the face of COVID-19.

#### Additional Information

Salary is commensurate with experience.

Due to COVID-19, this position is remote. However, the successful candidate must be ready to work in Oakland and spend time in Oakland once restrictions are lifted and it is deemed safe.

If interested, please submit a brief cover letter and resume to The Oakland Fund.

Job Type: Full-time

COVID-19 considerations:

Due to COVID-19, this job is remote for the foreseeable future. Applicants should, however, be local to the San Francisco Bay Area.

- 24 days ago - report job