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MURIEL MIGNON LILLY CABELL was 7 when her family's home and photography business on North Elgin Street were destroyed by the white

It's long overdue for the criminals who destroyed the Historic Greenwood District in 1921 to be held accountable. Each week we remember survivors or descendants.

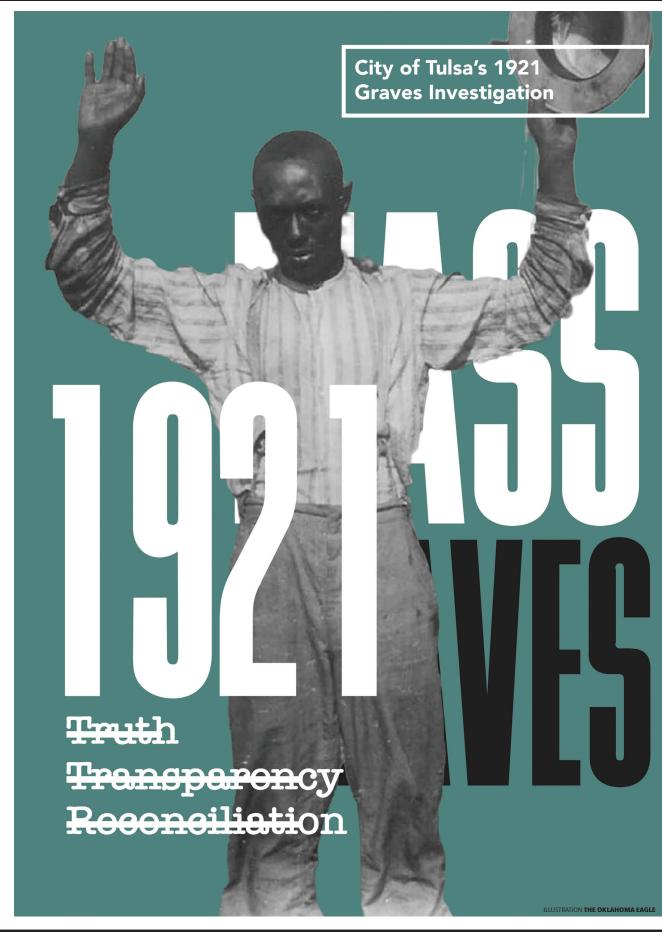
Latest **DEVELOPMENTS**

GRAVES INVESTIGATION

By RANDY HOPKINS

Recent revelations have raised new questions concerning the integrity of the City of Tulsa's 1921 Graves Investigation — the search for murdered victims of the Tulsa Race Massacre.

In order to assure transparency and that the Investigation was being done "in the right way," the City established a Public Oversight Committee in 2019. Since the Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial in 2021, however, the City has been reduced the Committee to a public relations's fig leaf. **GRAVES INVESTIGATION** On A2



STATE

'RELENTLESS PACE' OF OK **EXECUTIONS TRAUMATIZED CORRECTIONS STAFF**

By ASHLYND HUFFMAN, OKLAHOMA WATCH

Oklahoma's "nonstop executions" traumatized corrections staff, leaving them vulnerable to mental health distress and botched procedures, nine former Department of Corrections officials warned last month.

OKLAHOMA EXECUTIONS On A3

NATION

SCHOOL OFFICIALS 'HAVE A PLAN' TO ADDRESS LACK OF **PROFICIENCY IN MATHEMATICS**

By Tashi McQueen, The Afro

A new report found that 23 Baltimore City Public Schools have zero students deemed proficient in mathematics. Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) representatives are responding to outrage over the disclosure that 23 City Schools have zero **EDUCATION PROFICIENCY** On **B1**

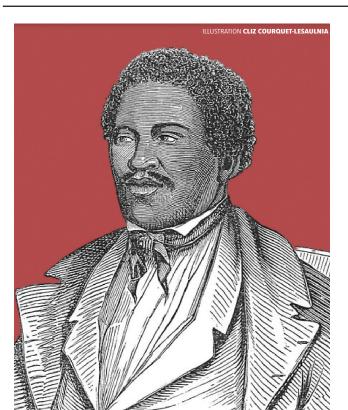
STATE

CATHOLIC LEADERS' PUBLIC SCHOOL PROPOSAL TO TEST LEGAL BOUNDARIES

By Jennifer Palmer, Oklahoma Watch

Catholic leaders on Tuesday made their pitch for a publicly funded charter school to the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board. The board has until late April to approve or deny the proposal.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS On A3



HENRY BOX BROWN, Charles Stearns, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

THE REVOLUTIONARY **ACT OF BLACK LOVE**

The history of slavery in America is a tale of horror, but there are also "unmatched stories of bravery, perseverance, persistence, and, yes, even love."

By ALEXIS TAYLOR, WORD IN BLACK

"My eye soon caught her precious face, but, gracious heavens! That glance of agony may God spare me from ever again enduring! My wife, under the influence of her feelings, jumped aside; I seized hold of her hand while my mind felt unutterable things, and my tongue was only able to say, we shall meet in heaven!"

Henry "Box" Brown knew it could lead to a lashing, but it would be worth every drop of blood. There was no price to be put on the final moments he would ultimately ever spend with his wife, Nancy, and their BLACK LOVE On A5

notifications. **B3**

LOCAL

RETURN TO HOPE



By Kimberly Marsh

Social Entrepreneur D'Marria Monday, co-founder of Return to Hope and founder of Block Builderz, and Bianca Caampued, social impact strategist and interim executive director of the Tulsa Creative Engine, have opened a RETURN TO HOPE On A6

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Race Against History

Throughout the country, legislation has been passed or is being proposed to prohibit the teaching of critical race theory. Missouri is no exception.

By FEDRICK C. INGRAM, WORD IN BLACK

Republican state Sen. Andrew Koenig recently introduced legislation that was passed by the Senate that "prohibits teachers from placing blame on a collective group or race for the 'actions committed in the past by others," among other directives.

The odd aspect of Koenig's and other GOP anti-CRT proponents is that they've whipped up a nation-wide fervor over a non-issue. Koenig's bill specifically states: "No school shall RACE AGAINST HISTORY On B2

VOL. 102 NO. 05

(#) THE OK EAGLE.COM

#THE OK EAGLE #OKEAGLEPAPER **Ernie Fields**

touring circuit. A4

PUBLISHER'S PAGE

Trombonist, pianist, arranger and bandleader made his mark on a

AD SERVICES Jobs & Classifieds

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The Eagle Church Directory is your source for finding a place to worship. **B4**





GRAVES INVESTIGATION from A1

It was already known that, with one exception, all post-Centennial Committee meetings were "private." The public was not given notice of or access links to those meetings. The public could not watch in real time

It turns out that the situation is even worse than that. On January 25, 2023, in response to my official records request, the City admitted that it did not record the March, June and September 2022 Committee meetings. Those three meetings are now forever lost to the public, the news media and history itself. They can never be viewed.

The Mayor's Office has thus calculatingly minimized the number of people who can watch the Investigation unfold and has isolated and gagged the Oversight Committee.

This, however, is the diametrical opposite of what Mayor G. T. Bynum led the world to believe on November 18, 2022. The Mayor's press conference that day was the latest official act of the Graves Investigation.

The November 2022 press conference ended with an enterprising reporter asking the Mayor about the long-standing request of several Oversight Committee members for a live-in-person meeting. Since the Centennial, all meetings have been virtual.

The Mayor was adamant that he would only countenance virtual meetings. He justified that as a way "to make (the meetings) accessible to both the folks on the Oversight Committee but also anybody else that wants to participate in the meeting, and the reality is at this point there is an international interest in this Investigation, we've been doing those meetings virtually to maximize the number of people that can watch them and be able to get information from them."

Unlike the Committee meetings themselves, the Mayor's press conference was promptly posted to the City's Grave Investigation Facebook page. The public got only one side of the story and a blatantly false one at that.

When the Oklahoma Eagle pursued the issue of virtual meetings, the City doubled-down in a December 2022 statement to the paper. The statement did not reveal that Oversight meetings were no longer being recorded, but obviously had that reality in mind. The City sought to shifting the responsibility for recording meetings to the news media and

When The Oklahoma Eagle pursued the issue of virtual meetings, the City doubled-down in a December 2022 statement to the paper... The City sought to shifting the responsibility for recording meetings to the news media and Oversight Committee.

Oversight Committee. The City's statement represented that:

"Virtual meetings with the Public Oversight Committee have continued, are open to all members of the media and public oversight committee members to record if they choose, and all questions from committee members are heard and answered during those meetings and afterward when requested."

The statement was disingenuous at multiple levels. The Oklahoma Eagle, for one, did not get advance notice of or access to any of the 2022 meetings, in spite a request to be included. How could the Eagle "choose" to record anything? If any media outlet should have gotten access, it was the 100-year old paper founded with the salvaged printing press of the Massacre-destroyed Tulsa Star.

Media Advisories were sent out regarding the March and September meetings, though the City has just disclosed that it has no list of who got them. There was no disclosure in those Media Advisories that the City was changing its longstanding policy of recording Oversight meetings. All such meetings through 2021 were recorded by the City. The City routinely records endless public meetings on far less important subjects. Nor was there any clue given that it was now the job of the news media or Committee members to do the recording.

The City's statement assured the Eagle that Oversight Committee members' questions are heard and answered. But this is like a tree falling in the forest with no one around to hear it. By sealing off the meetings, the public and excluded media have been shielded from the litany of the Mayor's broken promises. They have been shielded as well from the inability or refusal of the Mayor's team to answer many questions regarding those broken commitments, such as:

- The Mayor's broken promise to conduct the Investigation "as a homicide investigation."
- The unilateral downsizing of the "targets" of the Oaklawn Cemetery search to 18 adult males, whereby women and children Massacre victims remain second class citizens even in death.
- The aborted and never explained termination of the 2021 Oaklawn dig within 24 hours of finding a single gunshot victim.
- The unexplained 16-month delay in restarting the Oaklawn dig, while the clock ran on Bynum's term of office and the lives of the Massacre's three octogenarian survivors.
- The shameful reburial of 19 sets of previously exhumed human remains in Oaklawn on July 30, 2021, undertaken in opposition to the unanimous recommendation of the Oversight Committee.

Fairly or not, the City's violations of its many promises of transparency reflects poorly on the credibility of the Investigation's professional team. The concealed, unrecorded March 1, 2022 meeting centered on the professional team's 1,000-page technical report of the 2021 Oaklawn dig. Why would the City fear public questioning about that report?

The June and September meetings centered on the City's widely publicized DNA investigation, whereby the City hopes to link Massacre descendants to buried remains. Tulsa lawyer Damario Solomon-Simmons, however, has claimed that Greenwood descendants should not trust the City with their DNA.

The June and September meetings were the City's chance to counter those allegations. Yet,

by burying the meetings, the City made it look like there was something to hide and played right into Solomon-Simmons' hands on the trustworthiness issue.

Another twist in the Graves Investigation occurred at the November 18 press conference. In response to what may have been a prearranged question, Dr. Kary Stackelbeck, the Investigation's lead archaeologist, said that the Oaklawn excavation area is no longer considered to be a "mass" grave.

On the Massacre Centennial, however, Mayor Bynum described the area to be excavated in 2021 as, "a mass grave, which we know is a mass grave." Between them, Dr. Stackelbeck and Dr. Phoebe Stubblefield of the University of Florida have described that Oaklawn area as a "mass grave" at least 47 times. Conveniently, the change appears to better justify another recent unilateral decision — the decision to leave 75% of the human remains discovered during the renewed 2022 Oaklawn dig in the ground without further study.

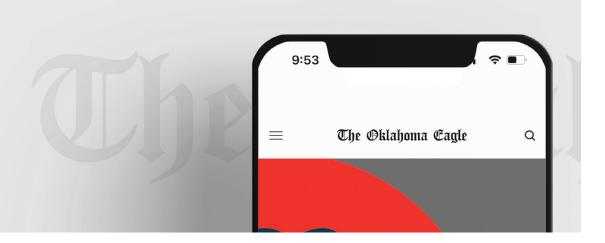
Pursuit of this "mass graves" issue must await future Oversight meetings, assuming any are held and anyone is allowed to see them. The City did not bother to call the December 2022 quarterly Public Oversight Committee meeting.

DR. MAURICE O'BRIAN FRANKLIN is a professor of Public Policy and Public Administration at California State University, Northridge. He is Creek and Chickasaw Freedman. He attributes his activism and social justice commitment to the influences of mom, James Baldwin, Marcus Garvey, and his 4th great grandfather Buck Colbert Franklin, Bartlett Franklin and his cousin Dr. John Hope Franklin. Dr. Franklin lives in New York City, is a Navy veteran and is a native of Pauls Valley and Ardmore,

The Oklahoma Eagle

Our Mission

To amplify our core value of equity, through journalism and editorial" is the cornerstone of our continued success.





"Near-constant mock executions being conducted within earshot of prisoners' cells"

OKLAHOMA EXECUTIONS from A1

"Reports from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary describe near-constant mock executions being conducted within earshot of prisoners' cells, staff offices, and visiting rooms," according to a letter to state Attorney General Gentner Drummond. "Correctional staff have communicated privately with visiting defense mental health experts about the distress they are experiencing due to the nonstop executions.

Among those signing the letter (see below) were former DOC directors Joe M. Allbaugh and Justin Jones, and former state penitentiary warden Dan Reynolds. The letter, dated Jan. 13, asked Drummond to petition courts for a revised execution schedule "spacing them a minimum of several months apart to ensure the safety and well-being of the state's correctional employees.

On Jan. 17, Drummond requested that seven impending executions each be delayed by 60 days. The state Court of Criminal Appeals consented, resetting the 25 executions in 29 months pace it approved in 2022.

"That relentless pace of executions means the prison never really returns to normal operations after the emotional and logistical upheaval of an execution," the former DOC officials wrote in the letter, obtained by Oklahoma Watch through the state's Open Records Act.

Drummond took office on Jan. 9 and was in McAlester three days later to meet with corrections staff and witness the execution of Scott James Eizember, who was convicted for the 2003 murders of A.J. Cantrell and

"I was there with them at 6:45 a.m. when they started their morning and stayed with them until they did their postmortem exit brief, with the mental health professionals there to provide services," Drummond said in an interview with Oklahoma Watch.

Just as the penitentiary staff was concluding one execution, it began preparation for the execution of Richard Eugene Glossip, which had been scheduled for Thursday.

"As I was finishing my interviews with certain personnel, they said, 'You know, Mr. Drummond, can we break? I need to grab a quick sandwich 'cause I start on Glossip at (1 p.m.)," Drummond said. "And I thought. man, that's unhealthy. And so I started asking more questions, and it's just too onerous.'

Oklahoma and Texas each carried out five executions in 2022, accounting for 56% of all executions nationally

SOURCE: Death Penalty Information Center's annual

Drummond said he filed the motion to delay and then space out executions only after talking with victims'

"I've talked to every family that was affected. There was some frustration, but there was a lot of awareness of the demands on DOC. And so, in the end, every family member agreed. And we proceeded with that," he said.

The letter from former corrections officials cited statistics showing Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse for those who carry out executions.

"There are significant costs with these kinds of compressed time period executions," said Ngozi Ndulue, the deputy director of the Death Penalty Information Center, said in an interview last fall with Oklahoma Watch. "There are financial costs, but there are also emotional costs, which almost seems to downplay it a little

Oklahoma and Texas each carried out five executions in 2022, accounting for 56% of all executions nationally, according to the Death Penalty Information Center's annual

The state resumed executions in October 2021 following a seven-year

moratorium triggered by the botched executions of Clayton Lockett and Charles Warner.

In 2014, Lockett writhed and groaned during his execution when the state used the surgical sedative midazolam for the first time.

Warner's execution, scheduled for the same night, was postponed for what the state said was a problem with an intravenous line. A medical examiner's report showed the state used the wrong drug acetate instead of potassium chloride — in 2015 to stop Warner's heart.

The letter to Drummond emphasized the potential harm of mistakes on those carrying out an execution.

"If even a routine execution can inflict lasting harm on corrections staff, the traumatic impact of a botched execution is exponentially worse," the letter said. "Oklahoma has experienced this harm on multiple occasions and should not needlessly place its hardworking correctional staff at risk of another such mistake."

ASHLYND HUFFMAN covers criminal justice for Oklahoma Watch. Contact her at ahuffman@ oklahomawatch.org and 405-240-6359. Follow her at @AshlyndHuffman

A Sea Change In The Law And **A Potential** Upending Of Oklahoma's **Education** Landscape



CATHOLIC LEADERS present to the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board on Feb. 14, 2023

PUBLIC SCHOOLS from A1

Named St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual Charter School, after the patron saint of the internet, the school is a joint effort between the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Diocese of

The purpose, school leaders said, is to reach students outside of the state's metro areas, where there aren't many Catholic schools. Its curriculum would mirror that of the Catholic school system, including religious components.

If approved, it would be the first publicly-funded, religious charter school in the country.

Board Chairman Robert Franklin asked the school's representatives why they are seeking state authorization and the public oversight that will come with it when they could open private online school.

"When we get away from the metropolitan areas and we are looking at the population and their ability to afford tuition for Catholic virtual school, that's a real consideration," said Lara Schuler, senior director of Catholic education for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. "And if we're competing against all other virtual schools, but all of the other ones are free, that's a problem."

Speaking against the proposal, Kenneth Upton, an attorney for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said if approved, the school would erase fundamental safeguards ensuring students and citizens can choose their own religion.

"It would be a sea change in the law and upend Oklahoma's education landscape," he said.

Sherri Brown with the Oklahoma Parent Legislative Action Committee also criticized the proposal during public comment. "Do not sacrifice constitutional rights at the altar of school choice," she urged the board.

Brown said she's concerned about potential discrimination LGBTQ+ students, pregnant students, and students with disabilities.

The proposed school would operate 'in harmony with faith and morals, including sexual morality," according to the application. And responding to board members' questions about students with special needs, Schuler said they are considering outsourcing some services to private vendors.

The board's decision will likely end up in court regardless of how they vote. Organizations both for and against the idea have indicated they are willing to file a lawsuit.

Publisher's Page

Ernie Fields

Trombonist, pianist, arranger and bandleader

By MICHAEL LAPRARIE, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

A"territory band" leader, Ernie Fields made his mark on a touring circuit that stretched between Kansas City, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Dallas in the 1930s and 1940s.



Born in Nacogdoches, Texas, on August 28, 1904, and raised in Taft, Oklahoma, Fields settled in Tulsa after graduating in 1921 from the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He soon began leading The Royal Entertainers, which became one of Tulsa's most popular dance orchestras during the 1920s. Fields initially refused offers to join other bands, believing that touring was an unacceptable lifestyle. Ironically, the Great Depression forced him to take his own band on the road in the early

The Ernie Fields Orchestra became one of the most popular groups among African Americans in the Southwest. Playing exciting big band jazz at nightclubs and open-air pavilions, the band eventually caught the

attention of record producer John Hammond. Under his guidance Fields went to New York in 1939 and recorded "T-Town Blues" for Vocalion, a nationally distributed record label. With this minor hit under his belt he began nationwide tours, culminating in a 1942 engagement in Harlem's legendary Savoy

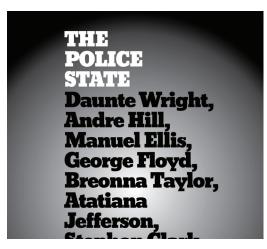
World War II interrupted the band's initial success. Fields began entertaining troops, playing for more than one hundred camp shows and twelve overseas broadcasts. After the war he kept a scaled-down version of the band together and continued to feature popular Oklahoma City singer Melvin Moore. Although the band regularly packed venues with dancers and teenagers in the Southwest,

nationwide success seemed elusive. In 1959 Fields finally earned widespread recognition. His mambo-style version of "In The Mood" shot into the top ten on the Billboard pop charts, and after thirty years in the music business Ernie Fields had a gold record.

He retired from the music business in the late 1960s, settling permanently in Tulsa and residing there until his death on May 11, 1997. In 1989 he was inducted in to the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame. His daughter Carmen pursued a successful career in broadcast journalism. Ernie Fields, Jr., followed his father's footsteps into music business and worked as a saxophonist, producer, and talent agent at the end of the twentieth century.

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Featured Last Week



The Killing of Tyre Nichols



The Art of Black Hair



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BLACK LOVE from A1

children, who were sold on the auction block while he worked.

"My agony was now complete, she with whom I had travelled (sic) the journey of life in chains, for the space of twelve years, and the dear little pledges God had given us I could see plainly must now be separated from me forever, and I must continue, desolate and alone, to drag my chains through the world," recounts Brown in his autobiography, the "Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown."

The year was 1848. And in a final act of resistance, a final act of love, Brown did the only thing he could do: he walked side-by-side with his wife, holding her hand as she moved closer to her fate on a North

"I went with her for about four miles hand in hand, but both our hearts were so overpowered with feeling that we could say nothing," recounts Brown. "And when at last we were obliged to part, the look of mutual love which we exchanged was all the token which we could give each other that we should yet meet in heaven."

"I went with her

for about four miles

bothourheartswere

with feeling that we

could say nothing."

hand in hand, but

so overpowered

Brown would go on to become known around the world as the formerly enslaved man who "mailed himself to freedom." And while he never laid eyes on his family again, the love of his children and his wife is palpable to this day.

I often wonder why people shy away from the stories that come from the period of chattel slavery in American

Is it troubling to read how our ancestors were brutally enslaved and transported during the Atlantic Slave Trade? Absolutely. Is it hard to watch Brown's skin split under the crack of a whip on screen? Without a doubt. But woven through the tales of horror are unmatched stories of bravery, perseverance, persistence, and, yes,

Time and time again, we see this repeated throughout history — the courage of love, men and women risking their lives and even paying the ultimate price — to fulfill the basic human needs of connection and intimacy.

I remember reading this passage more than a decade ago and becoming

overwhelmed with emotion. Against the agonizing backdrop of slavery were parents, friends, and lovers who had the audacity to form bonds. There were people who eked out happiness even under the grimmest of circumstances and at the threat of having it all disappear in a moment.

The Library of Congress went to extensive lengths during the 1930s to record personal accounts of slavery in America from the mouths of the people who survived it. "Slave Narratives: A Folk History of

Slavery in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves" includes beautiful stories that show how love flourished during some of the darkest periods of American and human history.

"Hit wus in de little Baptist church at Neuse whar I fust seed big Black Jim Dunn an' I fell in love wid him den," reckoned Lucy Ann Dunn, of Raleigh, N.C. "He said dat he loved me den too, but hit wus three Sundays 'fore he axed ter see me home."

Dunn was 90-years-old when she told her love story on Aug. 4, 1937.

What began as love at first sight bloomed into a courtship.

"We walked dat mile home in front of my mammy an' I wus so happy dat I aint thought hit a half a mile home. We et cornbread an' turnips fer dinner an' hit wus night 'fore he went home. Mammy wouldn't let me walk wid him ter de gate I knowed, so I jist sot dar on de porch an' sez good night," recalled Dunn. "He come ever' Sunday fer a year an finally he proposed. I had told mammy dat I thought dat I ort ter be allowed ter walk ter de gate wid Jim an', she said all right iffen she wus settin' dar on de porch lookin'.

Dunn detailed her life before and after Yankee soldiers arrived on the plantation she worked with her parents and four siblings. Her love story takes place just two years after gaining her freedom. I often wonder what the ancestors would think of today's "relationship goals."

At a time when so many had their relationships controlled, many dared to love who they wanted — an act of defiance punishable by death. I often fear we take so many things for granted — the right to unabashedly love who wewant being one of them.

During this month of flowers, chocolates, teddy bears, and whispered sweet nothings, I say let's not forget those who went before us and dared to engage in one of the ultimate protests: the revolutionary act of Black

Alexis Taylor is the Managing Editor of the AFRO, a role she began in 2023, afte previously serving as news editor. Taylor is a graduate of Morgan State University, and began writing for the AFRO as an intern in 2011. Taylor has covered critical topics for the Black community, including voting rights, police brutality and the impacts of the



"And when at last we were obliged to part, the look of mutual love which we exchanged was all the token which we could give each otherthatweshould yetmeetinheaven."





D'MARRIA MONDAY, Social Entrepreneur, co-founder of Return to Hope and founder of Block Builderz

"The Fact Is **There Are Many Barriers For People When They Come Home From Prison**

RETURN TO HOPE from A1

non-profit thrift shop to benefit re-entry programs.

The revenues from the store, featuring second-hand, thrift and vintage apparel, supports health, wellness and employment resource programs for formerly incarcerated women in Tulsa

Studies have proven that people who have support when they come home from prison may successfully reintegrate. Monday has made it her life's mission to help other women in the criminal justice system after serving a 10-year sentence for a non-violent drug charge. Although they are free of incarceration and reunited with their families, women face monumental challenges as they start a new life, such as paying off thousands of dollars in fines and fees, finding employment, housing,

and education and need wellness support. Formerly incarcerated women, especially women of color, have much higher rates of unemployment and homelessness, and are less likely to have a high school education, than formerly incarcerated men. Women cite employment, education, and life skills services as their most pressing needs upon re-entry.

"The fact is there are many barriers for people when they come home from prison. I know that challenge because I spent so much time trying to secure housing," Monday said. "I had navigated what it's like to re- enter the community, and I've also made it my mission to help others reintegrate into the community successfully.

"Propagate it takes a village. To be able."

"Because it takes a village. To be able to rebuild your life, it takes a support network," she said. The two co-founders have put their talents together to help move fashion forward while meeting the goals for assisting women, from basic needs to wellness and dealing with trauma.

Return to Hope is the sister organization to Block Builderz, Monday's community-building organization. The two organizations work together to fulfill a holistic mission working together to assist with employment, housing, wellness and recovery.

A co-founder and interim executive director of Tulsa Creative Engine and Small Girls PR a NY/LA-based creative communications agency founded in 2010, Caampued managed major brands and worked in the fashion industry as well. Monday, a mother, social entrepreneur and a passionate voice of change, operated a boutique and has been working on a the

shop collection for more than a year. She uses her lived experiences to empower the fight for freedom and dignity for incarcerated women and makes it her daily purpose to create opportunities for others.

Her company's mission is to provide holistic housing solutions. Block Builderz breaks barriers and replaces them with opportunities for people impacted by the criminal justice system. The organization's vision is to build hope block by block. Monday said hope is about healing post-traumatic experiences. Return to Hope's mission is to enhance the quality of life for justice-involved women in Tulsa by removing systemic and mental barriers to build self-determination and transformation.

The Oklahoma Eagle

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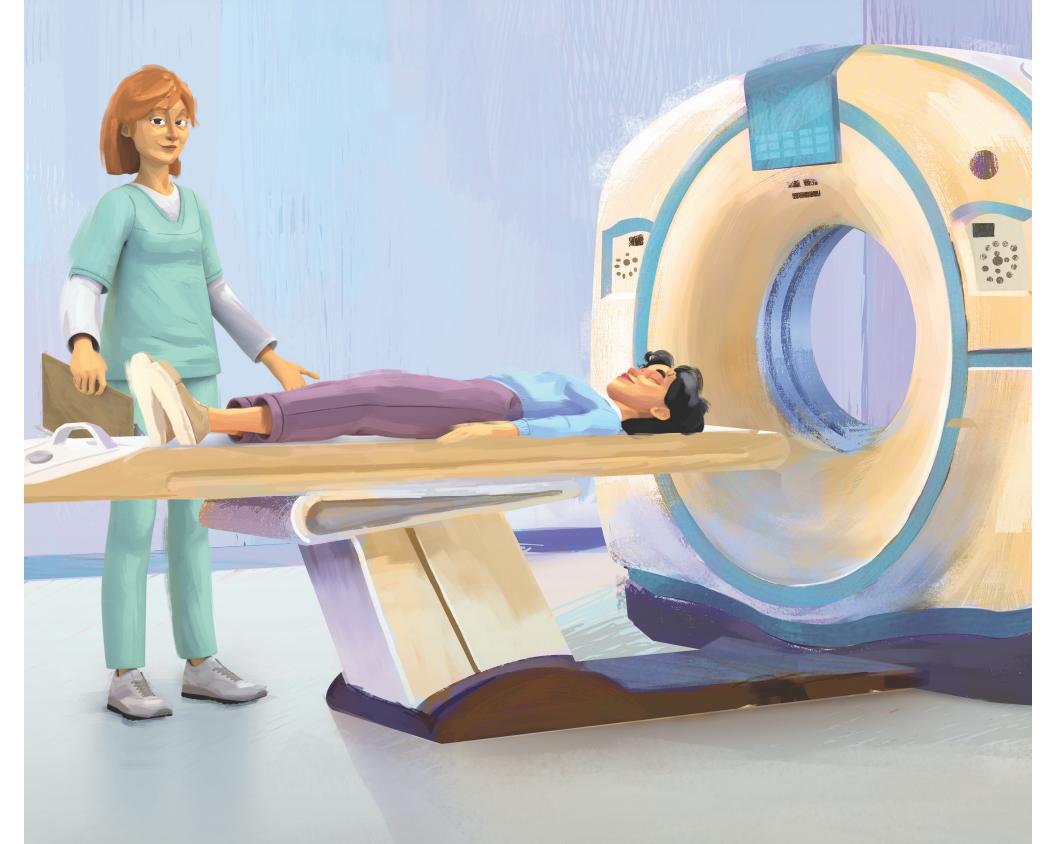
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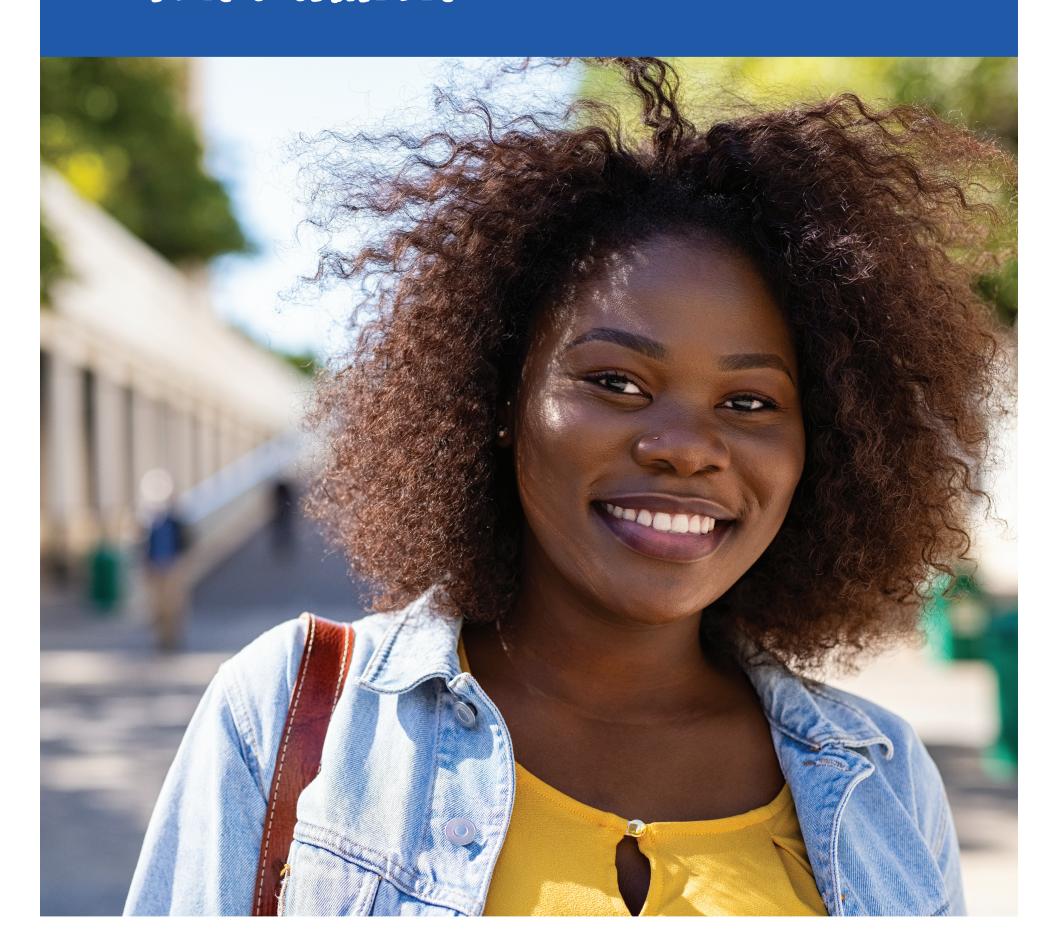
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GOOD THINGS START HERE.



Nation

School Officials 'Have a Plan' to Address Lack of Proficiency in Mathematics

Rpt: 23 Balto City Public Schools B2



Race Against History

Throughout the country, legislation has been passed or is being proposed to prohibit the teaching of critical race theory. Missouri is no exception.

Black **BALTIMOREANS** FIGHT' TO SAVE H()MES FR.OM REDEVELOPMENT



 $\textbf{ANGELA BANKS} \ poses \ for \ a \ photograph \ in \ front \ of \ the \ house \ she \ used \ to \ rent, \ Wednesday, \ Feb. \ 15, \ 2023, \ in$ Baltimore. In 2018, Banks was told by her landlord that Baltimore officials were buying her family's home of four decades, planning to demolish the three-story brick rowhouse to make room for an urban renewal project aimed at transforming their historically Black neighborhood. Banks and her children became homeless almost overnight Banks filed a complaint Monday asking federal officials to investigate whether Baltimore's redevelopment policies are perpetuating racial segregation and violating fair housing laws by disproportionately displacing Black and

By Lea Skene, Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — In 2018, Angela Banks received bad news from her landlord: Baltimore officials were buying her family's home of four decades, planning to demolish the three-story brick row house to make room for a beleaguered urban renewal project aimed at transforming a historically Black neighborhood. Banks and her children became homeless almost overnight. With nowhere else to go, they spent months sleeping in her aging Ford Explorer.

Roughly five years later, the house remains standing, and plans to redevelop west Baltimore's Poppleton neighborhood have largely stalled, even after the city displaced Banks and many of her neighbors.

Banks filed a complaint Monday asking federal officials investigate whether Baltimore's redevelopment policies are perpetuating racial segregation and violating fair housing laws by disproportionately displacing Black and low-income residents. Her experience presents the latest example of Black Baltimoreans losing their homes to redevelopment after watching their neighborhoods suffer from growing disinvestment — while whiter, more affluent communities flourish, Banks and her attorneys

"I lost everything," Banks told The Associated Press. "It's like we had no voice. We could make noise, but nobody would hear us."

Ordered to vacate quickly, her family ended up leaving behind many of their belongings.

During a recent visit to the neighborhood, Banks stepped cautiously through an unsecured back door and peered inside the house, wondering aloud whether squatters had moved in. Her eyes settled first on the marbled vinyl floor tiles she installed herself many years ago. She also encountered extensive water damage and rotting drywall, unfamiliar furniture, clothes and other personal items. Startled by her presence, two black cats scurried down the second-floor hallway and disappeared into a hiding spot.

"This was home," she said, shaking her head.

Her landlord sold the house to the city voluntarily in 2018, but other Poppleton homeowners have been subjected to eminent domain, when the government seizes private property for public use.

Once relatively common in American cities, using the practice for revitalization and infrastructure projects has largely fallen out of favor. Some cities are currently working to provide reparations to Black residents, acknowledging the harm caused by urban renewal efforts and other discriminatory practices.

Banks reminisced about her children swimming in Poppleton's public pool while she socialized with neighbors on their stoops. Since then, over 100 occupied homes have been seized, according to the complaint. The pool and nearby recreation center closed years ago, Banks said. Poppleton is about 93% Black, according to 2020 census data.

"Baltimore has long been a tale of two cities," said Marceline White, executive director of Economic Action Maryland, which joined Banks in filing the complaint and organized a news conference Monday in Poppleton.

In 1910, Baltimore leaders enacted the country's first residential segregation ordinance that restricted African American homeowners to certain blocks.

In addition to redlining, Poppleton residents experienced "slum clearance" starting in the 1930s with construction of Poe Homes, a public housing complex named after a nearby onetime residence of the famous poet Edgar Allan Poe. The number of displaced Black families was larger than the number of housing units created, according to the complaint.

Then came Baltimore's so-called "Highway To Nowhere," which was designed to connect the downtown business district to interstates surrounding the city. Officials used eminent domain to demolish nearly 1,000 homes in the 1960s and '70s, cutting a swath through majority-Black west Baltimore and severing ties between Poppleton and other nearby communities.

Construction of the thoroughfare was never finished partly because residents in more affluent neighborhoods successfully campaigned against it — and the endeavor became largely pointless.

"What's happening now in Poppleton is a reflection of what has happened before, part of an unbroken chain of policies and practices," said Lawrence Brown, a research scientist at Morgan State University. "There is a pattern."

Plans for Poppleton's urban renewal surfaced in the 1970s. By that time, Brown said, the neighborhood had already been experiencing mistreatment and disinvestment for decades.

In 2006, city officials signed an agreement with a New York-based company, La Cite Development. Construction has been completed on two mixed-use buildings with 262 rental units, but many other aspects of the \$800 million project haven't materialized. Initial plans identified over 500 properties the company would redevelop near a University of Maryland biomedical research park, just outside the downtown business district.

Company officials didn't respond to a recent request for comment.

Baltimore leaders have said they're committed to revitalizing an increasingly blighted community suffering from population loss, but Poppleton residents accuse them of catering to big developers at the expense of homeowners and renters.

In 2015, the city agreed to partially subsidize the Poppleton redevelopment project. That was after officials tried to terminate their agreement with the developer,

citing a lack of progress, but the company sued and won. Mayor Brandon Scott, who took office in 2020, pledged his commitment to "advancing fairness and equity in housing for all residents." In a statement Thursday, he said his administration "has taken significant steps to address the housing inequities of the past through substantial investments in formerly redlined communities.'

The movement to save Poppleton's existing homes galvanized around longtime resident Sonia Eaddy, who recently won a decades long fight when Scott announced her row house would be removed from the redevelopment plan after negotiations with the developer. A nearby block of rainbow-colored historic row houses will be rehabbed by a local nonprofit that helps Black women achieve homeownership, officials also announced.

Eaddy said she celebrated the victory, but she's not **SAVE HOMES** Continued On **B2**

"WHEN WE SAW THESE SCORE, We Knew Students Struggled During The Pandemic

EDUCATION PROFICIENCY from A1

students deemed proficient in mathematics. The Statewide Spring 2022 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) testing results show that while City Schools students returned to "prepandemic levels of proficiency" in English Language Arts (ELA), they struggled in

In a statement released by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), it was disclosed that "math proficiency percentages for grades three through eight decreased from 33 percent in 2018-2019 to

22 percent in 2021-2022." André Riley, executive director of communications for City Schools. responded to the findings.

"When we saw these scores, we knew students struggled during the pandemic just like other school districts," Riley says. "These results are from students starting school below grade level and a global pandemic. We have to find the best way to catch them up.

"Those 23 schools do not begin to describe the situation," Riley continues. "We have a solid plan, and we're making sure we work with our parents so that they understand these test results."

Sen. Antonio Hayes (D-MD-40) weighed in on the results disclosed in the report.

"This news gives me great concern," Sen. Antonio Hayes (D-MD-40) told the AFRO. "We, as a state, have invested tremendous resources into Baltimore City schools and public education. I will reach out to the Baltimore City School Board to find out this report's status and how we can

better address students and their needs." "We have some of the greatest educational institutions in Baltimore City, such as Coppin State University," Hayes savs. "There's room for partnerships between the school system and higher education institutions to look at how we can reach out to the urban population of

According to the report, only 7% of

Baltimore City students were ranked "proficient" in math. Around the state of Maryland, the highest proficiency rate for mathematics in any county was 38%.

Riley said the MCAP tests 14 categories and within half of those categories, City Schools' rate of improvement was better than the state's. About 64% of City Schools students scored proficiency in ELA.

"We may be of the lowest ranking in the state for math, but we're closing the gap,"

"EMINENT DOMAIN IS AN ACT OF VIOLENCE

It's being used to perpetuate gentrification

SAVE HOMES from **B1**

done fighting for reform.

"Eminent domain is an act of violence. It's being used to perpetuate gentrification," she said during Monday's news conference.

Most displaced residents have been offered financial assistance. Banks said she didn't initially qualify because her landlord sold the property voluntarily, but the city later gave her compensation she used to pay off debts.

Her complaint lists a series of potential remedies, including additional compensation and priority access to affordable housing for displaced residents. She filed the complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which said it was unable to comment on pending investigations.

Banks' former neighbor, Parcha McFadden, recently left the family home she inherited after losing her father, who invested in the property with future generations in mind. She and her daughter have been living in a rented apartment while their old house sits vacant.

"Homeownership is part of the American dream, but it can so easily be ripped away," she said. "How is this American? How is this the American dream?'



BOARDED DOORS AND WINDOWS are seen on homes adjacent to a playground, Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2023, in Baltimore. In 2018, Angela Banks was told by her landlord that Baltimore officials were buying her family's home of four decades, planning to demolish the three-story brick rowhouse to make room for an urban renewal project aimed at transforming their historically Black neighborhood. Banks and her children became homeless almost overnight. Banks filed a complaint Monday asking federal officials to investigate whether Baltimore's redevelopment policies are perpetuating racial segregation and violating fair housing laws by disproportionately displacing Black and low-income residents

"HomeownershipispartoftheAmericandream, butit can so easily be ripped away"

- Parcha McFadden, BALTIMORE RESIDENT AND NEIGHBOR OF ANGELA BANKS.



RACE AGAINST HISTORY from A1

offer a course on critical race theory in kindergarten through 12th grade."

CRT has never been taught in elementary or high schools. It's traditionally a course taught in law schools and colleges that examines the role of systemic racism in American society.

Chris Tinson, Associate Professor of History and Chair of the Department of African American Studies at St. Louis University, has kept an eye on the growing controversy surrounding efforts to curtail CRT in public schools.

"We're at a moment. I think these moments are recurring, where we're grappling with American democracy, the history of the country, questions around reparations and questions around historic wrongs," Tinson explained.

Because CRT has been manipulated, minimized and politicized, Tinson further discussed how many people are simply choosing sides in the contentious debate.

"If you just say, 'this equals that,' it's enough for many people. But it seems that many Republicans-and some Democrats-have latched on to this idea that CRT is the target in which they can scare people to just get votes," Tinson

"I don't think they've legitimately studied what each school board requires; whether CRT is actually there or how it's measured. There hasn't been any kind of objective measurement

that I've seen where they've provided evidence

that critical race theory is taught throughout Missouri or any other state."

Koenig's bill, which is now headed to the House, prohibits teachers from teaching that "individuals of any race, ethnicity, color, or national origin are inherently superior or inferior and that individuals, by virtue of their race, ethnicity, color, or national origin, bear

for actions committed in the past by others.' Without any data or studies to back up their claims, Koenig and other conservatives pushing anti-CRT legislation claim that teaching it encourages "inferior or superior" feelings among students.

collective guilt and are inherently responsible

The bill includes exceptions for teaching about "sexism, slavery, racial oppression, racial segregation, affirmative action" and laws that lead to discrimination, as well as "discussing

current events in a historical context.' Koenig insists it would not limit teachers from explaining slavery and racism in America, but it would address supposed racial indoctrination of

"There's a big difference between saying that

a certain group of people in history thought that individuals were inferior versus saying that is the case today, or that it's a fact that certain races are inferior to others," Koenig said.

"It sounds like something but there's nothing

"I'm in front of classes every day, at mostly

majority white universities, and there's no point

there," Tinson retorted.

where anybody in the room feels inferior or superior while talking about difficult moments in United States history and some of those moments still pertain to us today.

"There are no objective measures that they can point to that says 'here's the evidence that people are feeling inferior."

Koenig's office did not respond to requests for an interview.

Describing proposed legislation like Koenig's, as "toxic ideology," Mayor Tishaura Jones said the attempt is "an affront to anyone who believes we can and must learn from history. Hiding from the past won't help us create a more equitable

Anybody who believes "children can't handle hearing hard truths about America and its history—the good, the bad, and the ugly," Jones continued, "hasn't "spent enough time talking with children. They are resilient, naturally curious, empathetic, and smart."

The whole CRT attack, Jones summarized, is orchestrated and pushed by politicians and people who "are far too fragile to hear the

unvarnished truth." Because CRT has been merged with black history, Tinson defined proposed legislation as

an unsophisticated attempt to "kill two birds with one stone." "CRT merges with black experiences and other peoples of color experiences throughout the country. CRT aims to evaluate how our

legal structures protect racial power, which is

essentially how white society essentially stays in control, and how the legal apparatus maintains power for certain groups.

"CRT does deal with black experiences, but it is not the sum total of African American history," Tinson continued.

'So, there is an effort to conflate them because it doesn't require a lot of deep analysis. There are things in our current discussion of African American history that do deal with harms of the past. So, if you can knock out CRT then you don't have to have the conversation about historic harms."

Since January 2021, 42 states have introduced bills or taken other steps aiming to place restrictions on how issues of race and sexism are

Mayor Jones maintains it's important that students understand "the fraught history of race in the United States to understand how and why systematic racism still pervades our society.

"Fighting against the facts of our history," Jones said, "is waging a battle against thought and ideas: and in an open society, there can be no room for this sort of willful ignorance and intolerance.'

Classifieds

The Oklahoma Cagle

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle: February 3 and 10, 2023.

NOTICE TO BIDDERS SEALED BIDS FOR PROJECT NO. 2023- MPO (C3)

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m. the 10th day of March, 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. 2023-MPO (C3) NON-ARTERIAL MILL, PATCH & OVERLAY

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2036N0001Z.Streets. CWNARP.4281.42813243-541106 2 0 3 6 N 0 0 0 1 Z . S t r e e t s . CWNARP.4282.42823243-541106

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Monday, February 13, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holders of valid pre-qualifications certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or C

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services at the City of Tulsa Engineering Services, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the City of Tulsa by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

The overall aspirational Small Business Enterprise utilization goal for this project is ten (10) percent.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United

The City of Tulsa itself is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the City are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes, which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the City of Tulsa.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the City of Tulsa, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 10th day of March 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 3rd day of February 2023.

(SEAL) Christina Chappell City Clerk

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle: January 27 and February 3, 2023

NOTICE TO BIDDERS SEALED BIDS FOR TULSA METROPOLITAN UTILITY AUTHORITY PROJECT NO. TMUA-W 22-89, 153120-C2-TO5A

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority, a Public Trust, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m., 10th day of March 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. TMUA-W 22-89, 153120-C2-TO5A DRAINAGE IMR-POVEMENTS BIRD CREEK

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2131W0006Z.WaterSupp.Water.7400.74003122-541101 2331W00007.WaterSupp.Water.7400.74003122-541101

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for

Tuesday February 7, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link:

https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holder of valid pre-qualification certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or D

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services for the City of Tulsa, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United

The Authority, acting on behalf of the City of Tulsa, is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the Authority are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority. See Contract

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidder's Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the Authority, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall, 175 E. 2nd Street, in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 10th day of March 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 27th day of January 2023.

(SEAL) Rick Hudson, Chairperson Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority

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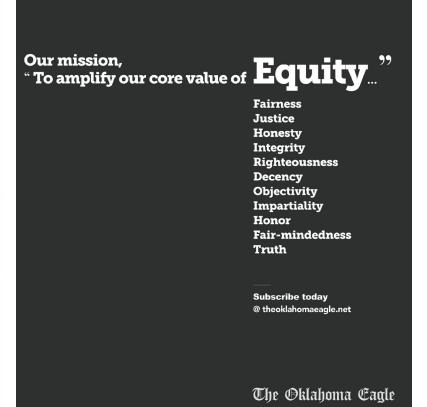












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Minister RJ Smith

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Dr. W. T. Lauderdale

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3101 N. M.L King Tulsa OK (918) 625-2374

Sunday School -

Sunday Morning



Wednesday Prayer - 7:30 pm Wednesday worship - 8pm Rev. John W. Anderson

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307-311 N. Greenwood Ave. P: 918-587-1428 F: 918-587-0642 vernonamechurch@sbcglobal.net

Sunday **Church School**

Worship Service 10:00 am

Wednesday **Bible Study**



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Sunday School

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918-584-PRAY

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Morning

Wednesday

Bible Study

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Rev. Robert Givens

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. "Where Peaceful Waters Flow"

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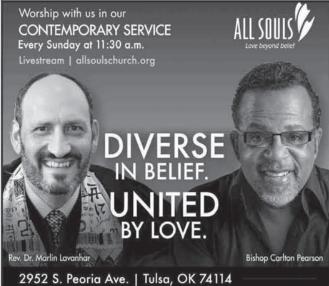
For Further Information call (918) 835-1525. "Have Faith In God." Mark 11:22

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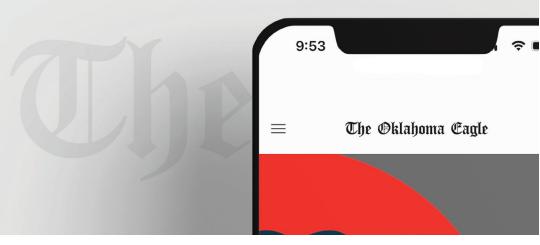


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Our Mission

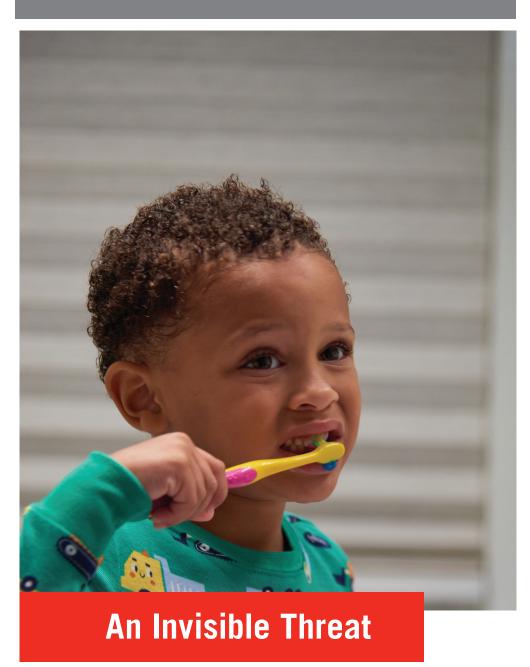
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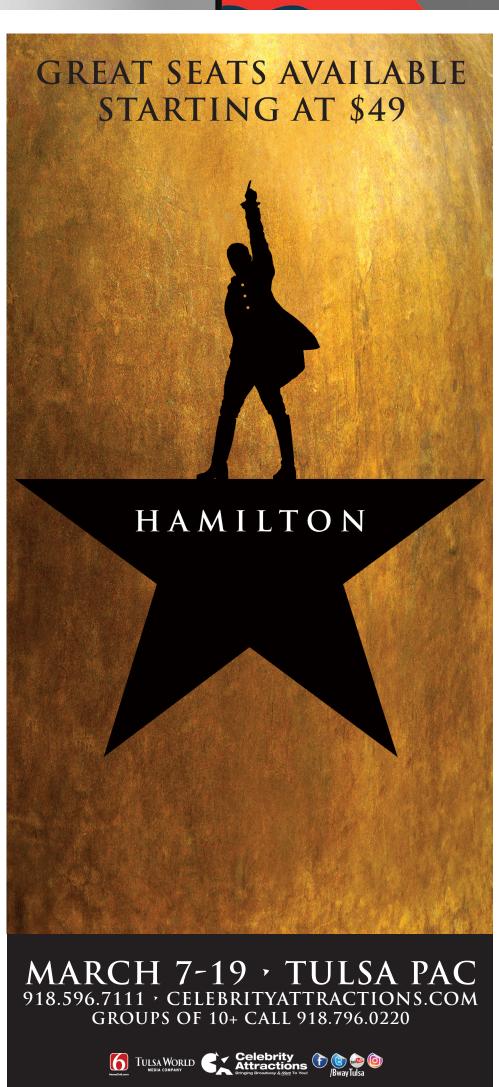
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