

ITEM #: 12
DATE: 02-10-26
DEPT: ADMIN

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: 2026 NAACP FREEDOM FUND BANQUET SPONSORSHIP

BACKGROUND:

At the January 30, 2026, City Council meeting, the Council reviewed a request (attached) from Pastor Moses Ward, President of the Ames Branch of the NAACP for sponsorship of the 2026 Freedom Fund Banquet. The Council directed that the request be placed on the February 10, 2026, agenda for Council consideration.

The letter from Pastor Ward describes the scheduled program for the 2026 event, which will be held on February 19 beginning at 5:30 p.m. The 2026 Special Guests are the Langston Hughes Players. The City Council is being asked whether it wishes to participate as a sponsor in the event. Five sponsorship levels are offered, along with individual/single ticket pricing. The sponsorship levels are summarized below:

Diamond Sponsor: \$5,000, includes 20 guests at the event

Platinum Sponsor: \$3,500, includes 16 guests at the event

Silver Sponsor: \$2,500, includes 10 guests at the event

Bronze Sponsor: \$1,500, includes 8 guests at the event

Sustaining Sponsor/Faith-Based: \$650, includes 5 guests at the event

In 2025, the City participated in the event as a Bronze Sponsor. The Library is exploring participating as a sponsor this year as well but has yet to determine which level of sponsorship to pursue. **Staff is proposing to participate with two tables at the Bronze Sponsorship level, for a total cost of \$3,003 (Two \$1,500 tables plus a \$1.50 service charge for each).** Funding to support the request is available from the Council Contingency account, which has a current balance of \$93,689.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the use of \$3,003 from the Council Contingency Account for Sponsorship level for the 2026 NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet which provide two tables (16 seats).
2. Authorize a sponsorship at one of the other sponsorship levels.
3. Decline to sponsor the 2026 NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet is a signature annual event for the Ames Branch of this

important organization. Through this and other events, the NAACP facilitate meaningful conversations to strive for equitable outcomes for the whole community. In 2025, the City participated in this event as a \$3,003 Sponsor. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[M. Ward - Ames NAACP 2026 Freedom Fund Sponsor Request.pdf](#)