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## Gay ex-city staffer gets \$160,000 settlement

By Cecily Burt ,STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND -- The city is poised to pay a former, openly gay personnel manager \$160,000 to settle a discrimination lawsuit she filed against the city's personnel director because he invoked "Christian values" in the workplace.

In her claim Kathleen Hurley said director Walter Johnson created a discriminatory and hostile work environment by giving preferential treatment to her colleagues and subordinates who were male, African American and Christian.

According to records filed in Federal District Court last summer, Hurley said Johnson informed employees at his first departmental staff meeting that he was a "Christian and he would run the organization on Christian values."

Hurley said Johnson told employees at a different staff meeting that "when he speaks, it is not him speaking -- 'it comes from above.'" She also said Johnson told her he "prayed" over a disciplinary letter he gave her on June 19, 2000.

Hurley said in her lawsuit that Johnson frequently berated her and threatened to fire her in front of other employees.

Hurley, who is a lesbian, had worked for the city since January 1992 until she was fired by Johnson on July 7, 2000. Johnson became Hurley's supervisor in March 1999. He is still employed by the city.

City Manager Robert Bobb said he found nothing to sustain Hurley's allegations. The City Attorney's Office said it chose to settle the case rather than run the risk of having a jury grant a higher award.

The settlement must be approved by the City Council at its July 30 meeting. Hurley would receive \$90,000 and her attorneys, Siegel and LeWitter, \$70,000.

City Manager Robert Bobb said he found nothing to sustain Hurley's allegations. He said Johnson has not been disciplined, nor will he be.

"I think Mr. Johnson and his staff acted appropriately," Bobb said.

The settlement must be approved by the City Council at its July 30 meeting. If approved, Hurley will receive \$90,000 and her attorneys, Siegel and LeWitter, will receive \$70,000.