



Chicago Park District

Legislation Text

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REQUEST TO INITIATE 45-DAY NOTICE PERIOD TO RENAME BUCKTHORN PARK IN HONOR OF HADIYA PENDLETON

To the Honorable Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District

I. Recommendation

It is recommended that an order be entered authorizing the General Superintendent or his designee to initiate a 45-day notice period to solicit public input to rename Buckthorn Park in honor of Hadiya Pendleton.

Proposed Park: Buckthorn Park

Location: 4345 S. Calumet Ave., Chicago, IL. 60653

Community Area: 38- Grand Boulevard

Ward: #3

Proposed Name: Hadiya Pendleton Park

II. Explanation

The Chicago Park District naming and renaming procedures allow for the naming of features in parks, including playgrounds and buildings. Alderman Pat Dowell requested that the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners name Buckthorn Park in honor of Hadiya Pendleton. This proposal has support of Alderman Pat Dowell, the Grand Boulevard community, and the Pendleton family.

In 2011, the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners approved a proposal to enlarge Buckthorn Park. This expansion project increases the small playlot from less than a quarter acre in size to a 2 acre park. The Chicago Park District hired Planning Resources Inc. to develop plans for the expansion project. Working with the Alderman Pat Dowell, community groups, and the Park District, the consultant has created a design that honors the cultural heritage of Bronzeville and includes a new playground, interactive water feature, a walking path, and fitness stations. Bronzeville's significance as a hub for music, literature, and other arts will be highlighted through features such as a "musical staff path," sculptural seating to emulate books and musical instruments, and inscriptions in planters and knee walls.

The new park is considered a fitting tribute to Chicagoan Hadiya Pendleton (1997 - 2013). An honor student at King College Prep High School, Hadiya Pendleton was killed as the result of a senseless act of violence. While sitting under a shelter in Harsh Park, Hadiya and her friends came under fire by gang members who had mistaken them as rivals. Only a few weeks earlier, Hadiya had performed as a drum majorette in President Obama's second inauguration. Hadiya's murder has brought national attention to the widespread gun violence plaguing communities throughout America. Her parents Nathaniel and Cleopatra Pendleton attended President Obama's State of the Union Address in which he spoke passionately about the need for gun control. Michelle Obama has also made powerful speeches in which Hadiya served as an important symbol for the need to stop this violence. In a speech to students at Chicago's Harper High School, the First Lady implored the audience to consider Hadiya a role model. She urged them to use their own lives to give meaning to Hadiya's life. Naming the expanded park in honor of Hadiya Pendleton is not only a fitting tribute to a talented high school student, but also an important symbol of Chicago galvanizing against gun violence and rallying in support of safer neighborhoods.

III. Park Naming Procedures

Chapter VII, Section E of the Code of the Chicago Park District, (the Naming Ordinance), which governs the naming and renaming of parks and park features, states that if a proposed name honors a person, the (i) person shall have been deceased for a least one (1) year prior to consideration; and (ii) the person shall have demonstrated a continued commitment and made an extraordinary contribution to

civic betterment, locally, nationally or internationally.

Pursuant to the Naming Ordinance, this request to rename and name parks have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Chicago Park District, who shall (i) file a copy of this request with the Board of Commissioners (or appropriate Committee); and (ii) initiate a notice period of at least 45 days to provide notice and solicit public input. Such notice shall be posted at the respective subject park field house (or for any park without a field house, at the nearest field house) and it shall be sent to advisory councils located within a one (1) mile radius of the subject park. At the conclusion of the notice period, the General Superintendent or his designee may in his discretion recommend to the Board that it approve the requested renames and names.