



Chicago Park District

Legislation Text

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REQUEST TO INITIATE 45-DAY NOTICE PERIOD TO NAME THE GYMNASIUM IN WILLYE WHITE PARK IN HONOR OF D. WILLIAM “BILL” BOONE

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 name the gymnasium in the Willye B. White Field House in honor of D. William “Bill” Boone.

Proposed Park Feature: Gymnasium in Willye B. White Park Field House

Location: 1610 Howard Street, Chicago, IL. 60626

Community Area: Rogers Park

Ward: #49th Ward

Proposed Name: D. William “Bill” Boone Gymnasium

II. Explanation

The Chicago Park District naming and renaming procedures allow for the naming of features in parks, including playgrounds and buildings. The Willye White Park Advisory Council has requested that the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners name the gymnasium in the Willye White Field House in honor of: D. William “Bill” Boone. This proposal has the support of Alderman Joe Moore of the 49th Ward as well as community members and representatives of the Seabury Foundation.

A philanthropist who was deeply committed to the Rogers Park community, D. William “Bill” Boone (1936 - 2005) helped the Chicago Park District develop a much-needed field house for Willye B. White Park. Born and raised on Chicago’s North Shore, he attended the University of New Mexico and spent three years in the Marines before graduating from the University of Illinois in 1960. Following graduation he lived for a time in Spain and then moved back to Chicago, establishing an office at Clark and Howard, from which he did his writing. Eventually Boone moved to the Milwaukee area, but he remained involved in his family’s charitable foundation, known as the Seabury Foundation.

In 2000, Boone helped guide the Seabury Foundation towards a decision to concentrate almost all of its Chicago giving-- roughly a half million dollars a year-- to Rogers Park community north along the north side of Howard Street. For 7-8 years the Foundation was involved in funding many nonprofit agencies in the neighborhood, including Howard Area Community Center, Family Matters, A Just Harvest, Housing Opportunities for Women, and Gale School, to name a few. Boone and the Seabury Foundation were instrumental in organizing leaders from around the community to collaborate on community issues, like affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, improved schools, and most importantly, working closely with the Park District to build a recreation center in the neighborhood. With D. William “Bill” Boone as the key advocate, the foundation agreed in 2004 to allocate a significant grant if the Park District would not have all the funds necessary to get the project off the drawing board. When it was determined that there was a shortfall of roughly \$500,000 to build the facility, the Seabury Foundation agreed to donate the funds that enabled the Park District to complete the project.

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.