



# Chicago Park District

## Legislation Text

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### REQUEST TO OFFICIALLY RENAME

#### CATALPA PARK (PARK #372)

#### IN HONOR OF CHESTER FRANK KUJAWA

### 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 officially rename Catalpa Park in honor of Chester Frank Kujawa.

Park name: Catalpa Park (Park #372)

Location: 4330 S. Kedvale Avenue

Community Area: Archer Heights

Ward: 14

Proposed Name: Chester Frank Kujawa Park

#### II. 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 Chapter VII, Section E (1) of the Code of the Chicago Park District, this request to name Catalpa Park was forwarded to the Secretary of the Chicago Park District, who filed a copy of this request with the Committee on Programs and Recreation and initiated a notice period to solicit public input. Notices were posted in parks and sent to advisory councils located within a one-mile radius of the park site. Elected officials were also notified of the proposal, including the alderman of the wards in which the park is located.

The notice period of forty-five (45) days soliciting public input regarding the naming proposal was initiated on October 16, 2020. There has been positive support for this proposal from Alderman Burke and the community. Staff recommends that the Board approve the request to name Catalpa Park (Park #372) to Chester Frank Kujawa Park.

### **III. Explanation**

The Chicago Park District naming and renaming procedures allow for the naming of parks and features in parks, including playgrounds and buildings. This proposal has the support of Alderman Edward Burke, the Mayor and the Chicago City Council.

Chester Frank Kujawa was born on the south side of Chicago on May 15, 1924 and represents what is great about this country and the City of Chicago. On February 19, 1945, the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division, C Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon and the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment landed on the sandy beaches of Iwo Jima during World War II. There were 323 marines who landed on the island of Iwo Jima. Chester Frank Kujawa, then 20 years old was one out of the four survivors of his company. On the day of this landing in 1945, many soldiers were severely wounded and missing in action. As soon as Chester and his fellow marines reached the shores of Iwo Jima they were fired upon by the Japanese military from Mount Suribachi. They moved to the bottom of the mountain for safety where they endured explosions for the next twelve hours until the Navy arrived with their ships and helped push back the Japanese. Chester and the rest of the Marines fought for thirty-six days until the Japanese finally surrendered the island.

Chester Frank Kujawa, resided in the Archer Heights Community Area with his wife, Terry, before his passing on December 12, 2016. On September 18, 2019, the Mayor and members of the Chicago City Council passed a resolution to honor the courageous actions of Marine Kujawa and the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division, C Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon. This resolution also called upon Chicago Park District leadership to honor the courageous actions of Marine Kujawa and rename Catalpa Park, Chester Frank Kujawa Park.