



Broward County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-1054, Version: 1

Broward County Commission Regular Meeting

Director's Name: Barbara Sharief

Department: County Commission

Information

Requested Action

MOTION TO ADOPT Resolution No. 2021-312 designating a portion of NW 6th Court in the Broward Municipal Services District in honor of Judge Zebedee Wright and Dr. Kathleen C. Wright. (Commissioner Sharief)

Why Action is Necessary

Board action is necessary to adopt a Resolution renaming a County-owned road.

What Action Accomplishes

Adopts the proposed Resolution renaming a County-owned road after Judge Zebedee Wright and Dr. Kathleen C. Wright.

Is this Action Goal Related

No

Previous Action Taken

Summary Explanation/Background

This item proposes renaming the portion of NW 6th Court from NW 27th Avenue to NW 31st Avenue, located in the Broward Municipal Services District ("County Road"), in honor of Judge Zebedee Wright ("Judge Wright") and his late wife Dr. Kathleen C. Wright ("Dr. Wright"), a couple who have made significant contributions to Broward County ("County"). Judge Wright is a long-term resident of NW 6th Court.

Judge Wright was born in 1934, and grew up in Pahokee, Florida, where he experienced the vestiges of the Jim Crow Era. Subsequently, Judge Wright moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he was determined to get an education. He attended Dillard High School and excelled academically, allowing him to earn a scholarship to attend college. Judge Wright graduated from Florida A & M University, receiving a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Thereafter, he studied law at Florida State University ("FSU") College of Law. Judge Wright was the first African-American male student to graduate from the FSU College of Law.

After law school, Judge Wright defended civil rights as an attorney and worked in his community to mobilize the African-American community to vote. In 1982, Judge Wright, along with other attorneys,

formed the T.J. Reddick Bar Association, named after Thomas J. Reddick. Thomas J. Reddick was the first African-American attorney to open an office and practice law in Broward County, to be appointed to the Broward County Court of Record, and to be elected as a Circuit Court Judge in Florida. Judge Wright and his fellow cofounders formed the T.J. Reddick Bar Association because African-American attorneys were not being afforded equal access to law firms as attorneys or partners, or granted court appointments and judgeships, or given respect as attorneys in Broward County. Today, the T.J. Reddick Bar Association is dedicated to promoting the professional excellence of African-American lawyers in Broward County, increasing the enrollment of minority students in college and law schools, offering mentoring programs, and giving back to the community by making charitable contributions and conducting voter registration drives.

In 1983, Judge Wright was appointed by Governor Graham to the Broward County Court where Judge Wright served until his retirement in 2003. In addition to serving on the bench, Judge Wright has also been active on the court and on the field. Judge Wright formed the Fort Lauderdale Road Runners, a nationally recognized youth basketball program, and he has coached several little league football and basketball teams.

Dr. Wright was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in 1935. She attended Dillard High School and graduated as the valedictorian in 1953. After high school, Dr. Wright earned a bachelor's degree in Education from Florida A & M University. Upon graduating from college, Dr. Wright returned to Dillard High School where she taught for 16 years, all while earning her master's degree and a Doctorate in Education.

In 1974, Dr. Wright successfully challenged an incumbent candidate for a seat on The School Board of Broward County ("School Board"). Dr. Wright's historic win made her the first African-American woman to win a countywide election in the State of Florida, the first African-American woman in the state to serve on a school board, and the first African-American member of the School Board. Dr. Wright subsequently served as Vice Chairman of the School Board during a portion of her eight-year tenure with the School Board. Dr. Wright was also an active member of the community, holding leadership positions in over 30 organizations, including the Urban League of Broward County and the Broward County Democratic Party. Dr. Wright was also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., where she held the title of Regional Director of the Dynamic South Region of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., between 1978 and 1982 and served on the National Nominating Committee.

Tragically, Dr. Wright passed away in 1985, at the age of 49, after sustaining injuries in a plane crash. Her legacy lives on through the Kathleen C. Wright Foundation, and the many posthumous honors she has received including an honorary statue in front of the School Board's offices and the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s Kathleen C. Wright Life Development Center.

Pursuant to Section 336.05, Florida Statutes, the Board is authorized to name and rename County-owned streets and roads. Section 18.43 of the Broward County Administrative Code ("Administrative Code") establishes the Board's policies for naming property, buildings, structures, or facilities, including roads.

On April 20, 2021 (Board Agenda Item No. 38), the Board provided notice on the record that it would

consider a proposed Resolution renaming the County Road after Judge Wright and Dr. Wright on June 1, 2021, as required under Section 18.43(h) of the Administrative Code. In addition, the Board waived Section 18.43(c) of the Administrative Code, which provides that property owned by the County should not be named after living persons, in order to rename the County Road after Judge Wright, a living person. Further, the Board directed the County Administrator to solicit the input of at least three local municipalities, homeowners' associations, or other appropriate community groups of the Board's proposal to designate the County Road in honor of Judge Wright and Dr. Wright. Correspondence submitted by the County Administrator to such groups is included as Attachment 1 of the proposed Resolution.

This item (1) adopts a Resolution designating the County Road in honor of Judge Wright and Dr. Wright; (2) directs the County Administrator, as Clerk of the Board, to provide notice to the officials designated in the Resolution; and (3) directs the County Administrator to take all budgetary and other actions necessary to effectuate the renaming of the County Road.

Source of Additional Information

Launa Carbonell, Chief of Staff, District 8, 954-357-7008

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary

\$1,700