



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 5, 2014

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Public Hearing on the Recommendation From the City Council Naming Committee on the Proposal to Name the City Playground at Buchanan Park the Leatrice Byrd Playground at Buchanan Park.

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**ISSUE:** Naming of the City playground at Buchanan Park, 1501 Cameron St., the *Leatrice Byrd Playground at Buchanan Park*.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council: (1) receive the recommendation of the City Council Naming Committee to name the City playground at Buchanan Park the: *Leatrice Byrd Playground at Buchanan Park*; (2) set the proposal for public hearing and consideration on Saturday, February 22, 2014; and (3) concur with the recommendation of the City Council Naming Committee and approve the naming of the City playground at Buchanan Park the: *Leatrice Byrd Playground at Buchanan Park*.

**BACKGROUND:** On March 21, 2013, the City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities received an email from Beatrice Porter-Gruel requesting consideration in renaming the City owned Buchanan Park in memory of Leatrice Byrd (Attachment 1). Leatrice Byrd lived her life as a devoted mother always putting her children and those in the neighborhood first. The legacy of her family and the children of the Buchanan, Cameron, Boyle, and Princess Street neighborhoods were her proudest accomplishment. She lived a selfless life receiving happiness and joy by doing for others.

**DISCUSSION:** In response to the proposal from Beatrice Porter-Gruel, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA) solicited public comment on the proposed park naming from May 21, 2013 through June 21, 2013 (Attachment 2).

Community members received notifications of the public comment period by City eNews, neighborhood canvassing of the eNews release, the RPCA website, and through "word of mouth" assistance from Beatrice Porter-Gruel.

On December 17, 2013 the City Council Naming Committee (Mayor William Euille, Councilwoman Del Pepper and Deputy City Manager Michele Evans) held a meeting with Beatrice Porter-Gruel and members of Ms. Byrd's family to discuss the naming of the City playground within the relocated Buchanan Park to honor Leatrice Byrd (Attachment 3). The City Council Naming Committee voted unanimously to recommend to City Council that the City playground in Buchanan Park be named the *Leatrice Byrd Playground at Buchanan Park*.

It is recommended that Council schedule these proposals for public hearing and consideration on Saturday, February 22, 2014.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 - Proposal to name Buchanan Park in memory of Leatrice Byrd  
Attachment 2 - Public comments for the proposal to rename Buchanan Park  
Attachment 3 - Buchanan Park Site Maps

**STAFF:**

Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager  
Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager  
James Spengler, Director, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities  
Jack Browand, Division Chief, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities