



Legislation Text

File #: RES 17-0024, **Version:** 1

ITEM TITLE:

#17-24 - Naming the "Pocket Plaza" Located at the Corner of S. Meals Drive and N. Harbor Drive in Honor of Mrs. Tillie Wonder

SUBMITTED BY: Darryl Verfaillie, PRCS Director

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve naming of existing (unnamed) "pocket plaza" located at the corner of S. Meals Drive and N. Harbor Dr. in honor of Mrs. Tillie Wonder.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Discussion

In September of 2016, Marcie Robertson (Park Maintenance Supervisor) recommended to the Director of Valdez Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services - that the existing unnamed "pocket plaza" located at the corner of South Meals Drive and North Harbor Drive (see attached map) be named the Tillie Wonder Plaza to honor Tillie's 27+ years of dedication to the City of Valdez through her ongoing City beautification efforts. This specific location was chosen due to the fact that this was the first area in town that Mrs. Wonder and her husband designed and planted when she began her beautification efforts in 1988.

Per the City of Valdez Parks and Recreation Commission's Park and Facilities Naming Guidelines (attached), I would strongly recommend in favor of this action based on the following criteria:

"An individual or group of individuals who have made significant contributions towards improving the quality of life of Valdez Residents and furthering the City's mission to provide opportunities for the enjoyment of residents and visitors, particularly those opportunities that people cannot supply for themselves."

Background

In 1988, Mrs. Tillie Wonder was hired by the City of Valdez as one of its initial Beautification Contractors - continuing on in these duties as lead community flower gardener until 2015, when she reluctantly retired due to personal/unforeseen issues.

Her countless contributions include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Designed various City information signs - both past and present - including: Glacier View Park, numerous Trail Heads, Old Town Information Signs, and the summer Snow Equipment Display that resided across from the Post Office for so many years
2. Designed the first World Extreme Ski Logo
3. Authored the book "Gardening in the Alaska Rain Forest" to share her wealth of local knowledge while simultaneously highlighting the natural beauty of Valdez
4. Volunteered countless hours over the past 27 years to train Park Maintenance staff on flower care and floral design; and
5. Designed the Valdez Parks & Recreation Department logo used today

Actions Taken

A Public Hearing was held on 13 December 2016 during the regularly scheduled Parks & Recreation Commission's monthly meeting to seek input on the proposed action - no opposition was received.

Following the Public Hearing, a motion was passed to draft a letter of recommendation from the Parks & Recreation Commission to the Valdez City Council, in favor of naming the existing (unnamed) pocket plaza in honor of Mrs. Tillie Wonder. On 11 April 2017, the Commission signed a letter of support, providing its strongest recommendation to approve this naming request (attached).

Next Steps/Actions Items (if applicable)

If approved, the Parks Maintenance Department shall order and install the appropriate signage when conditions and staffing permit - and pending confirmation of Mrs. Wonder's (or a designated representative's) ability to travel to Valdez;

The Commission will schedule a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to commemorate this event in the summer of 2017.