

BOARD OF HONOR

Meeting
July 3, 2024

Members Present: Vivian Creighton Bishop (arrived at 2:46 p.m.)
David Ebron
Beth Harris, Chair
Judge Bobby Peters (via teleconference)
Barbara Pierce

Members Absent: John Wells

A meeting of the Board of Honor was called to order at 2:34 p.m. in the Ground Floor Conference Room, at the Government Center, by Chairwoman Beth Harris. During this meeting the following items were voted upon, and their recommendations are as follows:

1. Approval of minutes for the May 24, 2023, meeting.

Mr. Ebron made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Judge Peters and carried unanimously by the four members present, with Ms. Bishop being absent for the vote, and Mr. Wells being absent from the meeting.

2. Request: Honorary Designation Application

- Honoree: Evelyn Turner Pugh
- Requestor: Columbus, GA Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- POC: Pat Hugley Green
- Location: Carver Park
- Signage: Renaming - Honorable Evelyn Turner Pugh Park
- Attachment(s): Application

Chairwoman Harris acknowledged members of the Columbus, Georgia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. present in support of the request to honor Evelyn Turner Pugh at Carver Park.

Mr. Ebron made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Ms. Pierce and carried unanimously by the four members present, with Ms. Bishop being absent for the vote, and Mr. Wells being absent from the meeting.

3. Request: Honorary Designation Application

- Honoree: Joni Ressmeyer
- Requestor: Dr. Frank Brown
- Location: Double Churches Pool
- Signage: Renaming – “Miss Joni” Ressmeyer Swimming Pool
- Attachment(s): Application, Request Response from Parks & Recreation

Chairwoman Harris asked if anyone was present to speak on the request to rename Double Churches Pool in honor of Joni Ressmeyer.

Parks & Recreation Director Holli Browder provided a copy of the City Facility and Honorary Street Naming Policy, stating the Parks & Recreation Department is opposed to the renaming of the facility based on Section 2(A) and Section 3. She stated though the Ressmeyer Family has made tremendous contributions to the community, there is no connection between Double Churches Pool and Joni Ressmeyer. She explained it is her understanding that the policy requires the honoree to have been involved with the specific facility in some way for an honorary renaming.

The discussion continued with members of the Board of Honor recognizing that Ms. Ressmeyer taught swimming lessons to many children at her home throughout the years, but expressed their concern that approving this request could set a precedence for requests to rename City facilities in the future. The board discussed recommending the placement of an honorary plaque instead of renaming the facility, to which Director Browder stated the Parks & Recreation Department would be in support of that recommendation.

NOTE: Ms. Vivian Creighton Bishop arrived at 2:46 p.m.

Ms. Pierce made a motion to forward to the City Council the recommendation of the Board of Honor to approve the placement of an honorary plaque in lieu of the request to rename the facility, seconded by Judge Peters and carried unanimously by the five members present, with Mr. Wells being absent from the meeting.

4. Request: Honorary Designation Application

- Honoree: Richard Callahan, Sr.
- Requestor: Jason Crowson & Stephanie Callahan
- Location: Godwin Creek Golf Course
- Signage: Stone with bronze plaque and marble bench.
- Attachment(s): Application, Request Response from Golf Director on behalf of the Golf Course Authority, Applicant’s Response to Concerns/Questions

Chairwoman Harris asked if anyone was present to speak on the request to place a stone with bronze plaque and marble bench at Godwin Creek Golf Course.

Dr. Alonzo Jones, Columbus Golf Course Authority Member, explained this is not a request submitted by the Authority nor is this a request that the Authority is not in strong support of. He went on to explain that from the Authority's perspective, they do not have a lot of information on Mr. Callahan or his association with Godwin Creek Golf Course other than Mr. Callahan and his wife running an independent kid's program at the golf course for thirteen years but had no affiliation with the Golf Course Authority or the City. He added that he believes the Golf Course Authority would feel better if the Authority had more oversight in requests for memorials at the golf courses.

Parks & Recreation Director Holli Browder stated her daughter was part of the program for a few years and she knows Mr. Callahan was always there with the kids but has no additional information to add for the board's consideration.

Golf Course Director Jim Arendt explained this is Golf Course Authority business and all he could share are the concerns expressed by the Authority. He stated the Authority expressed concern that if this request is approved then it would open the doors to additional requests and the aesthetic would then look more like a cemetery rather than a golf course. He also shared that the Authority members shared concerns that a stone and bench memorial would overshadow the memorial in place for Mr. Godwin, who the golf course is named in honor of.

A discussion was held regarding the oversight of the City's golf courses by the Columbus Golf Course Authority and the recent changes to the criteria for honorary designations. Some of the members of the Board of Honor agreed in the concern with the Golf Authority regarding the aesthetics of the courses if more requests are submitted in the future.

Ms. Pierce made a motion to recommend denial based on the criteria and the Columbus Golf Course Authority not being support of the request, seconded by Ms. Bishop and carried unanimously by the five members present, with Mr. Wells being absent from the meeting.

With no further business to come before this board, Chairperson Harris entertained a motion for adjournment. Motion by Judge Peters to adjourn the July 3, 2024, Board of Honor Meeting, seconded by Ms. Pierce and carried unanimously by the five members present, with Mr. Wells being absent from the meeting, and the time being 3:02 p.m.

Lindsey G. McLemore, Deputy Clerk of Council
Recording Secretary