

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 13, 2015

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

VIA: Kenneth Fields, City Manager

FROM: James Slaton, Public/Support Services Director

SUBJECT: Public Hearing - Renaming of Washington Avenue.

SYNOPSIS: A public hearing is required under Sec.18-30 of the City's Code of Ordinances whenever the City Commission is considering the renaming of a City street.

BACKGROUND

The City has received a request from Branch 5109 of the NAACP, in Lake Wales, to rename "Washington" Avenue in the corporate limits of the City of Lake Wales to "Barack Obama" Avenue.

A public hearing is required under Sec.18-30(b)(1) of the City's Code of Ordinances whenever the City Commission is considering the renaming of a City street. City staff will bring this street renaming request back to the Commission for a final vote during the regularly scheduled City Commission meeting on February 3, 2015.

City staff advertised the date, time and location of the public hearing in the Lake Wales News 30 days prior to the hearing and mailed notices of the hearing to each residence or business with an address on the subject street.

Washington Avenue is partially within the corporate limits of the City of Lake Wales, partially within unincorporated Polk County, and it crosses a State highway (Hwy 27). The Polk County BoCC has also received a street renaming request from NAACP Branch 5109 for the section of Washington Avenue that lies within their jurisdiction. To date, the BoCC has not approved the street renaming request, but administrators with the BoCC have indicated that they would move forward with their street renaming process if the Lake Wales City Commission ultimately approved the renaming of the section of Washington Avenue that is within the city limits of Lake Wales. Though the intersection of Washington Avenue and Hwy 27 is on a State highway, Polk County is the maintaining agent of the traffic control devices and signage in that intersection and would be responsible for requesting any street sign changes from FDOT.

This street renaming request would affect a total of 61 properties. There are a total of 37 properties on Washington Avenue in the Lake Wales city limits and 24 in unincorporated Polk County. A list of every affected residence and business is included as an attachment to this memo.

The City does not have a policy for distributing the costs associated with a street renaming request and will incur any costs associated with the request, e.g., new streets signs, poles, or other items. The total cost to the City for all materials related to changing the street name is \$1,390. This amount includes: 12 new 6" street signs/posts and two 186" x 42" next-signal signs on Hwy 27. In addition to changing the street signage within the City's jurisdiction, renaming Washington Avenue would require changing 8 street signs in unincorporated Polk County and changing 2 lighted overhead signs at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Hwy 27. Polk County does have a policy where the requestor of a street name change bears the costs associated with the renaming. Polk County's materials estimate to change the street signage is \$584 and \$4,512 for the overhead lighted signs at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Hwy 27 (signage only, installation would be performed by Polk County Traffic Operations).

NAACP Branch 5109 initially requested to rename "Washington" Avenue to "President Barack Obama" Avenue, which exceeded street name character limitations within Polk County's street naming ordinance. They have since amended the request to "Barack Obama" Avenue.

City staff has received four correspondences from the public regarding the street renaming request and each are included as attachments to this memo.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City's fiscal impact would be \$1,390.

NAACP Branch 5109's potential financial impact, due to estimated reimbursements to Polk County, could be \$5,096.

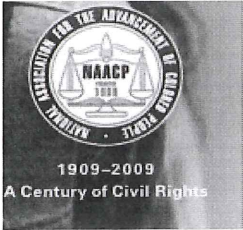
ATTACHMENTS

Amended Street Renaming Request from NAACP Branch 5109

Citizen Correspondences

Listing of Affected Addresses and Contacts

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
POST OFFICE BOX 4035
LAKE WALES, FLORIDA 33859-4035
Phone: (863) 528-8055**



**DECEMBER 11, 2014
NAACP BRANCH 5109
LAKE WALES, FL 33853**

TO: Mr. Kenneth Fields, Lake Wales City Manager

Mr. Fields after our meeting on December 11, 2014 it was agreed that the re-naming of Washington Avenue will be requested as Barack Obama Avenue.

Thanks for your assistance.


**David M. Smith Sr.
President of the Branch Unit 5109**

2012 - 2014

Executive Officers

President
David M. Smith, Sr.

1st Vice President
Rev. Lawrence Epps Jr.

2nd Vice President
Leroy Smith, Sr.

3rd Vice President
C. W. Edwards

From: [Eugene Fultz](#)
To: [Clara VanBlargan](#)
Subject: Fwd: Citizen Mail from Web Site [ID: 203169]
Date: Friday, December 12, 2014 12:00:27 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Information" <info2@cityoflakewales.com>
Date: December 12, 2014 at 9:00:59 AM EST
To: "Eugene Fultz" <efultz@cityoflakewales.com>, "Kenneth Fields" <kfields@cityoflakewales.com>
Subject: Citizen Mail from Web Site [ID: 203169]

NOTE: This message was generated by a form-mail link on the City's website. Do NOT reply directly to this message. Instead, send your response to the email address listed below if one is provided. Contact the IS Department if you have questions.

Name: Cheryl Danboise

EMail: Cherylsue22@gmail.com

Subject: Citizen Mail from Web Site

Message: This is to address the proposed change of Washington St to Barack Obama...I can NOT believe this!! Choose another street...NOT our founding father There is NO way Obama is anything close to Washington...I wouldn't want any street named that but definitely not Washington...

What a shame...our country and cities have become so " un American"

Cheryl

Reply: Reply Unnecessary

PETITION TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES

I, signer of this petition, registered voter in Polk County and currently residing at 851 Hillside Avenue, which is within the geographical limits of the City of Lake Wales, State of Florida, respectfully request you recant and change your recent vote to replace the name of Washington Avenue for President Barack Obama Avenue.

The avenue in question was named to honor the memory of General George Washington. He was a signer of the Constitution of the United States of America, therefore one of the founding fathers of our nation; the first elected president of our country and the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army that fought for the independence of our land from the British monarchy.

I consider eliminating Washington's name from that avenue is incorrect and disrespectful to our history and heritage.

If you want to recognize President Barack Obama you should select any other avenue, street, boulevard, road or terrace within the city boundaries, but not Washington Avenue.

I strongly suggest you reconsider your previous decision in this respect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cesar Guerra".

Cesar Guerra

Cc County Commissioners
450 N Wilson Avenue
Bartow, Florida 33830

James Slaton

From: Kenneth Fields
Sent: Wednesday, December 10, 2014 8:37 AM
To: James Slaton
Subject: FW: Citizen Mail from Web Site [ID: 203167]

Put this in the renaming file.

Kenneth Fields
City Manager
City of Lake Wales, Florida
P.O. Box 1320
201 W. Central Ave.
Lake Wales, FL 33853-1320

863-678-4182 x225

-----Original Message-----

From: Information
Sent: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 9:01 PM
To: Eugene Fultz; Kenneth Fields
Subject: Citizen Mail from Web Site [ID: 203167]

NOTE: This message was generated by a form-mail link on the City's website. Do NOT reply directly to this message. Instead, send your response to the email address listed below if one is provided. Contact the IS Department if you have questions.

Name: Virginia Irene Cooper

EMail: dadcoop2@hotmail.com

Subject: Citizen Mail from Web Site

Message: Changing the name of Washington St.

I believe we need a street named for our President. I think the street they have chosen is the wrong one. I think they should have chosen B St and renamed the B St center for our President. The center stands for and represents the community services the President believes in.

I work 3-11 and am not able to attend public meeting to participate in public discussion.

Virginia Irene Cooper
859 Hunt Circle
Lake Wales, FL 33853
863-241-1732

A reply to let me know this was received and read is all that is necessary.

Reply: Reply Requested

January 09, 2015

Lara E. Dix
313 Winter Ridge Blvd.
Winter Haven, Florida 33881

Mr. Kenneth Fields
Lake Wales City Manager
P.O Box 1320
Lake Wales, Florida 33853

Subject: Renaming Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue

Dear Mr. Kenneth Fields

I am writing this letter to inform you that I own property on Washington Avenue. I have no objection to renaming Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lara E. Dix', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lara E. Dix

Cc: 111 Britton Street Babson Park, Florida 33827

Kenneth Fields
City Manager of Lake Wales
201 West Central Ave.
Lake Wales, Florida 33853

January 12, 2015

Edward Johnson
10040 Washington Ave.
Lake Wales, Florida 33853-3039

RE: Changing Washington Ave to Barack
Obama Ave.

Mr. Fields,

My name is Edward Johnson, I have
been living on Washington Ave. Since 1964. I am looking
forward to the changing of the name Washington Ave to
Barack Obama Ave.

Sincerely,

Edward Johnson
Edward Johnson

RECEIVED
JAN 14 2015

BY: JB