

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 23, 2015

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

VIA: Kenneth Fields, City Manager

FROM: James Slaton, Public/Support Services Director

SUBJECT: Resolution 2015-01, Renaming Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue

SYNOPSIS: The approval of Resolution 2015-01 will change the name of Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue.

BACKGROUND

The City 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 was held on January 20, 2015 to seek public input on the street renaming request, in accordance with Sec. 18-30 of the City's Code of Ordinances.

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. The section of Washington Avenue within the city limits runs between B and G Streets. 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.

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, posts, or other items. The total cost to the City for all materials related to changing the street name is \$707. This amount includes: 12 new 6" street signs and posts. In addition to changing the street signage within the City's jurisdiction, renaming Washington Avenue would require changing 8 residential street signs in unincorporated Polk County, changing two 186" x 42" next-signal signs on Hwy 27, 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 change. Polk County's materials estimates are \$584 for the new residential street signage and approximately \$5,195 for the next-signal and lighted overhead signs at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Hwy 27 (signage only, installation costs are unknown).

City staff has received eleven 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 will be \$707.
- NAACP Branch 5109's potential fiscal impact, due to estimated reimbursements to Polk County, could be \$5,779.
- There will be a minor fiscal impact to any businesses or residents on Washington Avenue who might need change their address on checks, letterheads, etc.

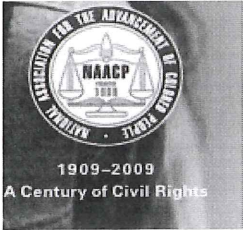
ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 2015-01

Amended Street Renaming Request from NAACP Branch 5109

Citizen Correspondences

**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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David M. Smith Sr.', is written over the typed name. A long horizontal line extends from the end of the signature across the page.

**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

RESOLUTION 2015-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR THE RENAMING OF WASHINGTON AVENUE WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES TO BARACK OBAMA AVENUE.

WHEREAS, the City Commission received a request from NAACP Branch 5109 to rename Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on January 20th, 2015 in accordance with Section 18-30 of the City's Code of Ordinances to receive public input on the street renaming request;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA THAT:

1. The City Commission approves the renaming of Washington Avenue within the corporate limits of the City of Lake Wales to Barack Obama Avenue by a vote of __Yeas and __Nays.

THIS RESOLUTION INTRODUCED AND PASSED by the City Commission of the City of Lake Wales, Florida, at its regular meeting on February 3, 2015.

Mayor Eugene Fultz

ATTEST:

City Clerk Clara VanBlargan, MMC

RESOLUTION 2015 - 01

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 that reads "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". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

GWENDOLYN SMITH
646 G Street, Lake Wales, FL 33853
Phone: #863-676-5020

January 16, 2015

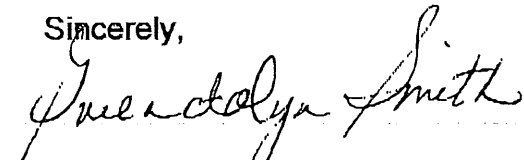
CITY OF LAKE WALES
201 West Central Avenue
Lake Wales, Florida 33853

ATTENTION: James Slaton, Public/Support Services Director

Mr. Slaton:

As property owner of the building at 109-117 Washington Avenue in Lake Wales, I fully support the renaming of Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue. I am not only a supporter of this proposal, I'm also appreciative of David Smith's diligence and tireless efforts to get this and other city information out to Lake Wales citizens. I believe that renaming Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue is a positive move for our community, city, county, state.

Sincerely,


Gwendolyn Smith

Mr. Levonza Smith, Sr.
6020 Washington Avenue
Lake Wales, Florida 33853
January 16, 2015

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

Re: Street name change

Dear Mr. Fields:

I am in favor of changing the name of Washington Avenue to Barack H. Obama Avenue in honor of the First Afro-American elected to the office of president of the United States of America.

Sincerely,



Levonza Smith, Sr.

JAN 29 2015

January 15, 2015

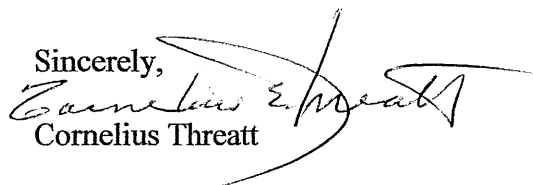
Cornelius E. Threatt
P. O Box 2153
Bartow, Florida 33831

Dear Mr. Kenneth Field,

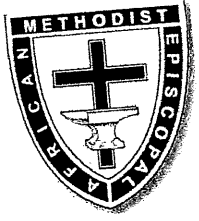
I, Cornelius Threatt property owner on Washington Avenue is in agreement with the name change from Washington Avenue to President Barack Obama.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cornelius E. Threatt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Cornelius Threatt



JAN 20 2015

Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church
241 "C" Street
Lake Wales, Florida 33853
(863) 676-6416 (phone) (863) 678-3796 (fax)
Reverend Ella Edwards, Pastor

January 16, 2015

To: Mr. Kenneth Fields, City Manager
Re : Renaming of Washington Avenue

Dear Mr. Fields,

The Pastor, Officers and Members of Allen Temple A.M.E. Church have no objections to renaming Washington Avenue to Barack Obama Avenue. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me at the telephone number listed above. God bless!

Sincerely,

Reverend Ella Edwards

Reverend Ella Edwards, Pastor



NEW HOPE FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH

P.O. BOX 2337
Lake Wales, Florida 33859

3900 Washington Avenue
Lake Wales, Florida 33853

PHONE (863) 676-4057 • FAX (863) 678-3847

JAN 2nd 2015

January 15, 2015

City of Lake Wales
City Manager
201 West Central Avenue
Lake Wales, FL 33853

Ministerial Staff

Bishop Charles Brown
Senior Pastor

Min. Janice Denmark
Administrative Assistant

Min. Lucinda Ann Key
Associate Minister

Min. Rochelle Burrage
Associate Minister

Min. Darius Stoudemire
Associate Minister

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to affirm the Pastor, Ministerial Staff and congregation of New Hope Free Will Baptist Church are in support of the name change of Washington Avenue to Barrack Obama Boulevard.

Our church is currently located on Washington Avenue and we maintain the change would be a positive move for the city to pursue.

Sincerely,

Bishop Charles Brown

Bishop Charles Brown
Senior Pastor

CB:jd

HAND DELIVERED 1/26/2015

COMMISSIONER BETTY WOJCIK
LAKE WALES CITY COMMISSION
201 West Central Avenue
Lake Wales, Florida 33853

January 26, 2015

RE: Followup to PUBLIC HEARING debate on January 20, 2015 on the RENAMING OF WASHINGTON AVE

Dear Commissioner Wojcik,

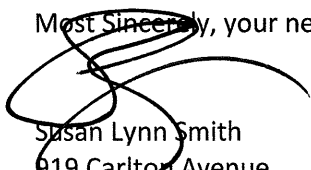
Following up on the communities input, many comments and suggestions from last weeks Hearing on the renaming of Washington Ave I encourage you, Commissioner, to carefully consider:

1. Propose and Support an **Amendment to the existing City Ordinance** whereby **barring the renaming of any existing city roads, bridges, buildings and other properties, that are presently named in honor of notable persons, whether they be founders from the national, state, county or city levels, or other meritorius persons of significance, like lifelong volunteers, historians, etc....** thereby protecting the honor and respect those notables deserve, while also representing the City as a whole, and, eliminating the temptations to disrespect those some persons had expressed, and may wish to achieve, solely for racial reasons.
2. In the absence of having such an Amended Ordinance, aforementioned, and firmly in place prior to the scheduled February 3, 2015 vote on the Renaming of Washington Avenue, **I would encourage you to rally support for your own suggestion, and consider an alternative street, thereby eliminating any disrespect to our First President, George Washington, whom was also a veteran and unparelled General whom led our troops in battle, from the mount on a horse, and on to victory during the Revolutionary War, which ultimately gave us the independence to decide these very issues.**
3. Or, in the alternative I emlore you to **heed Vice Mayor Lutton's suggestion thereby preparing your ballot in two parts**, because this really is a two pronged issue, whereby **one vote to determine the 'renaming issue' of Washington Avenue, and secondly on the dedication of a city street** (to be determined) **to honor Barack Obama.**

Because each of you, as local "lawmakers" represents and acts for the entire city in the totality of your votes, regardless of your elected districts, it is incumbent upon you each to carefully tread so as not to show disrespect to the remaining citizens of Lake Wales and equally to those persons of significance before you and us. It is therefore critical for each of you to **pass an Amended Ordinance barring such disrespectful actions**, find and **select an alternative location** to name after our current President, and **prepare your upcoming ballot in two parts**; one for the renaming of Washington Avenue and secondly for the dedication of another city street or property.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and diligence for the benefit of all Lake Wales citizens and our posterity.

Most Sincerely, your neighbor,



Susan Lynn Smith
919 Carlton Avenue
Lake Wales, Florida 33853