



Date: June 5, 2007
To: Members of the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee
From: Phil T. Hester, Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine /s/
Subject: Recommendation to name Admiral Kidd Park Community Center in honor of Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald

DISCUSSION

At the May 8, 2007 City Council meeting, Seventh District City Councilmember Tonia Reyes Uranga requested that the new Admiral Kidd Park Community Center be named in honor of Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald (Attachment #1). According to Administrative Regulation AR 8 – 7, the City Council referred the request to the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Parks and Recreation Commission considered this request at their May 17, 2007 meeting (attachment #2) and unanimously approved this request.

The Administrative Regulations AR 8 – 7 applies to the naming of all public land, buildings and facilities. AR 8 – 7 provides several policies to guide the consideration of a naming request. The following are those policies:

- The name should incorporate Long Beach whenever important for civic recognition or identification;
- A name in honor of a recognized geographic area, a topographic feature or a historically significant event may be appropriate;
- A name in honor of persons or families who have donated the land or a substantial portion of the improvement costs may be appropriate when applicable;
- A name in honor of a person or persons who have served the nation, the State of California, and/or the City of Long Beach in an exceptional or distinguished manner may be appropriate if warranted by service of major significance;
- A name in honor of a living person, or of a deceased person within one year of their death, is not appropriate, unless the significance of that person's contribution is worthy of an exception to the policy;
- A name in honor of a person is not appropriate when a name in honor of another person has been given to the same site, building or facility in the past;
- A name in honor of a person is not appropriate if that person has been overly recognized in the past; and,
- A name may be selected through a competition or a contest.

Naming the community center after Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald is appropriate under the category of persons who have served the nation, the State of California, and/or the City of Long Beach in an exceptional or distinguished manner of major significance. Congresswoman Millender-McDonald served four years in the California State Assembly, and over ten years in the United States Congress, representing the area of Long Beach where Admiral Kidd Park is located.

Some concern has been expressed that the naming of the community center for Congresswoman Millender-McDonald will take away from the park being named for Admiral Isaac Campbell Kidd. Part of that concern relates to the lack of information in the park relating to Admiral Kidd. That is being addressed in the improvement plans that will incorporate the three-acre site at the southeast corner of the park. Those improvements will include a tile image of the three naval vessels that have been named for Admiral Kidd, with information concerning his significance as the highest-ranking casualty in the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor as commanding officer on the battleship Arizona.

It is not unusual to separately name a facility located within a park. The best-known example in Long Beach is probably Blair Field in Recreation Park. Other more recent examples include Darren Erstad Field at Silverado Park, and Tim Salmon Plaza at Stearns Champions Park. Thus, this is not expected to cause any confusion or take away from the honor of naming the park for Admiral Kidd.

Finally, AR 8-7 recommends that there be a one-year period between the death of a person and the naming of a facility in their honor. This is intended to provide a time of reflection so that something is not named for someone that does not deserve the honor out of the emotions of the grieving period. In this case, the obvious achievements of Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald make the need for a period of reflection unnecessary and warrant an exception to that guideline.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action on this matter is not time critical.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact with the recommended action.

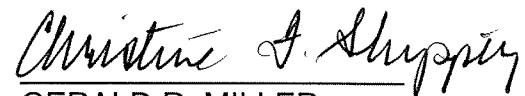
IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMITTEE:

Concur with the recommendation that "Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center" is an appropriate name for the new community center in Admiral Kidd Park and refer the recommendation to the City Council for approval.

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Attachments

APPROVED:


GERALD R. MILLER
CITY MANAGER



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE

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May 17, 2007

Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Subject: Recommendation regarding "Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center" as the Potential Name for the new community center at Admiral Kidd Park

The action before the Parks and Recreation Commission is to recommend a name for the new community center to honor the Congresswoman that represented the area while the community center was built.

Background. The Seventh District City Councilmember, Tonia Reyes Uranga, on May 8, 2007, requested that the new community center, recently completed in her district, be named the Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center. According to Administrative Regulation AR 8-7, the City Council has referred the request to its Housing and Neighborhoods Committee, and to the Parks and Recreation Commission for recommendations on that name. The Parks and Recreation Commission recommendation will be transmitted to the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee before it acts on the naming.

The Administrative Regulations AR 8-7 applies to the naming of all public land, buildings and facilities. AR 8-7 provides several policies to guide the consideration of a naming request. The following are those policies:

- The name should incorporate Long Beach whenever important for civic recognition or identification;
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- A name in honor of a person is not appropriate if that person have been overly recognized in the past; and,
- A name may be selected through a competition or a contest.

Naming the park site after Juanita Millender-McDonald is appropriate under the category of persons who have served Long Beach in an exceptional or distinguished manner of major significance. Ms. Millender-McDonald served four years in the California State Assembly, and over ten years in the United States Congress, representing the area of Long Beach where Admiral Kidd Park is located.

Discussion. Referring back to the naming policies in AR 8-7, the name as Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center is appropriate as it honors an exceptional career of service to the community. Ms. Millender-McDonald is also exceptional in her overall career, which included returning to school to earn a college degree, adding a post-graduate degree, achieving employment as a school teacher, and then advancing to an administrative position in the school district, and obtaining elected positions on the Carson City Council, in the California Assembly, and the United States Congress. Additional biographical information is attached. Her career not only exemplifies the ability to triumph despite a late start, but also the ability to overcome racial and gender discrimination, and receive the high national honor of serving in a leadership position in the Congress of the United States.

Some concern has been expressed that the naming of the community center for Ms. Millender-McDonald will take away from the park being named for Admiral Isaac Campbell Kidd. Part of that concern relates to the lack of information in the park relating to Admiral Kidd. That is being addressed in the improvement plans that will incorporate the 3-acre site at the southeast corner of the park. Those improvements will include a tile image of the three naval vessels that have been named for Admiral Kidd, with information concerning his significance as the highest-ranking causality in the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor as commanding officer on the battleship Arizona.

It is not unusual to name a facility in a park with a separate name from the name of the park. The best-known example in Long Beach is probably Blair Field in Recreation Park. Other more recent examples include Darren Erstad Field at Silverado Park, and Tim Salmon Plaza at Stearns Champions Park. Thus, this is not expected to cause any confusion or take away from the honor of naming the park for Admiral Kidd.

Finally, AR 8-7 recommends that there be a one-year period between the death of a person and the naming of a facility in their honor. This is intended to provide a time of reflection so that something is not named for someone that does not deserve the honor out of the emotions of the grieving period. In this case, the obvious achievements of Juanita Millender-McDonald make the need for a period of reflection unnecessary and warrant an exception to that guideline.

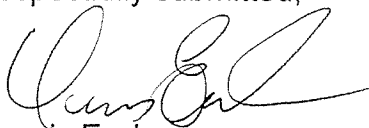
It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend to the Housing and Neighborhood Committee, and the full City Council that Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center is an appropriate name for the new community center in Admiral Kidd Park.

Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission

May 17, 2007

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Respectfully submitted,



Dennis Eschen
Manager, Planning & Development

Concurred by,



Phil T. Hester,
Director of Parks, Recreation & Marine

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Attachments



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Tonia Reyes Uranga
Councilmember, 7th District
Memorandum

R-16

Date: May 8, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Tonia Reyes Uranga, Seventh District *TRU*

Subject: **AGENDA ITEM: Request to name Admiral Kidd Park Community Center in honor of Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald.**

With the recent passing of Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald on April 22, the City of Long Beach lost a tireless advocate and a great friend, who always fought to make Long Beach and the surrounding region a better place to live.

She was a national leader who still fought for our local interests, such as fighting to preserve the Boeing C-17 production line, assisting the City to secure much needed funding for infrastructure and transportation issues, and protecting programs such as the Community Development Block Grant program, which expands economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

While there will undoubtedly be many tributes to Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, I believe that it is appropriate for the City of Long Beach to show honor, respect and gratitude to someone who did accomplished so much on our behalves.

Suggested Action: I respectfully request that the Long Beach City Council support naming the new community center at Admiral Kidd Park as the "Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center" and refer the item to the Housing and Neighborhoods Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Juanita Millender-McDonald, an educator who began her political career as a Carson city councilwoman and ended it as the "mayor" of the U.S. House of Representatives, died Saturday night. She was 68.

Carson Mayor Jim Dear said the congresswoman died of colon cancer that had spread to her liver. Though she announced only last week that she had cancer, and left the impression she would return to Capitol Hill, she was receiving hospice care. She died at her Carson home.

President George Bush called her "a dedicated public servant who tirelessly and honorably served her country for many years." Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said she was "a pioneer who will continue to serve as an inspiration for Californians and all Americans."

Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster described her as "vibrant, charismatic and a constant champion for the causes she believed in. Our prayers are with her family throughout this very difficult time."

"She was a patriot and a remarkable public servant in the truest sense," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe. "She was a key ally in keeping the Los Angeles Air Force Base open for business. Her loss is a loss to all of Los Angeles County and the state of California."

Naomi

Advertisement

Rainey, president of the Long Beach Branch of the NAACP, counted Millender-McDonald as a friend.

"She was a woman of virtue and character who cared about the community, friends and the world at large," she said. "She served a diverse constituency, and was respected by a majority of those constituents."

Millender-McDonald was remembered Sunday for her strength, her faith

and her commitment to public service. The daughter of an Alabama minister, she had a forceful public speaking style and a natural gift for politics.

"She was anointed with it," said Shirley Graves, a close friend. "The girl was good. Even when she was in education, she could work the aisles."

She was born in Birmingham, Ala., on Sept. 7, 1938. Her father was the Rev. Shelly Millender Sr., who raised her alone after her mother died of a heart attack when Juanita was 3 years old.

She married Jim McDonald and moved to Carson, where she raised five children. At 40, she went back to school and got a bachelor's degree from the University of Redlands.

Millender-McDonald worked as an English teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She earned a master's degree in education, allowing her to rise into the district's administrative ranks.

In the following years, she worked on local campaigns and was elected to the Democratic Central Committee, a launching pad for other offices. She also got involved in politics in her north Carson neighborhood.

Marvin Clayton, who was head of the local chapter of the NAACP at the time, said Millender-McDonald was active in protests to demand the hiring of black wait staff at the Sizzler restaurant and a black Santa Claus at the local mall.

"She was very much a go-getter," Clayton recalled.

In 1990, she ran for City Council, taking on a 72-year-old incumbent councilman who had been accused of sexual harassment.

She showed an early interest in gender equity issues, raising the pay of Carson's city clerk and treasurer, said Clerk Helen Kawagoe.

Two years later, with the key support of then-Rep. Mervyn Dymally, she beat two incumbents in the race for the newly drawn 55th Assembly District. In 1996, she emerged from a crowded field to win a special congressional election, replacing Rep. Walter Tucker, who had been convicted of fraud.

Her rapid rise was the result of determination and the support of groups like Emily's List, which helps women running for elective office.

"She was very much aware of the power of women," said state Sen. Jenny Oropeza, D-Carson, who counts Millender-McDonald as a mentor. "She spoke to me woman to woman. She said, 'Don't let the guys push you around.'"

Known until that point as Juanita McDonald, she changed her name to Millender-McDonald when she was sworn in to Congress, in memory of her father, who died in 1983.

"It was a 'thank you' for giving me the upbringing and values and the principles that I have lived by," she said at the time.

She said she would have changed her name when she was elected to the Assembly, but was told it would have been too long for the electronic voting board. (As it was, Millender-McDonald had the longest surname in Congress.)

She was involved early on in raising awareness of HIV and AIDS, especially among black women. For 10 years, she held an annual AIDS Walk at Cal State Dominguez Hills that raised over \$2 million, Graves said.

In her early years in Congress, Millender-McDonald courted controversy by seeking an independent investigation of claims that the CIA was responsible for the crack epidemic. She was also criticized by some constituents for not being tough enough on the CIA.

She got some unwanted attention when her son Keith, a water board member who had run unsuccessfully for his mother's former Assembly seat, was tried and convicted on corruption charges. Keith McDonald is still serving a 41-month prison sentence.

Millender-McDonald, who never spoke publicly about her son's case, was not implicated in the scandal. The voters never punished her for her son's misdeeds.

She was a strong supporter of the Alameda Corridor project, fought to keep the Boeing C-17 project in Long Beach, and supported the Major League Baseball academy in Compton. She worked to prevent the closures of King/Drew Medical Center and Compton College.

Lately, as the ranking member and then the chair of the House Administration Committee - a position known as the mayor of the House - she focused on election issues, highlighting cases in which she believed low-income voters had been disenfranchised.

Millender-McDonald is survived by her husband, Jim; five children, Valerie, Angela, Sherryll, Chris and Keith; and five grandchildren. Services are pending.

Staff writer Hanna Chu contributed to this report. Gene Maddaus can be reached at gene.maddaus@dailybreeze.com or (310) 543-6639.