



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0037, Version: 1

Recommendation to rename the El Dorado Park West Senior Center the “Dr. Thomas J. Clark Community Center,” in recognition of the legacy, contributions and services of former Long Beach Councilman and Mayor, Thomas J. Clark. (District 4)

On September 28, 2021, the Government, Personnel and Elections Oversight Committee approved a recommendation submitted by Committee Chair Supernaw, to consider renaming the El Dorado Park West Senior Center, the “Dr. Thomas Clark Community Center” (Attachment A). The motion passed unanimously and was then referred to the Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration as the next step in the re-naming process.

On October 21, 2021, the Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the recommendation to forward the item to the City Council for approval. Representatives from the 4th District City Council Office, as well as Dr. Clark’s daughter, were in attendance in support of the motion.

Tom Clark was the consummate public servant. After two years in the military, he enrolled at Long Beach City College where he excelled in academics and was a Track and Field athlete. In the early 1950’s, he earned B.S., O.D., and M.S., degrees at the University of California, Berkeley and opened his optometric practice in Los Altos in 1953.

Prior to being elected to public office, Dr. Clark served on the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). In the early 1960’s, Dr. Clark led the Commission’s effort to secure a bond for the purchase of the land that is now El Dorado Park West. It is safe to say that without his efforts, the open space we enjoy today would have been developed for commercial purposes.

In 1966, he was elected to the Long Beach City Council for the Fourth District where he served for 30 years (1966-1996), including three terms as Mayor of Long Beach (1975-1978, 1978-1980 and 1982-1984). From 1981 - 1982, he served as President of the League of California Cities.

After Dr. Clark retired from the Long Beach City Council, he was elected to the Long Beach City College Board of Trustees for Area Five where he served for 16 years including several terms as Board President. During his tenure at Long Beach City College, he served as President of both the California Community College Trustees and the Community College League of California (2006). In 1976, he was inducted into the Long Beach City College Hall of Fame for his community leadership and in 2007 he was elected to the Long Beach City College Hall of Champions for his accomplishments as a Track and Field athlete. No one in

Long Beach history has given more for a longer period than the Honorable Tom Clark.

The City's Policy and Process for Naming of City-owned Land, Buildings, and Facilities Administrative Regulation (AR 8-7) provides the policy to guide the consideration of a naming request:

- 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 been overly recognized in the past
- A name may be selected through a competition or a contest.

The matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani on December 8, 2021 and by Budget Analysis Officer Greg Sorensen on December 7, 2021.

The total cost for fabrication and installation of signage is unknown at this time. If approved, the Parks Recreation and Marine Department will work with the Public Works Department to obtain appropriate cost estimates for the signage and identify funding for this project. For previous similar projects to replace existing facility signage, it was determined that costs were approximated to be between \$20,000 and \$30,000. Fabrication and installation of the signage will not move forward until funding is identified. Once funding is identified, the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department will return to City Council to appropriate funding for this project. This recommendation is anticipated to result in a moderate impact to staff hours beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and a moderate impact on existing City Council priorities. Local job impact is unknown until a vendor is selected.

Approve recommendation.

BRENT DENNIS
DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER