



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Reginald Goodson, Interim City Manager

**Date:** November 22, 2024

**Subj:** Hold a Public Hearing – Renaming Veterans Park

## ***BACKGROUND:***

In 2007, the City purchased a small piece of property located at 222 North Water Street at the foot of the Pasquotank/Camden Bridge from Carolina Construction Corporation. A CAMA Grant of \$337,500 was the funding source used for the purchase. This parcel of property is 60' X 175' and is .205 acres. It is the site of a former service station. It is bulk headed and all the tanks were removed prior to the City's purchase.

Knowing that a new eastbound bridge was to be built in the near future, this park was irrigated and left as an open green space for several years. The bridge building contractor, Archer Western, needed staging space; and NCDOT paid the City \$49,700 to rent the park until the construction of the bridge was completed. At the completion of the bridge project, NCDOT was to return the park to its original grassed and irrigated state. The City Council wanted a park to honor our veterans and this parcel became the future site of our Veterans Park. Council discussed it at that time, and determined that the rental fee from NCDOT would be used to construct this park. The Council also placed \$50,000 in the FY 2015-2016 budget and utilized other funding sources as well. Parks and Recreation Department budget for the construction of Veterans Park. Parks and Recreation Department staff worked with members of several veterans' organizations such as the VFW Post 6060, American Legion and Disabled American Veterans to develop five potential park designs. On April 7, 2017, Veterans Park was formally opened by dedication.

## ***ANALYSIS:***

During the November 12, 2024 City Council meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Spence issued a request that Veterans Park be named after General Hawthorne L Proctor (US Army Retired). Retired Major General Proctor, a native of Newland, is the first African American and the first North Carolinian to serve as a Quartermaster General in the US Army. The City Council adopted a Public Property Naming Policy in April 2012 (attached), which requires that a public hearing be held to

consider any comments or input prior to naming City-owned facilities or land.  
The Council called for that hearing on November 12, 2024.

***AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING:***

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, rename Veterans Park as "General Hawthorne L. Proctor Park."

## **CITY OF ELIZABETH CITY PUBLIC PROPERTY NAMING POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City has the sole authority to designate the name of all public property and facilities. All City-owned property, buildings, facilities and land shall bear such names as the Elizabeth City Council shall approve pursuant to this policy.

### **CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. The City Council will consider proposals for the naming of City property, a park, public open space, building or an area within a park, open space, or building to recognize a person, organization, historical event, geographic location or feature, or a plant or animal indigenous to the Elizabeth City area. Property to be given names shall be owned by the City of Elizabeth City government. Properties to be named include buildings, any areas in building, other physical facilities, collections of books, records or other printed or audio-visual materials, land or water areas.
2. The City Council will consider the naming of a public property for an individual or an organization only when the individual(s) or organization has made exceptional contributions to the City and/or the community at-large in the form of money, land, time, or overall service to the community.
3. City Council designation of the name of a park, public open space, building or an area within a park, public open space or building will only apply to that particular building or tract of land and the name cannot be transferred to another park, public open space, or building without being proposed under the formal process outlined in this policy.
4. The City Council cannot control the names of buildings or parcels of land that are sold and are no longer used to provide City services.
5. Official names for property belonging to the City shall only be changed by the City Council as it deems appropriate.
6. This policy does not apply to the naming of public streets, roads, alleys and other similar thoroughfares. The naming of streets shall conform to the Elizabeth City City Code.

## **PROCESS OF CONSIDERATION**

The proposed naming of a public building, facility or land may be generated in the following manner:

7. City staff recommendation through an agenda request to the City Council in accordance with this policy. Staff's recommendation shall be made prior to the completion of any project to construct, renovate or develop a property. Consideration of the recommendation shall be made during a regularly scheduled public meeting.
8. Naming initiatives by individual City Council members shall be provided to the City Manager for preparation as an agenda request for consideration by the City Council.
9. The City Council accepts a donation of land, money, materials and/or services by an individual or organization where the donor has stipulated a naming will occur to recognize the contribution. In such situations the agreement is final and the name cannot be changed unless the City Council decides to return the land, money, materials or services to the individual or organization making the contribution or the individual or organization fails to deliver the agreed upon land, money, materials and/or services.
10. Requests from a City citizen or a group of City citizens who wish to recommend the naming of a park, building, public open space, or a particular area within a City facility to the Council shall be made in writing to the City Manager for consideration by the City Council.

## **GUIDELINES**

11. Upon receipt of the staff report and recommendation during an open meeting, the City Council shall state its intent to consider the adoption of a resolution for the naming or renaming of the public building, facility or land at the next or some subsequent meeting as determined by the City Council; and call for a public hearing with proper public notice to hear comments on the proposal or application.
12. The City Council may determine the public building, facility or land is of significant public interest and may deem it appropriate to hold community meetings in targeted areas to solicit additional public input.
13. Upon approval of the resolution by the City Council, the public building, facility or land shall bear the name assigned to it from and after the date

of the Council action or such subsequent dates as the Council may prescribe.

14. Current names for property belonging to the City shall remain the same unless changed by the City Council upon relocation or change in function of the property.
15. Official names for property belonging to the City shall be based upon geographical, historical, ecological, functional, or other such factors as the City Council deems appropriate. If a geographical reference of locational value is derived from the name of a person, it may be used in naming City property.
16. A public building/facility under construction/renovation or land purchased for park development or conservation/preservation will be given a "working title" that will only become the official name of the property when formally approved as such by the City Council.
17. Exceptions to this policy of naming property belonging to the City may be made by the City Council, as it deems appropriate.
18. This policy shall not be construed as the mechanism for selling the permanent naming rights to City structures, buildings, facilities or land.

*Adopted by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City on April 23, 2012.*