

INTRODUCED: June 14, 2021

AN ORDINANCE No. 2021-176

To designate that portion of Leigh Street from its intersection with North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to its intersection with North Belvedere Street in honor of the late Bill “Bojangles” Robinson.

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Patrons – All Members of Council

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Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney

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PUBLIC HEARING: JUN 28 2021 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of Council, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson was born in Jackson Ward on May 25, 1878, and began performing local minstrel shows as a child at five years of age; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of Council, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson later moved to Washington, D.C. where he performed in the show *The South Before the War*; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of Council, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson served in the United States Army and, upon completion of his service, he continued to tour with vaudeville shows, ultimately gaining national acclaim after starring in several stage revues on Broadway and appearing in over a dozen films; and

AYES:            9            NOES:            0            ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED:    JUN 28 2021    REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_    STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of Council, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson died on November 25, 1949, and his body lay in repose at the 369th Infantry Regiment Armory in Harlem, New York, where 32,000 visitors paid their respects before his burial in the Cemetery of the Evergreens in New York; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of Council, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson was posthumously inducted into the National Museum of Dance Hall of Fame in 1987, and each year his birthday, May 25, is recognized as “National Tap Dance Day;” and

WHEREAS, the City desires to memorialize Bill “Bojangles” Robinson’s contributions to the cultural life of the city of Richmond and beyond by designating that portion of Leigh Street from its intersection with North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to its intersection with North Belvedere Street in his honor as “Bill Bojangles Robinson Boulevard;” and

WHEREAS, because this designation is honorary only, the provisions of sections 8-7 through 8-10 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, do not apply to the designation made hereby or to any signs erected pursuant to this ordinance;

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

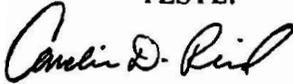
§ 1. **Designation of Street Block for Honorary Name.** The portion of Leigh Street from its intersection with North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to its intersection with North Belvedere Street shall be designated in honor of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson as “Bill Bojangles Robinson Boulevard,” pursuant to this ordinance.

§ 2. **Effect of Designation.** The designation of the portion of Leigh Street from its intersection with North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to its intersection with North Belvedere Street made pursuant to this ordinance shall be honorary only, shall not replace the existing name of the road, and shall

have no effect on the address of any property with an address on the designated road. The sole effect of designation pursuant to this ordinance shall be to authorize the placement of commemorative signs in accordance with this ordinance memorializing the designation in honor of the named person.

§ 3. **Administration of Ordinance.** The Department of Public Works shall implement this ordinance by installing, as soon as practicable after the adoption of this ordinance, and maintaining commemorative signs in accordance with this section. The commemorative signs shall be clearly distinct from the street signs used to identify the road in question such that a reasonable person could not conclude that the commemorative signs reflect the actual name of the road. The commemorative signs (i) shall be affixed to a sign pole installed at each end of the portion of the road designated in section 1 of this ordinance for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of this section or to any existing sign identifying the portion of the road designated in section 1 of this ordinance located at each end of the portion of the road designated in section 1 of this ordinance and (ii) shall bear the name “Bill Bojangles Robinson Boulevard,” as set forth in section 1 of this ordinance.

§ 4. **Effective Date.** This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

A TRUE COPY:  
TESTE:  
  
City Clerk



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney

**THROUGH** Joyce Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst

**COPY** Katherine Jordan, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Council Member  
Sven Philipsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Liaison  
Tabrica Rentz, Interim Deputy City Attorney

**DATE** May 12, 2021

**PAGE/s** 1 of 2

**TITLE** Honorary Street Designation – Bill “Bojangles” Robinson Boulevard

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance**  **Resolution**

**REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON**

Jordan

**SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE**

Land Use, Housing & Transportation

**ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

The patron request that legislation be drafted for Council’s consideration that designates the Leigh Street from Belt Boulevard to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in honor of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, as “*Bill Bojangles Robinson Boulevard*,” using two signs.

**BACKGROUND**

The City has occasionally made designations of City blocks in honor notable persons in Richmond’s history. Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, who was born in Jackson Ward on May 25, 1878, is such a person. He began performing local minstrel shows as a child at five years.

After moving to DC, he performed in the show *The South Before The War*. He served in the US Army before continuing to tour with vaudeville shows. He gained national acclaim after starring in several stage revues on Broadway and appearing in over a dozen films.

Mr. Robinson died on November 25, 1949 and his body lay in repose at the 369th Infantry Regiment Armory in Harlem, where 32,000 visitors paid their respects. He is buried in Cemetery of the Evergreens in New York.

Posthumously, Mr. Robinson was inducted into the National Museum of Dance Hall of

