

INTRODUCED: June 11, 2018

AN ORDINANCE No. 2018-177

To designate the 3100 block of Hawthorne Avenue in honor of Clarence Lee Townes, Jr.

Patron – President Hilbert

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: JUNE 25 2018 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, Clarence Lee Townes, Jr., died on January 11, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Clarence Lee Townes, Jr., was born in Richmond on January 21, 1928, educated in Richmond Public Schools, and graduated from Virginia Union University; and

WHEREAS, Clarence Lee Townes, Jr., was active in civic, educational, business, and professional activities, including work with Richmond Renaissance, now Venture Richmond; the Metropolitan Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau; Howard University's Joint Center for Political Affairs, providing guidance to newly-elected black officials; the Richmond Public Schools Board of Trustees; the Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors; the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority; and other governmental, educational, and private organizations; and

AYES: 8 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: JUNE 25 2018 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

WHEREAS, the City desires to memorialize Clarence L. Townes, Jr. 's contributions to the civic well-being of the city of Richmond and beyond as an advocate for equal opportunity by designating the 3100 block of Hawthorne Avenue in his honor; 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 (2015), 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 3100 block of Hawthorne Avenue shall be designated in honor of Clarence Lee Townes, Jr., pursuant to this ordinance.

§ 2. **Effect of Designation.** The designation of the street block made pursuant to this ordinance shall be honorary only, shall not replace the existing name of the street, and shall have no effect on the address of any property with an address on the designated street block. 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 street block in question such that a reasonable person could not conclude that the commemorative signs reflect the actual name of the street. The commemorative signs shall be affixed to the street sign for the street designated in

section 1 of this ordinance located at each end of the street block designated in section 1 of this ordinance and shall bear the name of the person set forth in section 1 of this ordinance.

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



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Lou Brown Ali
Council Chief of Staff

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Council Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Allen L. Jackson, Richmond City Attorney

THROUGH Lou Brown Ali, Council Chief of Staff *MKB on behalf*

FROM Joyce L. Davis, Council Policy Analyst *JLD*
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

COPY Chris Hilbert, 3rd District Council member
Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney
Meghan Brown, Deputy Council Chief of Staff *MKB*

DATE May 31, 2018

PAGE/s 1 of 3

TITLE: Honorary designation of the 1000th block of E. Hawthorne Avenue in honor of the late Clarence Lee Townes, Jr.

RECEIVED

JUN 01 2018

OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

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

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

President Hilbert

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Land Use, Housing & Transportation

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

The City makes designations of city blocks in honor of persons who have contributed to Richmond's civic well-being. The patron requests legislation be drafted for Council's consideration that designates the 1000th block of Hawthorne Avenue in honor of the late Clarence Townes, Jr.

BACKGROUND

The honorary designation of the 1000th block of Hawthorne Avenue is to honor Mr. Clarence Lee Townes who passed away, January 2017, at the age of 88. A Richmond native and longtime resident, Mr. Townes attended Richmond Public Schools, Armstrong High School, graduating in 1944. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Commerce from Virginia Union University. He was commissioned and served as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army

Infantry, receiving an honorable discharge in 1953.

Mr. Townes worked tirelessly during his lifetime to advance, strengthen, and increase the economic, educational, and political status of African-Americans in Richmond, statewide and in the nation. Mr. Townes was a key player in helping Richmond government transition from white to African American leadership in the 1970s. In the city of Richmond, he worked to broaden and increase economic and political opportunities for African Americans. Through his community and civic affairs involvement, he worked to bridge the racial divide of the business community and the government leadership to overcome racial divisions. Mr. Townes was a community advocate, civil rights champion, public servant, businessman and national and local political activist.

Among his significant contributions to the city was his role in helping to found and lead Richmond Renaissance (now Venture Richmond), an economic development booster organization for downtown Richmond revitalization. In the early 1980's, Mr. Townes served as Chairman of Richmond Renaissance and subsequently as its Deputy Director and Director. In his political career, Richmond City Council appointed Mr. Townes in January 1990 to serve on the Richmond Public Schools Board of Trustees. Serving until 1994, during part of his tenure, he served as the School Board chairman. Mr. Townes' public and community service leadership included serving as Commissioner of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (1963-1966). His leadership also included serving as a Member of the Virginia Commonwealth University Board of Visitors; Virginia Commonwealth University Real Estate Foundation; Valentine Museum Board of Trustees Emeritus; and as a Member and Chairman of the Metropolitan Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Mr. Townes was active in Republican Party politics in the late 1950s. He served on the Richmond City Republican Committee (1958-1961). In the 1960's, Mr. Townes served in Washington, D.C. as Special Assistant to the State Chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia. He organized and was treasurer of the National Negro Republican Assembly. At the height of his career with the Republican Party, Mr. Townes became an Assistant to the Chairman of the Republican National Committee and later Director of Minorities, working to increase Republican ties with minorities.

In 1970, he helped found the Joint Center for Political Affairs, an African-American think-tank associated with Howard University that assisted newly elected black officials with the business of government. While at the Joint Center, he served as its Director of Governmental Affairs from 1970-1974.

As a successful entrepreneur, Mr. Townes helped found a black controlled enterprise which led to the development of one of the first new apartment complexes in Church Hill. He was also successful in 1974, founding one of Richmond's first African-American-owned charter bus companies, Metropolitan Coach Corporation.

Mr. Townes' professional career included serving as a consultant on federal programs to Virginia State University and to the Virginia Electric and Power Company (currently Dominion Energy) on matters regarding equal employment. He also served as a consultant for the U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower

Administration, evaluating the agency's National Office Equal Opportunity Program. In banking, Mr. Townes was a prominent member of the Board of Directors of the Consolidated Bank and Trust Co. of Richmond, the oldest African-American controlled bank in the United States of America.

Through the honorary renaming of the 1000th block of Hawthorne Ave where Mr. Townes resided, Richmond City Council and Richmond residents will honor and recognize the important life and legacy of Mr. Clarence Lee Townes, Jr and his contributions to the city of Richmond.

REQUESTED INTRODOCTION DATE: June 11, 2018

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact Yes No

Budget Amendment Required Yes No

Attachment/s Yes No

Richmond City Council Ordinance/Resolution Request Form/updated 12.22.08/srs