

INTRODUCED: March 11, 2019

AN ORDINANCE No. 2019-078

To designate Birdwood Road in honor of retired Fire Chief Ronald C. Lewis.

Patrons – Ms. Trammell, Ms. Robertson, President Newbille, Mr. Jones, Ms. Larson,
Vice President Hilbert, Mr. Agelasto, Ms. Gray

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: MAR 25 2019 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, Ronald C. Lewis was installed as the City’s first African-American Fire Chief in 1978, a post which he held until 1995 and through which he led the modernization of what is now the City’s Department of Fire and Emergency Services and advocated for equality in hiring and promotional opportunities for minority firefighters; and

WHEREAS, Ronald C. Lewis, as Fire Chief of the City for 17 years, oversaw the rebuilding of seven fire houses, secured funding for updated firefighting equipment and advanced protective gear, launched progressive firefighter training and development programs, and introduced successful fire safety education programs to the City’s citizens, resulting in a significant yearly decline in fire-related fatalities; and

AYES: 9 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN:

ADOPTED: MAR 25 2019 REJECTED: STRICKEN:

WHEREAS, the City desires to memorialize Ronald C. Lewis' contributions to the City of Richmond by designating Birdwood Road 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.** Birdwood Road shall be designated in honor of Ronald C. Lewis, pursuant to this ordinance.

§ 2. **Effect of Designation.** The designation of Birdwood Road 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 shall be affixed to any sign identifying the road designated in section 1 of this ordinance located at each end of the road 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

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Allen Jackson, Richmond City Attorney
Richmond Office of the City Attorney

THROUGH Meghan K. Brown *NKD*
Interim Council Chief of Staff

FROM William E. Echelberger, Jr, Council Budget Analyst

COPY Reva M. Trammell, 8th District Representative
Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney
Richard K. Bishop, 8th District Liaison

DATE March 1, 2019

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TITLE Honorary Street Naming – Chief Ronald C. Lewis

RECEIVED

MAR 01 2019

OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

This is a request for the drafting of an Ordinance Resolution

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

Reva M. Trammell, 8th District Representative

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Land Use, Housing, and Transportation

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

- The Patron requests an ordinance to authorize the honorary naming of Birdwood Road in honor of the late Chief Ronald C. Lewis.

BACKGROUND

Summary:

- Chief Lewis served in the historic role of Richmond's first black Fire Chief of the Richmond Fire Department from 1978 until his retirement in 1995.
- The late Fire Chief Ronald C. Lewis was born June 15, 1934 In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Chief Lewis attended the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University.
- Chief Lewis made significant contributions to the Fire Service:
 - He entered the Philadelphia Fire Department on July 2, 1956 and rose through the ranks to become Battalion Chief In 1974.
 - He was selected to become Fire Chief for the City of Richmond on November 15, 1978.
 - He was a founding member of the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters, and served as its Northeast Regional Vice President and its Affirmative Action Officer.

