



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

16 SEP 15 PM 3:20

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Members of the City Council

FROM: Council President Lynette
Gibson McElhaney and
President Pro Tempore
Larry Reid

SUBJECT: Naming Grove in deFremery Park in
Honor of Bobby Hutton

DATE: 9/15/16

RECOMMENDATION

Council President McElhaney and President Pro Tempore Reid recommend that the City Council name the grove of trees located on the southern portion of deFremery Park at Magnolia Street as 'Bobby Hutton Grove'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adoption of the proposed resolution will authorize the naming of a grove of trees located on the southern portion of deFremery Park by Magnolia Street after Bobby Hutton who was the first member to join the Black Panther Party. His death near deFremery Park in 1968 marked a turning point in the history of Oakland and for the Black Panther Party. Each year, the local community commemorates his passing with a celebration in the park and has repeatedly requested the naming of a portion of the park in Bobby Hutton's honor.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Council President McElhaney has received numerous requests from local community members and leaders to name a portion of deFremery Park after Bobby Hutton. The policy to name a public facility is set forth in Resolution No. 65024 C.M.S., and requires that all requests for naming or renaming parks and recreation facilities be referred to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) and the Rules & Legislation Committee before the name is recommended to the City Council. In commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party, on April 13, 2016 PRAC unanimously recommended to name the grove in deFremery Park after Bobby Hutton.

The naming of the grove in deFremery Park officially recognizes a longstanding community tradition of referring to the deFremery Park as 'Bobby Hutton Park'. Often referred to as the 'first to fall', Bobby Hutton was the first member to join the Black Panther Party as well as the first to lose his life as a member. The community commemorates his passing each year at deFremery Park and considers his death a turning point in the political history of the local African American community and of Oakland in general.

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Bobby Hutton was born in Arkansas but moved to Oakland at the age of three when his family fled from the nightriders, extra-judicial mobs who perpetrated violence at night often by targeting African-Americans. In December 1966, Hutton was the first to join the newly formed Black Panther Party for Self Defense (BPP), a revolutionary Black nationalist and socialist organization founded in Oakland by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. At 16, he was the youngest member, the first recruit and the Party's treasurer. He joined the Black Panther Party because he wanted to make a difference in his community and because he believed in the Black Panther Party's Ten-Point Program.

On April 6, 1968, Bobby Hutton and several other members of the Black Panther Party were driving towards deFremery Park to organize a community event in support of jailed Party leader Huey Newton. In addition, the BPP members were attempting to calm the community which was still in shock after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. two days prior. Oakland police officers confronted the carload of BPP members on a side street. A shootout ensued, resulting in the death Bobby Hutton and the arrest of all others present on the scene.

The Black Panther Party was changed dramatically by the death of the teenager who was largely considered a martyr by party members after he was killed.

The timing of this memorial is appropriate given that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party in Oakland. In addition, drawing attention to the history of a community finding strength, compassion and unity after the violent death of one of their young men remains a vital message in Oakland during a period that has seen far too many deaths recently. This memorial symbolically advocates for justice and equality under the law for all people of color.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the City of Oakland in naming this portion of deFremery Park.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The Office of Council President McElhaney received numerous requests since 2013 to officially rename the park in memoriam for Bobby Hutton. In addition, the topic has been discussed and supported at several meetings related to the creation and implementation of the Black Arts Movement and Business District as well as with neighbors near the park and city staff. This item was also discussed at the April 13, 2016 PRAC meeting who unanimously recommended the proposal to the Oakland City Council.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There is no economic impact resulting from this report.

Environmental: There is no environmental impact resulting from this report.

Social Equity: Naming the grove after Bobby Hutton honors the local community by officially recognizing Bobby Hutton's contribution to Oakland.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

President Pro Temp Reid and Council President McElhaneey recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution naming the grove in deFremery park as the "Bobby Hutton Grove".

For questions regarding this report, please contact Alex Marqusee, Legislative Analyst, at 510-238-7031.

Respectfully submitted,



Council President Lynette Gibson McElhaneey

Prepared by: Alex Marqusee
Office of the Council President

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City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT LYNETTE GIBSON MCELHANEY AND
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE LARRY REID

**RESOLUTION TO NAME THE GROVE IN DEFREMERY PARK AS
'BOBBY HUTTON GROVE' IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE BLACK PANTHER
PARTY**

WHEREAS, the policy to name a public facility is set forth in Resolution 65024 C.M.S., and requires that all requests for naming or renaming parks and recreation facilities be referred to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) and the Rules & Legislation Committee before the name is recommended to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, Council President McElhaney has received numerous requests from local community members for several years to dedicate part of DeFremery Park in honor of Bobby Hutton and the Black Panther Party; and

WHEREAS, on April 13, 2016, PRAC unanimously recommended the renaming of the grove in DeFremery Park in honor of Bobby Hutton; and

WHEREAS, in December 1966, Bobby Hutton joined the newly formed Black Panther Party for Self Defense (BPP), a revolutionary Black nationalist and socialist organization founded in Oakland by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale and at 16, he was the youngest member, the first recruit and the Party's treasurer; and

WHEREAS, on April 6, 1968, Bobby Hutton and several other members of the Black Panther Party organized a community event at DeFremery Park in support of jailed Party leader Huey Newton and to calm the community which was still in shock after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.; and

WHEREAS, at that time, Oakland Police Officers confronted Bobby Hutton and several other members of the Black Panther Party who were driving to DeFremery Park, and Bobby Hutton was killed during the resulting shootout; and

WHEREAS, the community continues to commemorate Bobby Hutton, known as the 'first to fall', with annual celebrations in DeFremery Park and commonly refer to DeFremery Park as Bobby Hutton Park; and

WHEREAS, residents of Oakland have repeatedly requested that the City Council honor the Black Panther Party's contribution to the City of Oakland and specifically to honor the special historical significance of the Black Panther Party at DeFremery park; and

WHEREAS, the naming of a portion of DeFremery Park, specifically the grove of trees located on the southern portion of the Park approximately at Magnolia Street, honors the community's request for a dedication for Bobby Hutton and the Black Panther Party while still preserving the legacy of the DeFremery family's contributions to the City of Oakland; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the grove of trees located on the southern portion of DeFremery Park at Magnolia Street is hereby renamed and will from henceforth be known as the "Bobby Hutton Grove" in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, CAMPBELL-WASHINGTON, GALLO, GUILLÉN, KALB, KAPLAN, REID AND PRESIDENT GIBSON MCELHANEY

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: _____
LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California