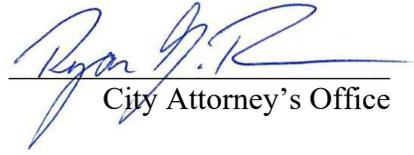


Approved as to Form and Legality


City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER LOREN TAYLOR

RESOLUTION HONORING HORACE HOUSTON FOR OVER 50 YEARS OF EXEMPLARY AND DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE CITY OF OAKLAND AND A GENERATION OF OAKLAND RESIDENTS

WHEREAS, Horace Houston was one of six siblings born to Louise and Villere Houston by midwife on March 7, 1946 in Reserve, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Horace always showed a deep passion for sports and recreation. He attended Rosenwald Elementary School and Fifth Ward High School where one of his favorite past times was sports, and he played all sports but his love was baseball and his entire family attended all his games; and

WHEREAS, Horace was an accomplished athlete and won at all levels of baseball and upon graduating from high school he had a wide choice of schools. His decision came down to either Southern University or Grambling State University, and he chose Southern University, a Historically Black University because it was closer to home; and

WHEREAS, according to Horace one of the proudest moments of his life was when he told his parents that he had earned an athletic scholarship to Southern University; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Southern he went on to play in a baseball league in Chicago, Illinois, and then returned home to marry his high school and college sweetheart, Mercedes Houston. According to Horace, when she was 10 years old she told his cousin that she would marry him one day; and

WHEREAS, Horace moved with his wife to Oakland, California in 1969. He was then hired as a Recreation Program Director at Brookfield Recreation Center; and

WHEREAS, Horace was then promoted to Recreation Center Director at Jefferson Square Recreation Center. He then returned to Brookfield at the direction of Al Jackson who was then a friend and Supervisor in the Parks and Recreation Department. He told his wife that he could not wait to go back to Brookfield; and

WHEREAS, Horace became a father on March 9 to his beloved daughter Kai Houston, whom he calls “the apple of his eye” and he was present in the room and watched her enter the world; and

WHEREAS, Horace served the City of Oakland’s youth and families at Arroyo Viejo Recreation Center. He has served as the Recreation Center Director at the Rainbow Recreation Center for over 20 years. He also provided valuable input for the development of the beautiful new Rainbow Recreation Center in District 6; and

WHEREAS, Horace has the unique distinction of being the long serving current City employee with over 50 years of service to the City of Oakland and its residents; and

WHEREAS, Horace has worked with at least five different Park and Recreation Directors; and

WHEREAS, Horace said that the most valuable part of his job has been teaching young people, watching them grow, return back, and teach him; and

WHEREAS, while at the Rainbow Recreation Center Horace worked with at-risk neighborhood youth in a program called the Underground Railroad that he led with District 7 Councilmember Larry Reid that helped youth explore other options and they in turn acted as mentors to other children in their community; and

WHEREAS, Horace is known for his deep and meaningful relationships with the neighbors in the surrounding neighborhood that allowed the Recreation Center to be a safe place for families and children; and

WHEREAS, Horace has over the years provided kids and adults with free shoes and clothes. And he has led countless backpack giveaways and turkey drives; and

WHEREAS, Horace has served as a mentor and successfully encouraged young people to apply to work in the City and some have become Recreation leaders; and

WHEREAS, the surrounding community has benefited from his active engagement which has often caused crime around the Center to settle down and caused a reduction in drug activity near the Center; and

WHEREAS, Horace has worked actively with the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs) during events such the National Night Out against crime to resolve critical issues in the community; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Horace oversaw the distribution of food every Tuesday and Thursday feeding up to 1,400 people a day through walk up and drive through pickups, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council recognizes Horace Houston’s significant contributions to the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS,

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
ASHA REED
Acting City Clerk and Clerk of the
Council of the City of Oakland, California