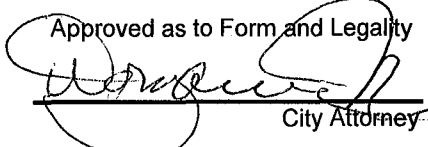


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Approved as to Form and Legality  
  
City Attorney

## OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

Introduced by Vice Mayor Campbell Washington & President Pro -Tem Guillen

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### RESOLUTION HONORING TORA ROCHA FOR 36 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CITY OF OAKLAND AND CONGRATULATING HER ON HER RETIREMENT

**WHEREAS**, Tora Rocha our esteemed colleague, is retiring after 36 years of outstanding service to the City of Oakland; and

**WHEREAS**, Tora Rocha began her career in 1980 with the City of Oakland as a Zookeeper at Oakland's Knowland Park Zoo where she worked as an elephant trainer, and then in 1983 Tora joined Children's Fairyland, where she was again an Animal Keeper and it was here that her long standing interest in Gardening first took root; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1985 Tora Rocha joined the Office of Parks and Recreation to become a Gardener I, while also completing course work at Merritt College in Ornamental Horticulture; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1987, Tora Rocha became a Gardener III (Gardener Crew leader) and worked in many key locations including Oakland's Morcom Rose Garden and Lakeside park; and

**WHEREAS**, Tora Rocha organized the "Deadheaders" volunteer group, which became instrumental in caring for over 4,000 roses spread out over the 7 acres of the Morcom Rose Garden, which in 2009 was named one of the Top 10 Rose Gardens in the United States by the All-America Rose Society; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2010 Tora Rocha became Oakland's first female Park Supervisor where she supervised the staff of both the Gardens at Lake Merritt and the West Oakland Parks, and here Tora developed a reputation for garnering support for city parks resulting in many new park volunteers; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2011, Tora Rocha launched the "Pollinator Posse" organization to bring attention to the plight of pollinating insects and the habitat needed for them to survive, the purpose of the Pollinator Posse is to create pollinator habitat throughout the Urban Jungle through outreach and education on the plight of our local pollinators, and she continues teaching

her staff, park patrons, and volunteers that landscapers are stewards of the ecosystem and not just outdoor custodians, and that gardening is a blend of both science and art; and

**WHEREAS**, Tora Rocha is a plant lover and promoter who uses innovative strategies in an age of diminished resources. She energized and expanded Earth Day and Martin Luther King Jr. Day to bring in hundreds of volunteers and support from organizations like Google and Apple into the Lake Merritt Gardens; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2012, Tora Rocha instigated and organized what has become a major annual Oakland event, the Autumn Lights Festival, a display of over a hundred locally produced illuminated art installations which attracts visitors by the thousands from all over the bay area, all in the name of support for special projects that improve and beautify the Gardens at Lake Merritt; and

**WHEREAS**, Tora Rocha has been featured in numerous magazine and newspapers such as Pacific Horticulture magazine, California Magazine, San Francisco Chronicle, Oakland Magazine, East Bay Times she has been interviewed, given talks and has made many appearances; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 2017, Tora Rocha was named “Best Garden Whiz” and “Butterfly Savior” by the Eastbay Express for her continued efforts to promote green spaces in Oakland; and Tora believes that sharing your passion with others can change a community; and

**WHEREAS**, after 36 years of Dedicated and Tireless Service to the City of Oakland, Tora Rocha is retiring to devote her creative energies to her true passions of horticulture and photography; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the City of Oakland honors, commends, and extends sincere gratitude to Ms. Tora Rocha for her 36 years of exceptional service to the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

AYES - BROOKS, CAMPBELL- WASHINGTON, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, GUILLEN, KALB, KAPLAN, and PRESIDENT REID

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
LaTonda Simmons  
City Clerk and Clerk of the  
Council of the City of Oakland, California