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RESOLUTION FOR BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 2017

RESOLUTION sponsored by the Board of Commissioners recognizing the month of February 2017 as Black History Month and honoring Dr. Conrad Worrill

WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History with five others in Chicago, and this association would then champion for the establishment of Negro History Week as a way to recognize the accomplishments of African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual and political development; and

WHEREAS, in 1926, Dr. Woodson's dreams of a Negro History Week became a reality and in 1976, the Association succeeded in expanding the observance to Black History Month which should be recognized year-round to call this nation's attention to the continued need to battle racism, pursue equal opportunity and equal justice and genuinely live up to this nation's democratic ideals and founding principles; and

WHEREAS, courageous men and women such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth spoke and acted against the tyranny of slavery; and

WHEREAS, in response to systematic and ongoing racial discrimination, Rosa Parks, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Malcolm X and other great American patriots carried out a new struggle for civil rights a full century after the abolition of slavery; and

WHEREAS, writers such as Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Alice Walker and Toni Morrison have created some of the most powerful works of the English language; and

WHEREAS, singers, composers and musicians such as Scott Joplin, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Louis Armstrong, Chuck Berry, Ray Charles and Tina Turner have moved the spirits of people worldwide; and

WHEREAS, African-American inventors have made incalculable contributions to the well-being of humanity, including the cellular phone (parts of which were co-patented by Henry T. Sampson in 1968), the elevator (Alexander Miles in 1867), the blood bank (Dr. Charles Drew in 1940), the spark plug (Edmond Berger in 1839), the carbon filament light bulb (Lewis Latimer in 1884), the gas mask and the traffic light (Garrett Morgan in 1916 and 1923), laser removal of cataracts (Patricia Bath in 1988) and a unit to control heart pacemakers (Otis Boykin in 1961); and

WHEREAS, the positive contributions of African-Americans, like those of Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, who performed the first open heart surgery at Provident Hospital, Ida B. Wells, Mary McLeod Bethune, President Barack Obama and the Tuskegee Airmen and many more, serve the best interests of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, the City of Chicago, the County of Cook, the State of Illinois and the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago appreciates those who have made significant social and political impact within the Chicagoland community, including Dr. Conrad Worrill,

who serves as a Professor and the Director of the Center for Inner City Studies at Northeastern Illinois University, as well as the national Chairman of the National Black United Front, where he works aggressively to change the American public school curriculum to be inclusive of the contributions of both Africans and African Americans. In 1983, while organizing to elect Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, Dr. Worrill co-founded the Task Force for Black Political Empowerment; and

WHEREAS, employees and constituents alike can be encouraged and inspired by the contributions of past MWRD employees, from those working on the excavation of the Sanitary and Ship Canal in the 19th century to those of today's 21st century workforce that are employed as attorneys, laboratory assistants, engineers, police personnel, computer scientists, pollution control officers, secretaries and countless others; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago recognizes and applauds African Americans who have strengthened our nation by urging reforms, overcoming obstacles, breaking down barriers and enriching our society with enormous contributions to the worlds of art, music, food and religious faith, and by investing and contributing in no small measure to this nation's economy through their commitment to education, entrepreneurial efforts and business leadership; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago has been a pioneer in recognizing the significant contributions that African Americans make to this country, which is evinced by its early adoption of a policy supporting the involvement and advancement of African Americans in the workplace and in doing business not only with the District but all businesses within its jurisdiction; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, on behalf of ourselves and staff, do hereby recognize the month of February 2017 as Black History Month and urge our fellow citizens to take note of, and to participate in, the special activities arranged in observance of this event; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Dated: February 16, 2017

Approved: MARIYANA T. SPYROPOULOS, President; BARBARA J. MCGOWAN, Vice President; FRANK AVILA, Chairman, Committee on Finance; TIMOTHY BRADFORD; MARTIN J. DURKAN; JOSINA MORITA; DEBRA SHORE; KARI K. STEELE; DAVID J. WALSH; Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Approved as to Form and Legality: Ronald M. Hill, General Counsel, RMH:aw

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