



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 24-1077, Version: 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE LIFE OF WALTER LEE BROOKS

WHEREAS, Walter Lee Brooks was born June 2, 1941 in Greenville, Mississippi to Amelia and Donald Brooks, and like many blacks at that time, they migrated to the westside of Chicago, where he attended Bryant Elementary school and eventually graduated from Harrison High School in 1960; and

WHEREAS, Walter was baptized at New Jerusalem MB Church under the late Rev. Lloyd Johnson, where he sang in the church choir and later served as a Deacon; and

WHEREAS, after graduating high school, Walter enlisted in the US Army and was stationed in Norfolk, Virginia; During his time in the Army, Walter served as the head cook, and provided security detail during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, after leaving the Army, Walter returned to Chicago, and began work at the Black Giant. Over the next few years, he would use his leadership skills to become the first black chef kitchen manager of Jewel, and eventually the first black general manager of Jack in the Box; and

WHEREAS always striving to further himself and other people of color, Walter opened his first grocery store, The Mad Butcher, in the early 70's on the west side of Chicago. His visionary and pioneering spirit eventually led to opening Eat & Run restaurant next to his grocery store, and in the early 80's he relocated to the Southside of Chicago, where he was able to place both businesses under one roof; and

WHEREAS, Walter always focused on training, teaching, and uplifting the black community. He had a statement that said "No One Will Help Us, But Us, the answer is Black Businesses means Black Jobs." This moto served as a driving force in his constant desire to expand and grow his business, while training the youth and hiring many of those who were considered unemployable; and

WHEREAS, in the early 90's, Walter was selling more chicken than "The Colonel," so he self-proclaimed himself "The General." The General would go on to successfully open Eat & Run Restaurants throughout the Southside of Chicago, Ohio, St. Lucia, Belize, Ghana, and a couple of franchises, and led the way to the creation of As Good As Mothers, the famous chicken and fish seasoning which was sold throughout the Midwest to various grocery stores and used in several restaurants; and

WHEREAS, "The General" could often be seen expressing his economic views on "Straight Talk" with W.L Lillard, where he was a proud member and active participant of the Straight Talk Economic Round Table, and he also was a regular guest on the "Munir Muhammad" show; and

WHEREAS, some of Walter's accomplishments include organizing the first and only Expo for Today's Black Man, implementing the Most Improved Student Award at several schools, and various recognitions from local businesses, churches, and organizations for his dedication and commitment to the community; and

WHEREAS, Walter also LOVED Black history. He took a trip to Africa with WVON and several trips with Africa Travel Advisors to places such as Dubai, Vera Cruz Mexico and Zanzibar to name a few. These trips focused on the history of blacks in these countries. In his final week he even asked about his passport; and

WHEREAS, Walter was always known for his Classic Cadillac cars, stylish clothes, and listening to music, and became affectionately known as the Music Man at Prairie Green Senior Lifestyle. He could always be found “Jammin The Box,” in his room, the hallway, at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and of course The Juke Joint; and

WHEREAS, Walter transitioned into eternity on December 30, 2023, and was proceeded in death by his mother, father and grandson Dontae, and

WHEREAS, Walter’s legacy will live on in his four children : Kim Young (Bonnie), Sherlanda Brooks (Jackie), Walter Brooks Jr (Felicia) and Leatrice Brooks (Leatha); Six grandchildren; Delvon Barnett, Patrick Young, Daniel Young, Jhaniya Brooks, Makayla Brooks, Walter Brooks III; Only sibling: Dorothy Lee Brooks; one sister-in-love Vera Brooks; Nieces and nephew; James, Angela and Wanda Howard, Sharon Brooks; 5 great nieces and nephews, cousins, extended family and friends. He will truly be missed by all;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby honor the life of Walter Lee Brooks as a distinguished member of the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and a suitable copy be presented to the family of Walter Lee Brooks so that his memory may be so honored and ever cherished.