



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 14-4375, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE, MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND MEMORY OF JAMES L. WHIGHAM

WHEREAS, James L. Whigham , a man whose life was devoted to public service, family, and faith, died on July 5, leaving friends, family and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS, James Whigham grew up in the East Garfield Park neighborhood on Chicago's west side where he attended St. Mathew's Catholic School and Quigley North Seminary; and

WHEREAS, after graduation from Quigley, James Whigham's strong ties and dedication to his community lead him to enter the Chicago Police Department Cadet Academy where his positive attitude and hard work earned him the respect of his fellow cadets and brought him recognition by his superiors; and

WHEREAS, James Whigham's dedication to service was not limited to his immediate community. He proudly served his country during the Vietnam War and left the service of his country to return to the Chicago Police Department; and

WHEREAS, James Whigham served with distinction and was singled out for recognition at the Chicago Police Department. He achieved the highest civil service rank possible, Captain. Whigham was selected by several police superintendents to serve in the exempt executive ranks and was elevated to Police Commander of two police districts and later served as Deputy Superintendent. His exemplary work was further recognized when he was chosen to run the police training academy where he helped shape the next generation of Chicago law enforcement. In further recognition of his expertise he was selected to create the new 911 Emergency Phone Response Center; and

WHEREAS, Senator Richard Durbin noted James Whigham's leadership and recommended him to President Bill Clinton who appointed him U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Illinois. James Whigham became the first African American to ever serve in that role. His extraordinary leadership skills were utilized by the U.S. Marshals service in its response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center; and

WHEREAS James Whigham's prodigious management, leadership and organizational talents were recognized and put to use by Cook County Board President John Stroger who appointed him to be the Inspector General of Cook County and then later as his Chief of Staff. After leaving the County he served the village of Hazel Crest as their Village Manager; and

WHEREAS, James Whigham was a firm believer and supporter of higher education. He received his undergraduate degree and one of his graduate degrees from Chicago State University, was a graduate of Northwestern University's Public Safety Institute and received a degree from the Strategic Management Program at the Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government; and

WHEREAS, just as he had taken his skills to teach the next generation of law enforcement officers at the police training academy, James Whigham took his talents to Governor's State University, where, as a university lecturer in their Masters of Public Administration program he helped shape the next generation of community leaders and civil servants; and

WHEREAS, James Whigham will be sorely missed by his family members. He was the proud father of three children: James, Summer and Jonathan was the treasured brother of Joe, Patricia, Odeal, Janel, Janetta and Raquel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County commemorates the extraordinary life of James L. Whigham, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to the family of James L. Whigham.