



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 16-3121, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

ONWARD NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE - CELEBRATING 8 YEARS OF SERVICE TO NORTHWEST COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, Onward Neighborhood House was established in 1926 as a community center serving the near northwest neighborhoods of Chicago, by a group of volunteers from the Glencoe Union Church and the Winnetka Congregational Church. It was named after the Onward Presbyterian Church, which served as its first home. Onward House formed clubs for its participants, including special interest and age-group clubs. They sponsored and housed numerous neighborhood activities as its staff helped acclimating residents find interpreters, referrals to city agencies and first aid. As the programs expanded so too did its need for new facilities. In 1928, the Chicago Congregational Union, together with Presbyterian Extension Board, provided the funds for a new building located at 600 N. Leavitt; and

WHEREAS, Prior to the 1920s, the idea of social service often referred to charity or relief, typically in the form of legal aid, immigrant assistance and traveler's aid. Most hardships up to then-both social and economic- had to be met by family and local efforts. The Great Depression (1930-1941), altered the social and physical needs of clients that pushed Onward House to focus on providing food, clothing and fuel as well as stress counseling. At this time, the agency served 130,000 annually through its education, youth and family support programs. On December 7, 1943, Onward Neighborhood House was officially incorporated as a not-for-profit organization "to maintain and conduct an organization to minister to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical needs of the community"; and

WHEREAS, fast forwarding to the early 2000's, Onward House acknowledged the need for proper technology training in a post-industrial economy, implicated by a digital divide in computer fluency among higher income and lower income populations, Onward House established its Community Computer Resource Center (CCRC) in 2000. On May 28, 2008, due to the displaced residents from newly gentrified areas and razed public housing, Onward House and its Board of Directors, sought out a new facility located at 5423 W. Diversey Avenue in the Belmont Cragin area; and

WHEREAS, continuing to serve families in the West Town & Belmont Cragin communities, Onward Neighborhood House continues to empower thousands of families and individuals seeking to achieve their full potential in a community-based setting through participant-driven educational, recreational and social service programs. Onward House remains true to their mission through their Early Childhood, School Age, Family Support, Food Pantry, Computer Center, Partnership Program and Adult Education Programs. Onward House continues to be a pillar of hope, guidance and development; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and Cook County Board, issue a proclamation that all the citizens of Cook County thank Onward Neighborhood House for 90 Years of service in the West Town community and 8 Years of service to the Belmont Cragin community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body, and an official copy of same be presented to Executive Director Mario F. Garcia and Onward Neighborhood House to commemorate this milestone event.