



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-4138, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **RECOGNIZING BRENDA PALMS BARBER FOR HER TIRELESS LEADERSHIP, DEDICATION, AND COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND SERVICE IN COOK COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, Brenda Palms Barber has served as Executive Director of North Lawndale Employment Network(NLEN) since it was founded in 1999, an urban workforce development agency; and

**WHEREAS**, Brenda Palms Barber is a graduate of Harvard's Strategic Perspectives in Non- Profit Management Program; and

**WHEREAS**, She also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Sweet Beginnings, LLC which was launched in 2004, a social enterprise using urban beekeeping to create jobs for those with significant barriers to employment, provide jobs and to gain a history of employment; and

**WHEREAS**, NLEN Chicago opened its first opportunity center in partnership with LSC Chicago using the Annie E. Casey Foundation model; and

**WHEREAS**, Sweet Beginnings LLC partnered with volunteers from the Boeing Company in 2007 to develop its business plan and Whole Food market begin distributing Bee Love products; and

**WHEREAS**, under the leadership of Brenda Palms Barber, NLEN has grown from 2 to 24 employees and generates an annual budget in excess of 2.4 million dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, Sweet Beginnings LLC expanded from a cottage industry to distributions at more than 40 Mariano stores; and

**WHEREAS**, NLEN launched its first skilled training program moving forward in partnership with CTA, Chicago Trust, and JP Morgan Chase Foundation in 2013. In addition, Sweet Beginnings; Bee Love products were being purchased at O'Hare and Midway Airports through Hudson News and they launched an education program at the Forest Preserve District of Cook County; and

**WHEREAS**, NLEN has received numerous awards including the First MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions, the prestigious Bank of America Neighborhood Award and the MetLife Foundation Community Partnership Award just to name a few; and

**WHEREAS**, Brenda Palms Barber raised NLEN's profile with extensive national media coverage with segments on CNN, the NBC Today Show, CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County Government acknowledges Brenda Palms Barber for transforming lives through North Lawndale Employment Network and Sweet Beginnings LLC.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that on behalf of the President, the Cook County Board of Commissioners and the 5, 4 million residents of Cook County take great pleasure in honoring and celebrating Ms. Brenda Palms Barber for her leadership, dedication and commitment as Executive Director of North Lawndale Employment Network and Chief

Executive Officer, of Sweet Beginnings, LLC and herewith express our sincere gratitude for your service to Cook County.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this Resolution is spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to Ms. Brenda Palms Barber in honor of this auspicious occasion.