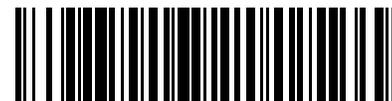




# City of Chicago



R2017-214

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	3/29/2017
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Burke (14)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Call for owners and management of Chicago Cubs organization to reconsider interest in creating cable channel network
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	Committee on Finance

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Chicago Cubs were established in 1876, eventually settling on the name “the Cubs” in 1903 and have been a longstanding tradition of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cubs celebrated a World Series victory in 2016, breaking the 108 year old curse since the last Cubs World Series win in 1908; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cubs owners and management have mentioned they are looking into creating their own proprietary cable channel network starting in 2020 when their contract with Comcast SportsNet Chicago ends; and

**WHEREAS**, the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers have both created their own networks, only broadcasting games exclusively on their cable channels, that costs an additional \$5 to \$6 per month on their cable package, essentially cutting off access to fans; and

**WHEREAS**, historically Cubs games were broadcast across the nation on WGN-TV, introducing the Cubs to generations of fans throughout the country; and

**WHEREAS**, recently Lifestyle site FanSided released their inaugural list of the 250 fanbases that are the best and most passionate across sports, entertainment, tech and more, and Cubs fans are now ranked number one; and

**WHEREAS**, because the Cubs games are broadcast on WGN-TV, this has helped maintain and expand the Chicago diaspora fan base, allowing the games to be more accessible, making it easier for young fans to be part of the tradition; and

**WHEREAS**, in an era when fans are quick to ditch their team, Cubs fans stayed true to the team their parents and grandparents introduced them to, and no matter how dark it looked, they believed wholeheartedly in the trusty mantra, “There’s always next year;” and

**WHEREAS**, in 2016 Cubs fans flocked to Grant Park and flooded the streets of Chicago for the team’s World Series victory parade and rally, where a reported 5 million attended; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of attending a Cubs game has increased over the years at a rate vastly disproportionate to the increase in the cost of living and while the quality of the fan experience at Wrigley Field may be better today than it was many years ago, most fans cannot keep up with price hikes; and

**WHEREAS**, starting in 2020, the Cubs would make it impossible for fans to watch the games unless they have cable television and pay for a line-up that includes a proposed private cable channel; and

**WHEREAS**, this decision would affect 15 to 20 percent of Cubs fans who currently do not have access to cable, along with many more who cannot afford a costly premium package that would include the Cubs channel; and

**WHEREAS**, if the Cubs have a similar experience to what happened when the Los Angeles Dodgers created their own cable channel, it would suggest that half of Cubs fans would be unable to watch any games; and

**WHEREAS**, as of April, 2016 more than 1.1 million American households unsubscribed to cable services in 2015, and 24.6 million households have never subscribed to cable television which is a figure predicted to rise to 26.7 million, or 21.9% of all US households by the end of 2016, severely diminishing the Cubs fan base; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2013 the Chicago City Council approved a \$500 million renovation plan for Wrigley Field, that included a massive left-field LED scoreboard and a large neon right-field sign; and

**WHEREAS**, it is our job as representatives of the City Council to look out for the wellbeing of our residents and to encourage the Cubs not to create their own network for purely financial reasons thus alienating their fan base; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that we the Mayor and the City Council do hereby express our concern for the owners and management of the Cubs organization in creating their own cable channel network.



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**Alderman- 14<sup>th</sup> Ward**