



# Office of the City Clerk



R2012-757

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## City Council Document Tracking Sheet

**Meeting Date:** 7/25/2012  
**Sponsor(s):** Graham, Deborah L. (29)  
**Type:** Resolution  
**Title:** Tribute to late Gwendolyn Hayes  
**Committee(s) Assignment:**

**TRIBUTE TO GWENDOLYN HAYES**

WHEREAS, In His Infinite Wisdom, Almighty God has granted eternal rest to Gwendolyn Hayes, an outstanding businesswoman and member of her community, on June 23, 2012; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Hayes started life in Sumerlee, West Virginia on June 30, 1936 as one of two children born to the union of Reverend Walter N. and Emma V. Harris. Her brother, Walter, preceded her in passing; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Hayes attended the First Baptist Church of Summerlee and accepted Christ at an early age. After graduating with honors from DuBois High School in Mount Hope, West Virginia, she migrated to this city where she lived with her cousin and began to achieve her dream of a college education by taking night courses at DePaul University and working a day job as the first African American keypunch operator for Reese Finer Foods; and

WHEREAS, In 1961, Gwendolyn met Henry E. Hayes and they married a year later, a union that ended only in her passing. She still continued her education in the field of accounting at Wright Junior College and Northwestern University. Eventually, the couple went into business for themselves, opening an accounting office on this city's West Side and investing in real estate; and

WHEREAS, During her lifetime, Gwendolyn Hayes owned many business ventures including G & H Hayes Management Services, the Sting-Rey, and the Chateau. She eventually became the first woman chief executive officer of the legendary African American radio station, WVON; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Hayes garnered numerous accolades from community organizations, newspapers and city officials, including Chicago's first African American mayor, Harold Washington with titles such as "Outstanding and Dedicated Community Service Award" and "Neighborhood Business Person of the Year". In 1988, she won the "Revlon and Black Woman Hall of Fame Foundation's Bethune Tubman Truth Award"; and

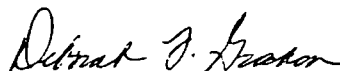
WHEREAS, After her noteworthy achievements in business, Gwendolyn Hayes left this city to return to her native West Virginia to devote herself to a higher calling. She resumed an active roll in the First Baptist Church of Summerlee, the church of her youth, as Superintendent of Sunday School, Financial Secretary and Board Trustee. Additionally, She was Banquet Committee Chairman, Corresponding Secretary, N.R.V.M. Missionary Clerk, N.R.V.M. Baptist Association Clerk and West Virginia Baptist Credit Union Association Treasurer at Hilltop Baptist Center; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Hayes leaves behind to celebrate her memory her husband and two children; Anita and Brian, seven grandchildren; Qiana, Donte, Toni, LeNa Avyance, Brian, Jr. and Jayla, four great grand children; Elijah, Tyrique, Eric Andrew, TaZaria Aquice and Zion Amir as well as a host of other relations and many friends; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Deborah L. Graham, Alderman of the 29<sup>th</sup> Ward has informed this august body of the passing of this praiseworthy Christian mother, grandmother, great grandmother and notable businesswoman; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council gathered together this 25<sup>th</sup> Day of July, 2012 AD, do hereby express our sincere sorrow at the passing of Gwendolyn Hayes and extend our deepest condolences to her family and the many persons whose lives she touched.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and given to the family of Gwendolyn Hayes.



DEBORAH L. GRAHAM  
Alderman – 29<sup>th</sup> Ward