



City of Chicago



R2019-301

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	4/10/2019
Sponsor(s):	Emanuel (Mayor)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Gratitude extended to Alderman John Arena for dedicated service to the 45th Ward
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Members of this Chamber are proud to congratulate our friend and colleague, Alderman John Arena, on his eight years of dedicated and outstanding service to the people of the 45th Ward and the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, Alderman Arena settled down in Portage Park on Chicago's Northwest Side, where he and his wife Jill ran a successful advertising and graphic design business and raised their two children, sending them to public schools. An active member of the Portage Park community for more than 15 years prior to seeking election as Alderman, John Arena supported local businesses and served twice as vice-president of the Portage Park Neighborhood Association; and

WHEREAS, First elected as Alderman of the 45th Ward in 2011, Alderman Arena served two consecutive terms in office; and

WHEREAS, A strong, independent voice on the City Council, who prioritized revitalization of the local economy, Alderman Arena worked with local chambers of commerce to bring more than 100 new businesses to the 45th Ward. He secured millions of dollars in small business improvement funds for local entrepreneurs; brought \$100 million in infrastructure improvements to the Ward; facilitated the creation and implementation of community informed Master Plans for the development of Six Corners and Jefferson Park; supported a \$25 million renovation of the Jefferson Park Transit Center; and funded 20 projects throughout the Ward through the participatory budgeting process, which gives 45th Ward residents decision-making power in how their tax dollars are spent; and

WHEREAS, Deeply committed to improving Chicago's public schools and to creating new educational opportunities for children, Alderman Arena secured more than \$40 million for 45th Ward schools; secured \$1.5 million in TIF funds to modernize and improve the Jefferson Park Branch Library; obtained funding for a new Independence Park Branch Library; supported teachers and fair funding for neighborhood schools; and helped negotiate \$36 million in investments from CPS to 45th Ward schools, including the installation of a new turf soccer field and roof and classroom renovations at Carl Schurz High School, a new addition to Prussing Elementary School, and new turf fields at Rufus Hitch and James B. Farnsworth Elementary Schools; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Arena brought renewed vibrancy and openness to the 45th Ward by encouraging the arts, most notably, through Arts/Alive 45, the independent not-for-profit organization that he helped to found; and by working to attract artists, museums, theatre companies, restaurants, festivals and public art events to the Ward in an effort to create new jobs, new points of interest for City residents and tourists, and new opportunities for neighbors to convene and for families to thrive in a safe and welcoming environment; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure on the City Council, Alderman Arena supported legislation to protect the rights of Chicago workers and laborers, including initiatives to raise the minimum wage, to provide paid sick leave, to create an Office of Labor Standards, and to reform the City's workers' compensation program; and

WHEREAS, A founding member of the Chicago Progressive Reform Caucus, Alderman Arena's support of ethics reform, government transparency and fiscal accountability earned him the 2017 Independent Voters of Illinois ("IVI") – Independent Precinct Organization ("IPO") Leon Depres Award, the IVI-IVO's highest award for public service; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Arena served with distinction on many Chicago City Council committees, including most recently as a member of the Committee on Committees, Rules and Ethics; Committee on Economic, Capital and Technology Development; Committee on Finance; Committee on License and Consumer Protection; and Committee on Special Events, Cultural Affairs and Recreation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this tenth day of April, 2019, do hereby extend to Alderman John Arena our deepest gratitude and thanks for his many years of exceptional service to the people of Chicago, and our best wishes for continued success in all of his future endeavors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Alderman John Arena as a token of our appreciation and esteem.