



City of Chicago



R2014-153

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	3/5/2014
Sponsor(s):	Burns (4)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Tribute to late James McKee, Jr.
Committee(s) Assignment:	

Resolution for James McKee, Jr.

WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago are hereby informed of the passing of James McKee, Jr., on January 31, 2014, by Alderman William D. Burns; and

WHEREAS, James McKee, Jr. was born on April 5, 1946 to James and Olivia. He was the first son and eldest of ten children. He was the big brother who was affectionately called J.R. by his six sisters and three brothers, and Jimmy by his friends and co-workers; and

WHEREAS, He began his career at Ryerson Steel Company where he first learned the ironworker trade before he became a skyscraper beam walker helping to erect the Sears Tower in 1974. He was among the first African-American iron workers in the Chicago area. Looking for something that would keep him closer to the ground, he took a position with the Chicago Transit Authority where he worked for many years until he retired; and

WHEREAS, James McKee was a visionary. Early on he recognized the value of the Grand Boulevard Neighborhood. He so much appreciated the beauty of an abandon building on the 4900 block of South St. Lawrence Avenue that he purchased it through the Chicago Abandon Property Program, renovated it, and moved into the neighborhood in December of 1994; and

WHEREAS, He not only moved into the neighborhood but became a part of it by joining the Grand Boulevard Home Owners' Association. He also worked with neighbors on placing a referendum on the ballot that voted problem areas dry. He was there for his neighbors, and often helped in cleaning vacate lots, removing graffiti, removing shrubbery that obstructed views and the safety of residents. He joined the community policing initiative, and was active in the judicial advocacy committee which would attend court proceedings, supporting residents who had been victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, He further served the neighborhood through his work on the community advisory boards for the development of the Willard Square Apartments, an 80 unit low-income housing project; Vision House, a 25 apartment complex to house individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS, and Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC), an economic development organization designed to improve the quality of life and strengthen the neighborhoods of North Kenwood, Oakland, Grand Boulevard and Douglas; and


WHEREAS, He was not only a good neighbor, but a loving father, grandfather, brother and uncle to extended family. He was a man of faith that will be missed; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and members of the Chicago City Council assemble this Fifth Day of March, do hereby pay tribute to James McKee, Jr.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family of James McKee, Jr.; and.

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William D. Burns
Alderman, 4th Ward
City of Chicago