



# City of Chicago



R2021-1271

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	11/17/2021
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Ervin (28)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Tribute to late Bobbie W. Hicks
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF  
BOBBIE W. HICKS**

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie W. Hicks, the first African-American layperson to teach in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Chicago, and longtime resident of the Austin Community, has passed away at 97 years of age; and

**WHEREAS**, The Chicago City Council has been informed of Bobbie's passing by the Honorable Jason C. Ervin, Alderman of the 28th Ward; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie was born on February 6, 1924 in Austin, Texas to the union of Willie Roy Conley and Leora O. Conley; and

**WHEREAS**, In Austin, Texas, Bobbie met the love of her life, Merritt Hicks Jr., and in 1944 the two united in marriage; to their union three children were born; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie's desire to teach came to her when she was in second grade; her first teaching job was in public schools before she was approached by a religious sister from St. Elizabeth in 1951 to teach in their school, thereby becoming the first African-American layperson to teach in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, For over 44 years, Bobbie taught in Catholic schools, including St. Elizabeth, St. James (Wabash Avenue), St. Procopius, St. Frances Cabrini, Resurrection, and St. Martin de Porres; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie received an award from the Archdiocese for her many years of service to the school, however she was not recognized as the first African-American layperson teacher for the Archdiocese until February of 2016 when Catholic students honored her at the 38th-annual African-American Heritage Prayer Service at Holy Name Cathedral where the crowd gave her two standing ovations; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie received the African-American Heritage Award, and in her acceptance speech, she told her students to work hard and do their best; she told the audience "Everybody – doctors, lawyers – has a teacher. Whatever you plan to do in your life, listen to your teacher"; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie is preceded in death by her husband, Merritt Hicks, Jr., one brother, two sisters, and a grandson; Bobbie is survived by one son, Merritt Hicks, III; two daughters, Jacqueline and Gwendolyn Hicks; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and nine great-great-grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS**, Bobbie will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this seventeenth day of November, 2021, do hereby extend our most heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Bobbie W. Hicks; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family of Bobbie W. Hicks as a sign of our honor and respect.



JASCON C. ERVIN  
Alderman, 28th Ward