



# Office of the City Clerk



Or2013-114

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## City Council Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	3/13/2013
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Burke, Edward M. (14)
<b>Type:</b>	Order
<b>Title:</b>	Call for Commissioner of Chicago Fire Department to recognize deaths of Firefighters Thomas F. Garry and Robert J. Klasek
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	Committee on Public Safety

**ORDER**

**WHEREAS**, at 4:14 p.m. on May 19, 1934, Engine Company 59 responded to a fire at the Union Stock Yards on Chicago's south side; and

**WHEREAS**, when Engine 59 arrived on the scene, the blaze was so substantial that the firefighters abandoned their engine as it was being destroyed by flames; and

**WHEREAS**, after 14 alarms had sounded, 103 companies comprised of 103 pumpers and 22 trucks arrived to battle the persistent flames; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 2,200 Chicago and suburban firefighters reported to battle the fire, deploying nearly five-sixths of the Chicago Fire Department's equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, during the fire, Company 59's quarters were destroyed and those firefighters were commanded to report to Company 39 (1618 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Street); and

**WHEREAS**, through the heroic efforts of the firefighters, approximately four hours after the initial alarm had sounded, the flames that once covered an estimated eight city blocks were reduced to almost nothing; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly 150 families became homeless as the result of the fire; and

**WHEREAS**, at one point during the battle, the fire became so large that passengers on a United Airlines plane flying over South Bend, Indiana, located 95 miles away from Chicago, noticed the clouds of smoke covering the city; and

**WHEREAS**, during the fire, firefighters became extremely dehydrated and overheated; and

**WHEREAS**, the firefighters began to drink polluted water from a 2,000,000 gallon reservoir that was not normally used for drinking; and

**WHEREAS**, seventy firefighters would become very ill, many of whom contracted typhoid fever; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Thomas F. Garry fought the Union Stock Yards fire as a member of Engine 88; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Garry entered the Chicago Fire Department on November 19, 1917; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Garry died from typhoid on October 25, 1934 at the age of 45, five months after drinking the polluted water at the Stock Yards; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Garry was widowed at the time of his death and left behind five children; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Garry's grandson is James T. Joyce, who served as the Commissioner of the Chicago Fire Department from 1999 until his retirement in 2004, following 34 years of service to the residents of Chicago as a member of the Chicago Fire Department; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Robert J. Klasek fought the Union Stock Yards fire as a member of Truck 8; and

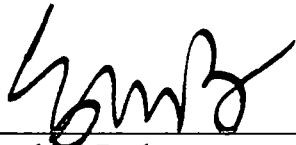
**WHEREAS**, firefighter Klasek entered the Chicago Fire Department on April 27, 1928; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Klasek died from typhoid on December 6, 1934, seven months after drinking the polluted water at the Stock Yards; and

**WHEREAS**, firefighter Garry and Firefighter Klasek are not included among the 558 members of the Chicago Fire Department who made the ultimate sacrifice; NOW THEREFORE

**BE IT ORDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

That the Commissioner of the Chicago Fire Department is hereby ordered to recognize the deaths of Firefighter Thomas F. Garry and Firefighter Robert J. Klasek as line of duty deaths attributed to their service in combating the Union Stock Yards Fire of May 19, 1934 and to honor their sacrifices with all appropriate tributes and commemorations.



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Edward M. Burke  
Alderman, 14th Ward

