



# City of Chicago



R2016-884

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

**Meeting Date:** 11/9/2016

**Sponsor(s):** Burke (14)

**Type:** Resolution

**Title:** Recognition extended to The Golden Thirteen the first African-American commissioned officers to service in the U.S. Navy

**Committee(s) Assignment:**

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS,** The Golden Thirteen were the thirteen African-American enlisted men who became the first African-American commissioned and warrant officers to serve in the United States Navy; and

**WHEREAS,** Throughout the history of the United States until the end of World War I, the Navy had enlisted African-Americans for general service, but they were barred from joining the Navy from 1919 to 1932; and

**WHEREAS,** That changed in June of 1941 during World War II, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the executive order (8802) that prohibited racial discrimination by any government agency ; and

**WHEREAS,** In January of 1944, the Navy began an accelerated 2-month officer training course for 16 African-American enlisted men at Camp Robert Smalls, Recruit Training Center Great Lakes - now known as Recruit Training Command; and

**WHEREAS,** All sixteen members passed the course, with twelve commissioned as Ensigns and one appointed to serve as a Warrant Officer; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1987, the U.S. Navy reunited the seven living members to dedicate a building in their honor at Great Lakes Naval Recruit Training Command in Illinois; and

**WHEREAS,** Today, Building 1405 at RTC Great Lakes, where recruits first arrive for basic training, is named "The Golden Thirteen" building in their honor; and

**WHEREAS,** The last living member of the distinguished Golden Thirteen, Frank Sublet, passed away in 2006; and

**WHEREAS,** The contributions and legacy of the Golden Thirteen will be honored at a special celebration held on the eve of Veteran's Day at Wintrust's Grand Banking Hall, 231 South La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois; and

**WHEREAS,** The Golden Thirteen were truly examples of what journalist Tom Brokaw called "Our Greatest Generation;"; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED,** That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this ninth day of November, 2016 do hereby recognize the contributions of the Godden Thirteen for their service; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Robert Sublet, the brother of the late Frank Sublet, on behalf of the families of the Golden Thirteen.



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*Alderman - 14<sup>th</sup> Ward*