



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
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Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: O2021-4873
Type: Ordinance
File created: 10/25/2021
Status: Passed
In control: City Council
Final action: 11/17/2021
Title: Honorary street designation as "Lemuel Austin, Jr. Way"
Sponsors: Austin, Carrie M.
Indexes:
Attachments: 1. O2021-4873.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/17/2021	1	City Council	Passed	Pass
11/10/2021	1	Committee on Transportation and Public Way	Recommended to Pass	
10/25/2021	1	City Council	Referred	

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO;

SECTION 1. Pursuant to an ordinance heretofore passed by the City Council which allows erection of honorary street-name signs, the Commissioner of Transportation shall take the necessary action for standardization of South Normal Avenue, between 110th Street & IIIth Street (11000 to 11100 S. Normal Avenue) as "Lemuel Austin Jr. Way."

CARRIE M. AUSTIN Alderman, 34th Ward

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

Date:

Office of Budget and Management 121 N. LaSalle,
Room 604 Chicago, IL 60602

To Whom It May Concern:

_____, Alderman of the ^Vward, hereby authorize the Office of Budget
Management to withdraw the funds associated with the cost of installation for this honorary street
designation for

from my: f ^J^Ward's annual menu program budget ☐ Ward's aldermanic expense allowance

Sincerely, Alderman

upon passage of this designation ordinance, pursuant to Section 2-8-040 of the Chicago Municipal Code.

6/1/2017

LEMUEL AUSTIN, JR. was known to many people as a "QUIET POWERHOUSE". He was many things to many people, but to most he was a Christian man first and a politician, second. Lemuel was born to the late Reverend Lemuel Sr. and Rosalee on November 12, 1945, in Chicago. -iK. > t. | j <- ^ | ■■■■<•>< '---■' <

Lemuel attended Carter J. Harrison High School where he received his high school diploma. He went on to attend Richard J. Daley City College of Chicago. In addition, he earned his certification from the Chicago Board of Underwriters and also became a licensed insurance broker.

He accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior at the tender age of seven and has traveled down the Christian road as best he could. Lemuel's strong belief in his personal savior was first instilled in him by his father, a devout Baptist minister, and mother. He was a faithful member of Messiah Temple Missionary Baptist Church where he served on the trustee board and was the business manager for the pastor's aide club.

Lemuel wedded his childhood friend, Carrie Mae Battle. To this union, six children were born. He was a proud father and a loving husband who always strived to do the best he could for his family. In addition to being a family man, Lemuel loved people. During his adult life, he held numerous jobs that ultimately helped people. From 1969 to 1987, he began a life in public service with positions at the Chicago Transit Authority and the U.S. Postal Service. He went on to become the Legislative Aide to the then State Representative Emil Jones, Jr, the Legislative Fiscal Analyst for the City Council Committee on Finance, the Administrative Assistant to the then Alderman Wilson Frost, an Inspector for the Cook County Sheriff's Department, and the Ward Superintendent for the Department of Streets and Sanitation for the City of Chicago.

In 1987, Lemuel won his first elected position and became alderman of the 34th ward. Recognizing his leadership abilities and outstanding characteristics of honesty and fairness, Lemuel was elected by his aldermanic peers for three terms to the powerful chairmanship of the Committee on Budget and Government Operations for the City Council. His accomplishments are numerous and exemplary, including being named City Vice-Chairman, Democratic Party of Cook County and being named to a total of 12 City Council committees including two chairmanships, two commissions and several advisory councils. He was also named chairman of the Second Sub-Circuit Judicial District and chairman of the 5th District slating committee for the Cook County Commissioner.

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He was also the only African-American to be appointed to the 1996 Executive Convention Site Committee. Lemuel's many distinguished awards included his acceptance of the 1993 Man Of The Year Award from the International Union of Operating Engineers Local #150.

Lemuel's power and success stemmed from his ability to work with all aldermen to help pass key legislation through the city council that would improve the quality of life for all Chicago residents. Among his many accomplishments, he sponsored the demolition program designed to tear down abandoned buildings city-wide in cooperation with Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Corporation Counsel. He also initiated the Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise Ordinance to ensure minority participation and fair inclusion in large city contracts. Just recently he successfully guided the "City Preference Ordinance" through the city council to become law which mandates that 50 percent of the workers on a construction project must be city residents. Lemuel was no stranger to controversy and tension, but he was always guided by what he felt was best for his constituents and this city.

Some of his many accomplishments in the 34th ward included the construction of the mini-mall at 115th and Halsted and more than \$5.5 million in capital improvements to the ward. He worked with CTA officials to restore the 108th and Halsted "Owl Bus Service" in the ward. He also worked to bring viable businesses to the ward's business district such as Walgreens at 106th Halsted and State Farm Insurance at 117th and Halsted.

Lemuel was noted for his passionate concern for youth and senior citizens and all his constituents. He financially and physically supported the Lemuel Austin Youth Foundation which includes sports leagues, a cheerleader team, a pom-pom squad and loved to giveaway toys and prizes during the annual ward picnic and Christmas party. He had a special concern for senior citizens seeking social services and formed a senior citizens club to serve as an advisory group on important issues and special events in the ward. One of his favorite events was the Annual Senior Citizens Dinner which is held in conjunction with Mother's Day.

Lemuel's political career was nurtured and guided by his POLITICAL FATHER. Commissioner Wilson Frost.

Commissioner Frost guided him through his many accomplishments and yes, some times through his defeats. This bond didn't stop at politics, for Commissioner Frost was involved in every aspect of Lemuel's life, down to the birth of his last grandchild, "Akarie

Pearl". Through this strong woven bond between two men, Lemuel's last routine from the day or even for the night was "I've got to talk to the Boss." Lemuel was noted for his fiery speeches, especially at one of his final speaking engagements, which was at a full ward organizational meeting on May 2nd of this year.

During this meeting, Lemuel talked to us as a family. He emphasized with all of his heart, that we must all stay, work and live together in love and harmony. Then Lemuel said that there were forces out there hoping to divide us, but if we must remain strong, nothing can come between us. Lemuel was teary eyed, along with the captains and workers who were at the meeting. Emotion was high and the sense of love and loyalty filled the room. In looking back in retrospect, many of us felt that Lemuel gave his own eulogy. His last word to us was, "We are a family, don't let anyone or anybody come between us." "Keep the family together".

Much was accomplished during the life of Lemuel Austin. He was a strong man with a down to earth nature that never allowed him to lose touch with the average citizen. Through perseverance and honesty, his achievements rose beyond his wildest dreams. He was a hard worker who often said "THERE'S NO SHORTCUT TO THE KING'S ROW". One of his favorite sayings was "IF YOU DON'T BRING NOTHING TO THE TABLE, YOU CANT TAKE NOTHING FROM THE TABLE". Now Lemuel can take his rest and feast from heaven's tableland.

Lemuel leaves to cherish his memory: his loving and devoted wife, Carrie M.; six children, Lemuel III (Brenda), Deneen, Kenneth (Deborah), Fatrice, Lemuettia and Lemuel IV; seven grandchildren: Brandon, Lemanda, Lemieka, Kenneth Lemuel, Jr., Charles, Kenisha, AKARIE PEARL; two godchildren: Jermaine

Turner and Larissa Fisher; one brother, Aaron (Alma); one sister, Esther Yates; one uncle, Roosevelt; a host of nieces; nephews; friends, and the entire 34th Ward Family.

Today, in the Black community and throughout the City of Chicago, there exists a void that will be hard to fill. When thought of, Alderman Lemuel Austin will be remembered as: a man who really cared, a man who tried to help everybody, one of the GOOD GUYS, a role-model for the youth, a man who drew wisdom from Commissioner Wilson Frost and his seniors. He was truly a God sent blessing to all of us because he was a Christian politician and our lives have been enriched by his passing our way.

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