RESOLUTION NO. 2022-32147

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE ("PSNQLC"), AT ITS MARCH 7, 2022 MEETING, AND APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO. 2019-30947, RELATING TO THE CITY'S ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM (THE "PROGRAM") AS FOLLOWS: (1) REINSTATING THE COMMEMORATIVE BENCH PLAQUE ELEMENT OF THE PROGRAM; (2) REPEALING THE TIERED FEE STRUCTURE AND ESTABLISHING A FIXED DONATION FEE OF $10,000 TO ADOPT ANY EXISTING OR NEW BENCHES IN CITY PARKS; AND (4) PROVIDING THAT ALL NET PROCEEDS FROM THE ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM SHALL BE DEDICATED TO PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMMING, AND BEAUTIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 (Exhibit A) supporting the creation of the Adopt-A-Bench Program (the "Program"), like the Central Park Conservancy's Adopt-A-Bench Program as referenced in a 2016 New York Times article (Exhibit B), which provides the public an opportunity to commemorate park benches in honor of loved ones at an initial adoption fee of $10,000; and

WHEREAS, on June 6, 2018, the City's Brick Paver Program was created via Resolution No. 2018-30380, to provide the public an opportunity to purchase commemorative brick pavers on the beachwalk corridor, between 53rd and 64th Streets, at a cost of$ 1,000 per paver, with the program available to individuals only (with no corporate sponsorship option); and

WHEREAS, at the January 17, 2018 Commission meeting, the City Commission approved applications for two commemorative benches sponsored by separate individuals at $10,000 each; and

WHEREAS, at the same meeting, under a separate agenda item, the City Commission approved Resolution No. 2018-30143 to increase the fees associated with bench adoption from $10,000 to $20,000 (Exhibit C); and

WHEREAS, following the 2018 fee increase there were several inquiries, however, all interested parties who contacted the Department declined to participate, noting the cost as the deterrent; and

WHEREAS, at that time, the Parks and Recreation Department reevaluated the program and determined a tiered cost structure that would enable a wider interest in the program; and

WHEREAS, at the September 11, 2019 City Commission meeting, the Mayor and City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2019-30947 (Exhibit D), establishing a tiered fee structure for "adopting" City benches, eliminating the element of commemorative bench plaques from the Program, and delegating to the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administratively approve future applications for the Program to streamline the process, and eliminating the Brick Paver Program in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, since the removal of the plaque element from the Adopt-A-Bench program, all interested parties to date have either declined to participate or ceased communication after learning that the commemorative plaque element was removed from the program, including one of the Program's only two participants, who adopted a bench at the original price point of $10,000; and

WHEREAS, at the December 8, 2021 City Commission meeting, a discussion regarding the "Adopt-A-Bench" Program and the 2019 repeal of the Brick Paver Program was referred to the Neighborhoods and Quality of Life Committee; and

WHEREAS, at the March 7, 2022 Public Safety and Neighborhoods Quality of Life Committee (the "PSNQLC" or the "Committee") meeting, the Committee discussed and recommended for the City Commission to: (1) reinstate the commemorative bench plaque element to the Program; (2) repeal the tiered fee structure and establish a fixed donation fee of $10,000 to adopt any existing or new benches in City parks; and (4) provide that all net proceeds from the Program be applied to Parks and Recreation programming, and beautification and improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, based on community feedback that the Parks and Recreation Department has continually received, this Program could be successful if the bench plaque element was re-instated as a component to the Program; and

WHEREAS, further, the Committee recommended that the City Commission continue to delegate to the Parks and Recreation Department the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench Program applications in order to streamline the process; and

WHEREAS, with the re-establishment of the commemorative bench plaque element of the Program, an amendment to the City's Naming Ordinance codified in Section 82-503 will be required to continue allowing the Parks and Recreation Department the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench Program applications.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, hereby accept the recommendation of the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC"), at its March 7, 2022 meeting, and approve an amendment to Resolution No. 2019-30947, relating to the City's Adopt-A-Bench program (the "Program") as follows: (1) reinstating the commemorative bench plaque element of the Program; (2) repealing the tiered fee structure and establishing a fixed donation fee of $10,000 to adopt any existing or new benches in City parks; and (4) providing that all net proceeds from the Adopt-A-Bench program shall be dedicated to Parks and Recreation programming, and beautification and improvement projects.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 4th day of May, 2022.

Dan Gelber, Mayor

ATTEST:

MAY 10 2022

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

MIAMI BEACH INCORPORATED MARCH 26 1915

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

City Attorney

4-15-22
Date

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager
DATE: May 4, 2022

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE ("PSNQLC"), AT ITS MARCH 7, 2022 MEETING, AND APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO. 2019-30947, RELATING TO THE CITY'S ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM (THE "PROGRAM") AS FOLLOWS: (1) REINSTATING THE COMMEMORATIVE BENCH PLAQUE ELEMENT OF THE PROGRAM; (2) REPEALING THE TIERED FEE STRUCTURE AND ESTABLISHING A FIXED DONATION FEE OF $10,000 TO ADOPT ANY EXISTING OR NEW BENCHES IN CITY PARKS; AND (4) PROVIDING THAT ALL NET PROCEEDS FROM THE ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM SHALL BE DEDICATED TO PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMMING, AND BEAUTIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Mayor and City Commission accept the recommendation of the Public Safety and Neighborhoods Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC"), at its March 7, 2022 meeting, and approve an amendment to Resolution No. 2019-30947, relating to the City's Adopt-A-Bench program (the "Program") as follows: (1) reinstating the commemorative bench plaque element of the Program; (2) repealing the tiered fee structure and establishing a fixed donation fee of $10,000 to adopt any existing or new benches in City parks; and (4) providing that all net proceeds from the Adopt-A-Bench program shall be dedicated to Parks and Recreation programming, and beautification and improvement projects.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

On November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 (Exhibit A) supporting the creation of the Adopt-A-Bench Program (the "Program"), like the Central Park Conservancy's Adopt-A-Bench Program as referenced in a 2016 New York Times article (Exhibit B), which provides the public an opportunity to commemorate park benches in honor of loved ones at an initial adoption fee of $10,000.

On June 6, 2018, the City's Brick Paver Program was created via Resolution No. 2018-30380, to provide the public an opportunity to purchase commemorative brick pavers on the beachwalk

corridor, between 53rd and 64th Streets, at a cost of $1,000 per paver, with the program available to individuals only (with no corporate sponsorship option).

At the January 17, 2018 Commission meeting, the City Commission approved applications for two commemorative benches sponsored by separate individuals at $10,000 each. At the same meeting, under a separate agenda item, the City Commission approved Resolution No. 2018-30143 to increase the fees associated with bench adoption from $10,000 to $20,000 (Exhibit C).

Following the 2018 fee increase there were several inquiries, however, all interested parties who contacted the Department declined to participate, noting the cost as the deterrent. At that time, the Parks and Recreation Department reevaluated the program and determined a tiered cost structure that would enable a wider interest in the program.

At the September 11, 2019 City Commission meeting, the Mayor and City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2019-30947 (Exhibit D), establishing a tiered fee structure for "adopting" City benches, eliminating the element of commemorative bench plaques from the Program, and delegating to the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administratively approve future applications for the Program to streamline the process, and eliminating the Brick Paver Program in its entirety.

Since the removal of the plaque element from the Adopt-A-Bench program, all interested parties to date have either declined to participate or ceased communication after learning that the commemorative plaque element was removed from the program, including one of the Program's only two participants, who adopted a bench at the original price point of $10,000.

At the December 8, 2021 City Commission meeting, a discussion regarding the "Adopt-A-Bench" Program and the 2019 repeal of the Brick Paver Program was referred to the Neighborhoods and Quality of Life Committee.

At the March 7, 2022 Public Safety and Neighborhoods Quality of Life Committee (the "PSNQLC" or the "Committee") meeting, the Committee discussed and recommended for the City Commission to: (1) reinstate the commemorative bench plaque element to the Program; (2) repeal the tiered fee structure and establish a fixed donation fee of $10,000 to adopt any existing or new benches in City parks; and (4) provide that all net proceeds from the Program be applied to Parks and Recreation programming, and beautification and improvement projects.

Based on community feedback that the Parks and Recreation Department has continually received, this Program could be successful if the bench plaque element was re-instated as a component to the Program.

Further, the Committee recommended that the City Commission continue to delegate to the Parks and Recreation Department the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench Program applications in order to streamline the process.

ANALYSIS

With the re-establishment of the commemorative bench plaque element of the Program, an amendment to the City's Naming Ordinance codified in Section 82-503 will be required to continue allowing the Parks and Recreation Department the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench Program applications.

As such, the City Attorney's Office will place a separate item on the May 4th City Commission agenda to amend Section 83-503 of the City Code and create an exception for the Adopt-A-Bench and commemorative brick paver programs under that ordinance.

SUPPORTING SURVEY DATA

N/A

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-14?

Yes

Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?

No

Strategic Connection

Non-Applicable

Legislative Tracking

Parks and Recreation

Sponsor

Vice-Mayor Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Exhibit A –Resolution No. 2016-29649 (Establishing program and adoption fee at 10k)
- Exhibit B – 2016 New York Times Article, "4,228 Central Park Benches With Stories to Tell"
- Exhibit C – Resolution 2018-30143 (Increasing adoption fee from 10k to 20k)
- Exhibit D – Resolution 2019-30947(Lowering adoption fee and removing plaque element)
- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-29649

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AT ITS SEPTEMBER 16, 2016 MEETING SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF AN "ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM" IN THE CITY, SIMILAR TO THE CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY'S PROGRAM IN NEW YORK CITY, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO PURCHASE PARK BENCHES TO COMMEMORATE LOVED ONES OR SPECIAL EVENTS AND WOULD BE AN ADDITIONAL MEANS TO FINANCE THE BEAUTIFICATION OF CITY PARKS.

WHEREAS, at the September 16, 2016 Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee (NCAC) meeting, a discussion took place regarding the creation of an "Adopt-A-Bench Program" in the City; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez, the sponsor of the discussion item, explained that the intent would be to develop a program in the City similar to the Central Park Conservancy's Adopt-A-Bench Program in New York City. Pursuant to such a program, park benches could be purchased by the public and would include a plaque to commemorate loved ones or special events. The program would also provide a means to raise funds to finance the City's Parks and Recreation Department's efforts to beautify City parks; and

WHEREAS, at its September 16, 2016 meeting, the NCAC voted in favor of recommending its support for an "Adopt-A-Bench Program" in the City similar to the Central Park Conservancy's Program.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby accept the recommendation of the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee at its September 16, 2016 meeting supporting the creation of an "Adopt-A-Bench Program" in the City, similar to the Central Park Conservancy's Program in New York City, which would provide an opportunity for the public to purchase park benches to commemorate loved ones or special events and would be an additional means to finance the beautification of City parks.

PASSED and **ADOPTED** this 9th day of November, 2016.

ATTEST:

11/28/16

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

Philip Levine, Mayor

MIAMI BEACH INCORPORATED MARCH 26TH 1915

APPROVED AS TO FORM & LANGUAGE & FOR EXECUTION

11/4/16

City Attorney DT Date

MIAMIBEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: November 9, 2016

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AT ITS SEPTEMBER 16, 2016 MEETING TO CREATE AN "ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM," SIMILAR TO THE CENTRAL PARK MODEL, WHERE ACROSS THE CITY PEOPLE CAN BUY AND NAME BENCHES AS A WAY TO FINANCE THE BEAUTIFICATION OF PARKS AND OTHER EXTRAS.

RECOMMENDATION

Commission vote on the recommendation of the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee at its September 16, 2016 meeting to create an "Adopt-A-Bench Program," similar to the Central Park Model, where across the City people can buy and name benches as a way to finance the beautification of the parks and other extras.

ANALYSIS

At the September 16, 2016 Neighborhood Community Affairs Committee (NCAC) meeting, a discussion took place on the creation of an "Adopt-A-Bench Program." Commissioner Rosen Gonzalez, sponsor of the discussion item, explained that it would be similar to the Central Park Model and a way to raise some money for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Vice-Mayor Grieco said he wasn't sure about adding new benches and that he thought the adopting would be of the current benches. Commissioner Steinberg expressed that she would be more open to a tree program in which people can plant trees in dedication of a specific person.

Commissioner Rosen moved for the item to go to City Commission with a positive recommendation and Vice-Mayor Grieco seconded. Commissioner Steinberg voted no.

Legislative Tracking
Parks and Recreation

Sponsor

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Exhibit A - New York City Adopt A Bench Article
- Exhibit B - New York City Adopt A Bench Registration Form

Granado, Rafael

From: Rosen Gonzalez, Kristen
Sent: Sunday, June 19, 2016 8:07 AM
To: Granado, Rafael
Subject: NYTimes: 4,223 Central Park Benches With Stories to Tell

Rafael. Please place this item as a referral to the Neighborhood's Committee to create a program similar to the Central Park Program where across the city, people can buy and name benches. This money could go into a fund to beautify parks and provide extras.

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/19/nyregion/4223-central-park-benches-with-stories-to-tell.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share

The Adopt-a-Bench program began in 1986, as a way to finance the maintenance of areas within the park. Today, the benches, each adorned with a plaque, are more than simply places to sit.

Sent from my iPad

Agenda Item C4C
Date 7-13-16

The New York Times - http://nyti.ms/24VTLMd

N.Y. / REGION

4,223 Central Park Benches With Stories to Tell

By N. R. KLEINFIELD JUNE 17, 2016

In the park, there are 9,485 of them. You sit on them. To rest. Read a book. Sip coffee. Polish off a pulled-pork sandwich. Feed the pigeons. Wait for a friend, maybe a spy. Or it's a sluggish day when you have nothing to do, and this is a delicious place to accomplish absolutely nothing.

Or you can drift off and muse on the plaque affixed there, representing a story behind the bench. The Central Park bench. You aren't just sitting on wood. You are sitting on memories.

There is, for instance, a bench on the Mall that reads, "Two Red Foxes and a Pup."

What could that possibly mean?

It means this. Last year, Karen May wanted to adopt a bench as a surprise 65th-birthday gift for her husband, Tony, a retired investment banker. She inscribed it: "Tony, win, lose or break even, you always have me. Love Karen." When their two sons were young and he came home from his work on Wall Street, they would rush to greet him and ask, "Hey, Poppy, did you win, lose or break even?" And he would reply that he broke even, because that was what much of life was about, breaking even.

While Ms. May was so inclined, she figured she would adopt an adjoining bench for her children.

When her elder son, Theodore, proposed to his girlfriend, Lucinda, he wrote a brief children's book for her called "Two Red Foxes," because foxes were a recurring theme in her upbringing (as when a fox sped across the field when her father proposed to her mother). The foxes were stand-ins for Ms. May's son and his fiancée. And there was the fact that her younger son, Thornwell (Ms. May's maiden name), went by the nickname Pup.

So she adopted the benches and engraved them with memories. People will sit there and not know. But she knows.

Caitlin LaMorte was in the park one morning, the weather obligingly balmy though rain was possible later. As development manager for the Women's Committee of the Central Park Conservancy, which manages the park, she runs the Adopt-a-Bench program. It began in 1986, as a way to finance the maintenance of the benches and their immediate surroundings. (For those with different park preferences, orphan benches are up for adoption in parks elsewhere in New York and some other cities.)

If you can afford it, it's simple enough. Pay $10,000 (it began at $5,000) and you get to put a plaque on a bench, saying almost whatever you want (within limits of decorum: no cursing, no advertising), up to a suggested maximum of four lines of 30 characters each. And then it's there forever.

Ms. LaMorte consulted her tablet for the latest count: 4,223 of the benches adopted. About 250 go each year, she said. While plenty of benches remain unadopted, some areas are sold out. For instance, all the benches facing the lake. The ones lining the Mall. Those near the Great Lawn. Those along Wien Walk.

There are three styles of benches: the simple wood-and-concrete version; the World's Fair style, with its circular armrests, dating to 1939; and the Central Park settee, based on the benches used during the park's creation, circa 1858. There are also several dozen handmade rustic benches. With those, you have to fund a restoration of an entire park area and the cost starts at about $500,000, not something to rush into.

Quite often, Ms. LaMorte said, benches are adopted to remember a relative or friend who has died. Or on occasion, a pet, generally a dog, though a few cats are honored as well. Something like 840 of the plaques have "memory" in their wording. There are some Sept. 11 remembrances.

Three years ago, a woman chose a bench in memory of herself for when her final date comes. It hasn't yet. The plaque, set to go, sits in one of Ms. LaMorte's desk drawers.

Increasingly, Ms. LaMorte said, "we have more plaques that are happy." Graduations or birthdays or birth wishes or wedding gifts. A Japanese couple, when they returned to Japan after a lengthy stretch in the city, adopted a bench that reads: "We leave our hearts in New York after 23 years of our adventure here."

There are a lot of benches in the playground areas commemorating births. One man adopted five benches, one for each of his grandchildren, who received them on their 16th birthdays.

Last year, Victor Schiller required a birthday present for his wife, Nancy. She told him, emphatically, no jewelry, thereby ruling out his go-to category.

He thought and thought, and then he had it. Give her one of the benches.

They didn't even live in New York. They lived in Charlottesville, Va., but they had bought a place in Manhattan that they inhabited roughly a week each month. They think Central Park is truly wonderful. Mr. Schiller, 59, is retired from creating technology start-ups. Ms. Schiller, 57, is retired from investment work focused on Bulgaria.

He gave her the bench, and was she happy. He waited on the inscription so she could have a say. They conferred and agreed on: "We Would Make the Same Mistake All Over Again! Vic & Nancy Schiller. Still Best Friends."

They did not reveal what the mistake was. Understandably, their three mystified children asked them, but lips sealed. Each has guessed, Umm, did you mean me? Well, of course not. No!

Was it waiting so long — 11 years — to have children? Wrong.

How about buying the apartment in New York? Incorrect, not even close.

So they don't know.

That's what reporters are for. To crack open mysteries, shine flashlights into dusty corners. Sometimes that's very hard. Other times, less so. In this case, the Schillers were ready to give it up. It was possible to find out in the most ordinary way — by asking them.

The two met when she was 20 and he was 22. They got engaged a year later. Mr. Schiller called his mother to break the good news. His mother dropped the phone. When she calmed herself enough to pick it up, she told him, "You're making a big mistake!"

Ms. Schiller called her mother. Her mother said, "What are you thinking?"

Those withering cautions, of course, are what mothers are legally required to say. And, of course, 20-somethings are under well-established protocol to ignore them.

Which is what the Schillers did. Went ahead and got married and never looked back.

Lou Young is a rugged, affable man of 59, with a bald head and a well-behaved beard. For 33 years, he has worked for the parks department, almost all of that time immersed in Central Park. He gives his title as Bench Guy. He affixes the plaques to the benches. A few at the beginning were handled by others, but since then they've been all his doing.

In the stinging sun the other day, he was out getting it done on a bench in the Ramble. As usual, the park was bubbling with activity. Wordlessly and with focused attention, he lined up a spot in the direct center, meticulously routed out a hole, then screwed in the plaque. Four screws. In less than 10 minutes, he was done. The inscription read: "You are the image of the rose shining within me like the flame within a lamp ...," a line modified from "The Little Prince."

Mr. Young paints the benches too, spiffs them up, fixes them when weather chews them up.

He came to New York from Birmingham, Ala., after the plant he worked in, making slats for train boxcars, shut down. Not long after he got to New York, he was riding in an elevator and noticed that it passed the 12th floor and then went to 14. No 13th floor. The unlucky thing.

Now wait a minute, Mr. Young thought, I was born on the 13th. On a Friday no less. To him, it's a lucky number. So he went to a dentist and had a front tooth plated with gold and 13 engraved on it. He likes to play the numbers. Every day for 25 years, he has played 1313 at $5 a pop. Never hit, but he keeps at it.

How did he like his work? "I just love the park," he said. "Best place to be. Since I'm from the South, it reminds me of home."

Once he put on a plaque that a man had ordered to propose to the woman he was dating. The man must have missed some important signals. Her answer was a flat no. Benches aren't returnable. Lou Young had to remove the failed plaque and replace it with one bearing nonmatrimonial expectations. (You can always change your plaque, but that's another $1,000.)

One day about 10 years ago the Bench Guy was out in earnest with newly arrived plaques. He had one to do at the southwest corner of the Great Lawn. He screwed it on, then took a look and saw it said Louis Young. He thought, "Interesting, this guy has the same name as me."

Turned out, one of the recurrent donors to the park, who had adopted 18 benches and given them as gifts, had gotten to know and admire Lou Young from watching him do his bench work. So she gave him a bench.

The plaque reads: "LOUIS YOUNG FOR HIS CARE AND DEDICATION TO CENTRAL PARK SINCE 1985."

It's not cheap to adopt a bench; you could buy a decent used car for the cost. But there is fund-raising. Nicole Vest battled leukemia for two and a half years before she died in February 2015. She was 34. Her family and friends debated what to do to

honor her memory. She was cremated, and there was no place to go and pay respects. Someone suggested a bench, and everyone liked that idea.

They set up an appeal on a fund-raising website. Family and friends chipped in, as did others, people who had never met Ms. Vest but knew one of her friends or relatives. The effort kicked off on March 10 of last year. It attained its goal by April 1. About 90 people donated, some giving as little as $20. They adopted a bench just north of the sailboat pond.

What to put on it? They wanted something original. "I didn't want something that was used all the time, like beloved sister and daughter," said Michelle Lapworth, Ms. Vest's sister.

Ms. Vest loved butterflies. She had a butterfly tattoo on her ankle, wore a butterfly necklace. Her best friend found a quotation from Hans Christian Andersen, and that met with approval. "'Just living is not enough,' said the butterfly. 'One must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.' In Memory of Nicole E. Vest 1981-2015."

Another story, pet included. When Chris Branca died much too young in an accident at 33 last April, his family wanted to remember him with a bench. They also wanted to remember his dog.

Buddha, a bulldog, had died a year earlier. Mr. Branca delighted in going to the park with Buddha. He lived further downtown. He drove there with Buddha. He was particularly fond of the Sheep Meadow.

Dogs are prohibited from the grass there. Nonetheless, that expanse beguiled Mr. Branca. Weekend after weekend, he went there with Buddha. "He would get a ticket all the time and just pay it," said Lindsey Branca, his sister. "That was his personality. He was a little bit defiant."

So, the family, which runs a real estate company, adopted adjoining benches, one for Mr. Branca and one for Buddha.

Mr. Branca was an abiding fan of Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are." With great frequency, he wore a Wild Things T-shirt. His best friend suggested

a Wild Things line that was adapted for the inscription: "For Chris Branca. In all of us there is Fear, Hope and Adventure. In all of us there is a Wild Thing."

The adjoining bench bears the plaque: "For Buddha Branca Chris's Bulldog forever by his side."

A memorial service was held at the benches. Some 80 people attended. Subsequently, friends have visited the benches, taken pictures, sent them on to the family.

A few weeks ago, his mother went to check on the benches and two of his childhood friends were sitting on them, chatting away. She sat down, slipped into the conversation. Another time, she looked in on the benches and a high school friend of Mr. Branca's was resting there. It turned out that he was in town visiting. He lives in Puerto Rico.

Benches. Benches. Benches. They can serve many purposes. He came to New York from Bogotá, Colombia. She arrived from St. Petersburg, Fla. They met in March 2014, at a friend's birthday party. Chrissy Crawford made such an impression on Enrique Corredor that on the way home in a cab, he texted her to ask her out. Things went excellently from then on.

As a boy he used to play in the park, dissolving into the Ramble. For years, he had had a dream that when he proposed to a woman, he would do it with one of the benches whose inscriptions he read. Right where he used to play. He just needed the woman.

Now he was set.

What to put on it? He trawled the internet, looking up love poems, romantic sayings. "I was surprised, but some of the best love lines were in letters written by Henry Kissinger," he said.

Yes, of course.

Nonetheless, he kept going. He came across something from "Gone With the Wind," Rhett Butler proposing to Scarlett O'Hara: "Say you're going to marry me.

Say yes. Say yes." Ms. Crawford was from the South. That would do it. He altered it somewhat and made the plaque: "My dearest Chrissy. Say you will marry me. With all my love and promise. Enrique. June 2015."

He picked a day for the surprise. He had gotten the engagement ring of Ms. Crawford's grandmother that he was going to use. But it rained. He had to push it back. He didn't know, but the new date was the wedding anniversary of her grandmother.

He suggested they run in the park. Ms. Crawford made it clear they had to leave by a certain time, for she had a business meeting. She has an online art gallery. He is an investment banker.

They ran. "He kept stalling and wanting to walk around and get coffee, explore," she remembered. "I was so angry with him by the time we got to the bench."

He told her, "Hey, Chrissy, look at that bench." The anger dissipated. He dropped to his knee. She said yes.

It was an expensive way to propose, considering it can be done free, but he didn't see it that way. "Well, I didn't have to pay for an engagement ring, so I get off on that," he said. "But I looked on it as a creating an heirloom. Leaving our mark on the city."

Something like 43 million people visit the park every year. Once a month or so, the couple will swing by, sit on the bench, their bench, and amid the park's placidity, contentedly gaze at the humanity filing past, and feel good.

A version of this article appears in print on June 19, 2016, on page MB1 of the New York edition with the headline: 4,223 Benches With Stories to Tell.

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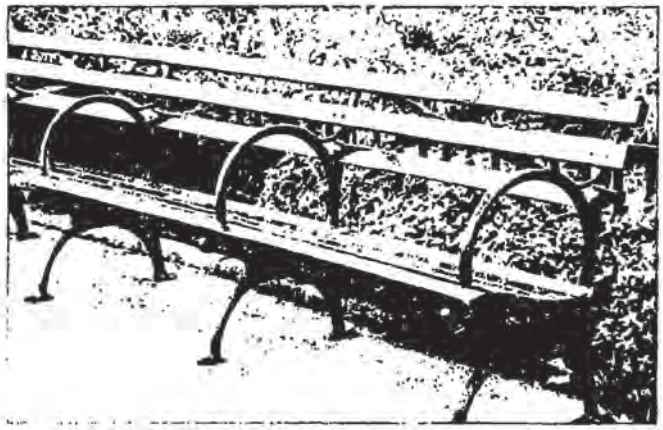
Page 753 of 906
Page 43 of 1451
NCAC # 34

There are 9,485 benches in the park. Almost half of them are more than simply places to sit. Credit Photographs by Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times and Yana Paskova for The New York Times

Page 754 of 906
Page 432 of 1451
NCAC # 35

May family members in Central Park, from left: Karen, Tony, Thornwell, Theodore and Theodore's wife, Lucinda. Credit Yana Paskova for The New York Times Photo

When you choose to participate in the Central Park Conservancy Adopt-A-Bench Program, you are helping to maintain Central Park's 9,000 benches.



We will acknowledge a donation of $10,000 with a personalized plaque on the bench of your choice. Multiple donors may contribute through honorary or memorial funds. Full payment must be received before you can reserve a bench. Bench adoptions are fully tax-deductible, and payment can be made by check, credit card, or stock transfer.

Not all benches without plaques are available. Please first consult our map of available bench locations in Central Park. We are happy to provide maps of any of your preferred locations.

Some areas of the Park no longer have benches available. These include: the Pond at 60th Street, Conservatory Water (Model Sail Boat Pond), the Alice in Wonderland and Hans Christian Andersen statues, Cherry Hill, the East 67th Street entrance, the East 69th Street entrance, the West 69th Street entrance, the East 72nd Street entrance, the East 76th Street entrance, the East 79th Street entrances, the Great Lawn Oval, the East 90th Street entrance, The Pool at West 102nd Street, Strawberry Fields, The Lake, the West 81st Street entrance, The Mall, Literary Walk, Olmsted Bed, and Adventure Playground.

You may submit your proposed inscription for the plaque for approval using the reverse of this form. Once the fabricator's proof is approved, it takes approximately **eight weeks** for the plaque to be engraved and installed.

I am interested in making a donation to the Adopt-A-Bench Program: ☐ $10,000

I am also inclosing a tax-deductible contribution for the general maintenance and care of benches: $ _____

By submitting this form I acknowledge that my contribution will be placed into the Adopt-A-Bench Endowment, the purpose of which is to maintain all Central Park benches and their environs, and that the Central Park Conservancy reserves the right to temporarily or permanently alter or relocate benches. I understand that it is my responsibility to update the Central Park Conservancy with my current contact information.

NAME _____ DATE _____

☐ IN HONOR OF _____ ☐ IN MEMORY OF _____

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE LISTED IN THE ANNUAL REPORT? (ONLY FOR GIFTS AT THE $1,000 LEVEL AND ABOVE.) _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. _____

NAME ON CARD _____ SIGNATURE _____

Please make check payable to the **Central Park Conservancy** and send it to:
Adopt-A-Bench Program, Women's Committee, Central Park Conservancy, 14 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022
Phone: 212.310.6617 · Fax: 212.310.6656 · Email: benches@centralparknyc.org

CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY
WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

I would like to adopt bench number:

1st choice: _ _ _ _ _ 2nd choice: _ _ _ _ _ 3rd choice: _ _ _ _ _ 4th choice: _ _ _ _ _

How did you hear about the Adopt-A-Bench program?

☐ Word of Mouth ☐ Saw plaques in the Park ☐ Website ☐ Adopt-A-Bench Committee Member

☐ Other: _____

Please choose from the fonts listed below and use the boxes to fill out the inscription.
(Please note that we cannot display graphics or logos on plaques).

☐ LITHOS PRO — THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.

☐ Helvetica — The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

☐ *Lucida Calligraphy — The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.*

☐ Times New Roman — The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1																														
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The Conservancy, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject any proposed inscription containing language that is obscene, lewd, defamatory, infringes on the proprietary rights of any third party, or is otherwise inappropriate.

If you are unable to provide us with the inscription at this time, please leave this blank and you may contact us when you are ready to submit your inscription.

Benches identified for adoption will be reserved for one (1) year following receipt of payment. If a proposed inscription is not received within this time period, the bench selected will be released from hold, and if unavailable at the time we receive your proposed inscription, we will assist you in selecting another bench.

The Conservancy does not rent or sell its donor mailing lists, however, we occasionally share the names and postal addresses of inactive donors with other reputable charitable organizations, as a cost effective way to find new supporters. If you prefer not to have your name and address shared in this way, please check here: ☐

The New York Times http://nyti.ms/24VTLMd

N.Y. / REGION

4,223 Central Park Benches With Stories to Tell

By N. R. KLEINFIELD JUNE 17, 2016

In the park, there are 9,485 of them. You sit on them. To rest. Read a book. Sip coffee. Polish off a pulled-pork sandwich. Feed the pigeons. Wait for a friend, maybe a spy. Or it's a sluggish day when you have nothing to do, and this is a delicious place to accomplish absolutely nothing.

Or you can drift off and muse on the plaque affixed there, representing a story behind the bench. The Central Park bench. You aren't just sitting on wood. You are sitting on memories.

There is, for instance, a bench on the Mall that reads, "Two Red Foxes and a Pup."

What could that possibly mean?

It means this. Last year, Karen May wanted to adopt a bench as a surprise 65th-birthday gift for her husband, Tony, a retired investment banker. She inscribed it: "Tony, win, lose or break even, you always have me. Love Karen." When their two sons were young and he came home from his work on Wall Street, they would rush to greet him and ask, "Hey, Poppy, did you win, lose or break even?" And he would reply that he broke even, because that was what much of life was about, breaking even.

While Ms. May was so inclined, she figured she would adopt an adjoining bench for her children.

When her elder son, Theodore, proposed to his girlfriend, Lucinda, he wrote a brief children's book for her called "Two Red Foxes," because foxes were a recurring theme in her upbringing (as when a fox sped across the field when her father proposed to her mother). The foxes were stand-ins for Ms. May's son and his fiancée. And there was the fact that her younger son, Thornwell (Ms. May's maiden name), went by the nickname Pup.

So she adopted the benches and engraved them with memories. People will sit there and not know. But she knows.

Caitlin LaMorte was in the park one morning, the weather obligingly balmy though rain was possible later. As development manager for the Women's Committee of the Central Park Conservancy, which manages the park, she runs the Adopt-a-Bench program. It began in 1986, as a way to finance the maintenance of the benches and their immediate surroundings. (For those with different park preferences, orphan benches are up for adoption in parks elsewhere in New York and some other cities.)

If you can afford it, it's simple enough. Pay $10,000 (it began at $5,000) and you get to put a plaque on a bench, saying almost whatever you want (within limits of decorum: no cursing, no advertising), up to a suggested maximum of four lines of 30 characters each. And then it's there forever.

Ms. LaMorte consulted her tablet for the latest count: 4,223 of the benches adopted. About 250 go each year, she said. While plenty of benches remain unadopted, some areas are sold out. For instance, all the benches facing the lake. The ones lining the Mall. Those near the Great Lawn. Those along Wien Walk.

There are three styles of benches: the simple wood-and-concrete version; the World's Fair style, with its circular armrests, dating to 1939; and the Central Park settee, based on the benches used during the park's creation, circa 1858. There are also several dozen handmade rustic benches. With those, you have to fund a restoration of an entire park area and the cost starts at about $500,000, not something to rush into.

Quite often, Ms. LaMorte said, benches are adopted to remember a relative or friend who has died. Or on occasion, a pet, generally a dog, though a few cats are honored as well. Something like 840 of the plaques have "memory" in their wording. There are some Sept. 11 remembrances.

Three years ago, a woman chose a bench in memory of herself for when her final date comes. It hasn't yet. The plaque, set to go, sits in one of Ms. LaMorte's desk drawers.

Increasingly, Ms. LaMorte said, "we have more plaques that are happy." Graduations or birthdays or birth wishes or wedding gifts. A Japanese couple, when they returned to Japan after a lengthy stretch in the city, adopted a bench that reads: "We leave our hearts in New York after 23 years of our adventure here."

There are a lot of benches in the playground areas commemorating births. One man adopted five benches, one for each of his grandchildren, who received them on their 16th birthdays.

Last year, Victor Schiller required a birthday present for his wife, Nancy. She told him, emphatically, no jewelry, thereby ruling out his go-to category.

He thought and thought, and then he had it. Give her one of the benches.

They didn't even live in New York. They lived in Charlottesville, Va., but they had bought a place in Manhattan that they inhabited roughly a week each month. They think Central Park is truly wonderful. Mr. Schiller, 59, is retired from creating technology start-ups. Ms. Schiller, 57, is retired from investment work focused on Bulgaria.

He gave her the bench, and was she happy. He waited on the inscription so she could have a say. They conferred and agreed on: "We Would Make the Same Mistake All Over Again! Vic & Nancy Schiller. Still Best Friends."

They did not reveal what the mistake was. Understandably, their three mystified children asked them, but lips sealed. Each has guessed, Umm, did you mean me? Well, of course not. No!

Was it waiting so long — 11 years — to have children? Wrong.

How about buying the apartment in New York? Incorrect, not even close.

So they don't know.

That's what reporters are for. To crack open mysteries, shine flashlights into dusty corners. Sometimes that's very hard. Other times, less so. In this case, the Schillers were ready to give it up. It was possible to find out in the most ordinary way — by asking them.

The two met when she was 20 and he was 22. They got engaged a year later. Mr. Schiller called his mother to break the good news. His mother dropped the phone. When she calmed herself enough to pick it up, she told him, "You're making a big mistake!"

Ms. Schiller called her mother. Her mother said, "What are you thinking?"

Those withering cautions, of course, are what mothers are legally required to say. And, of course, 20-somethings are under well-established protocol to ignore them.

Which is what the Schillers did. Went ahead and got married and never looked back.

Lou Young is a rugged, affable man of 59, with a bald head and a well-behaved beard. For 33 years, he has worked for the parks department, almost all of that time immersed in Central Park. He gives his title as Bench Guy. He affixes the plaques to the benches. A few at the beginning were handled by others, but since then they've been all his doing.

In the stinging sun the other day, he was out getting it done on a bench in the Ramble. As usual, the park was bubbling with activity. Wordlessly and with focused attention, he lined up a spot in the direct center, meticulously routed out a hole, then screwed in the plaque. Four screws. In less than 10 minutes, he was done. The inscription read: "You are the image of the rose shining within me like the flame within a lamp ...," a line modified from "The Little Prince."

Mr. Young paints the benches too, spiffs them up, fixes them when weather chews them up.

He came to New York from Birmingham, Ala., after the plant he worked in, making slats for train boxcars, shut down. Not long after he got to New York, he was riding in an elevator and noticed that it passed the 12th floor and then went to 14. No 13th floor. The unlucky thing.

Now wait a minute, Mr. Young thought, I was born on the 13th. On a Friday no less. To him, it's a lucky number. So he went to a dentist and had a front tooth plated with gold and 13 engraved on it. He likes to play the numbers. Every day for 25 years, he has played 1313 at $5 a pop. Never hit, but he keeps at it.

How did he like his work? "I just love the park," he said. "Best place to be. Since I'm from the South, it reminds me of home."

Once he put on a plaque that a man had ordered to propose to the woman he was dating. The man must have missed some important signals. Her answer was a flat no. Benches aren't returnable. Lou Young had to remove the failed plaque and replace it with one bearing nonmatrimonial expectations. (You can always change your plaque, but that's another $1,000.)

One day about 10 years ago the Bench Guy was out in earnest with newly arrived plaques. He had one to do at the southwest corner of the Great Lawn. He screwed it on, then took a look and saw it said Louis Young. He thought, "Interesting, this guy has the same name as me."

Turned out, one of the recurrent donors to the park, who had adopted 18 benches and given them as gifts, had gotten to know and admire Lou Young from watching him do his bench work. So she gave him a bench.

The plaque reads: "LOUIS YOUNG FOR HIS CARE AND DEDICATION TO CENTRAL PARK SINCE 1985."

It's not cheap to adopt a bench; you could buy a decent used car for the cost. But there is fund-raising. Nicole Vest battled leukemia for two and a half years before she died in February 2015. She was 34. Her family and friends debated what to do to

honor her memory. She was cremated, and there was no place to go and pay respects. Someone suggested a bench, and everyone liked that idea.

They set up an appeal on a fund-raising website. Family and friends chipped in, as did others, people who had never met Ms. Vest but knew one of her friends or relatives. The effort kicked off on March 10 of last year. It attained its goal by April 1. About 90 people donated, some giving as little as $20. They adopted a bench just north of the sailboat pond.

What to put on it? They wanted something original. "I didn't want something that was used all the time, like beloved sister and daughter," said Michelle Lapworth, Ms. Vest's sister.

Ms. Vest loved butterflies. She had a butterfly tattoo on her ankle, wore a butterfly necklace. Her best friend found a quotation from Hans Christian Andersen, and that met with approval. "'Just living is not enough,' said the butterfly. 'One must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.' In Memory of Nicole E. Vest 1981-2015."

Another story, pet included. When Chris Branca died much too young in an accident at 33 last April, his family wanted to remember him with a bench. They also wanted to remember his dog.

Buddha, a bulldog, had died a year earlier. Mr. Branca delighted in going to the park with Buddha. He lived further downtown. He drove there with Buddha. He was particularly fond of the Sheep Meadow.

Dogs are prohibited from the grass there. Nonetheless, that expanse beguiled Mr. Branca. Weekend after weekend, he went there with Buddha. "He would get a ticket all the time and just pay it," said Lindsey Branca, his sister. "That was his personality. He was a little bit defiant."

So, the family, which runs a real estate company, adopted adjoining benches, one for Mr. Branca and one for Buddha.

Mr. Branca was an abiding fan of Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are." With great frequency, he wore a Wild Things T-shirt. His best friend suggested

a Wild Things line that was adapted for the inscription: "For Chris Branca. In all of us there is Fear, Hope and Adventure. In all of us there is a Wild Thing."

The adjoining bench bears the plaque: "For Buddha Branca Chris's Bulldog forever by his side."

A memorial service was held at the benches. Some 80 people attended. Subsequently, friends have visited the benches, taken pictures, sent them on to the family.

A few weeks ago, his mother went to check on the benches and two of his childhood friends were sitting on them, chatting away. She sat down, slipped into the conversation. Another time, she looked in on the benches and a high school friend of Mr. Branca's was resting there. It turned out that he was in town visiting. He lives in Puerto Rico.

Benches. Benches. Benches. They can serve many purposes. He came to New York from Bogotá, Colombia. She arrived from St. Petersburg, Fla. They met in March 2014, at a friend's birthday party. Chrissy Crawford made such an impression on Enrique Corredor that on the way home in a cab, he texted her to ask her out. Things went excellently from then on.

As a boy he used to play in the park, dissolving into the Ramble. For years, he had had a dream that when he proposed to a woman, he would do it with one of the benches whose inscriptions he read. Right where he used to play. He just needed the woman.

Now he was set.

What to put on it? He trawled the internet, looking up love poems, romantic sayings. "I was surprised, but some of the best love lines were in letters written by Henry Kissinger," he said.

Yes, of course.

Nonetheless, he kept going. He came across something from "Gone With the Wind," Rhett Butler proposing to Scarlett O'Hara: "Say you're going to marry me.

Say yes. Say yes." Ms. Crawford was from the South. That would do it. He altered it somewhat and made the plaque: "My dearest Chrissy. Say you will marry me. With all my love and promise. Enrique. June 2015."

He picked a day for the surprise. He had gotten the engagement ring of Ms. Crawford's grandmother that he was going to use. But it rained. He had to push it back. He didn't know, but the new date was the wedding anniversary of her grandmother.

He suggested they run in the park. Ms. Crawford made it clear they had to leave by a certain time, for she had a business meeting. She has an online art gallery. He is an investment banker.

They ran. "He kept stalling and wanting to walk around and get coffee, explore," she remembered. "I was so angry with him by the time we got to the bench."

He told her, "Hey, Chrissy, look at that bench." The anger dissipated. He dropped to his knee. She said yes.

It was an expensive way to propose, considering it can be done free, but he didn't see it that way. "Well, I didn't have to pay for an engagement ring, so I get off on that," he said. "But I looked on it as a creating an heirloom. Leaving our mark on the city."

Something like 43 million people visit the park every year. Once a month or so, the couple will swing by, sit on the bench, their bench, and amid the park's placidity, contentedly gaze at the humanity filing past, and feel good.

A version of this article appears in print on June 19, 2016, on page MB1 of the New York edition with the headline: 4,223 Benches With Stories to Tell.

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There are 9,485 benches in the park. Almost half of them are more than simply places to sit. Credit Photographs by Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times and Yana Paskova for The New York Times

May family members in Central Park, from left: Karen, Tony, Thornwell, Theodore and Theodore's wife, Lucinda. Credit Yana Paskova for The New York Times Photo

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-30143

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AT ITS DECEMBER 20, 2017 MEETING TO INCREASE THE DONATION PRICE OF THE ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM FROM $10,000.00 TO $20,000.00 PER BENCH.

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 supporting the creation of an "Adopt-A-Bench Program" to provide the public an opportunity to adopt existing or new park benches for the commemoration of loved ones or special events, and to provide the Parks and Recreation Department an additional means to finance the beautification of City parks; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Department received two applications for the Adopt-A-Bench Program (the "Program") in 2017, which were separately referred to the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee for consideration; and

WHEREAS, participation in the Program currently requires a $10,000.00 adoption fee, and benches are made available for re-adoption after 10 years; and

WHEREAS, in the event a bench needs to be replaced within a donor's 10-year adoption period, the cost of standard bench models used at our City's parks may vary between $1,800.00 and $2,800.00 at current market rates; and

WHEREAS, Program proposals requesting a new bench placement will incur initial costs associated with the purchase, shipping, and installation of the bench; and

WHEREAS, ongoing maintenance includes a monthly pressure wash and repairs, as needed, at an estimated annual cost of $216.00, including labor, and the estimated cost for design, fabrication, and installation of a 3"h x 10"w stainless steel plaque is $300.00; and

WHEREAS, at its December 20, 2017 meeting, the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee separately approved both Program applications submitted to date, and discussed the cost of benches available for adoption under the Program. Following its consideration and discussion, the Committee approved a motion recommending an increase to the Program's $10,000.00 adoption fee to $20,000.00 per bench for all future participants.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby accept the recommendation of the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee at its December 20, 2017 meeting and approve increasing the donation price of the Adopt-A-Bench Program from $10,000.00 to $20,000.00 per bench.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 17 day of January, 2018.

ATTEST:

1/29/18

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

Dan Gelber, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM & LANGUAGE & FOR EXECUTION

City Attorney

1-8-18

Date

MIAMIBEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: January 17, 2018

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AT ITS DECEMBER 20, 2017 MEETING TO INCREASE THE DONATION PRICE OF THE ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM FROM $10,000.00 TO $20,000.00 PER BENCH.

RECOMMENDATION

Mayor and City Commission accept the recommendation of the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee at its December 20, 2017 meeting to increase the Adopt-A-Bench Program donation fee from $10,000.00 to $20,000.00 per bench.

ANALYSIS

On November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 supporting the creation of an "Adopt-A-Bench Program" similar to the Central Park Conservancy's program in New York City. The program provides the public an opportunity to adopt park benches for the commemoration of loved ones or special events, and would be an additional means to finance the beautification of City parks.

The Parks and Recreation Department received two applications for the Adopt-A-Bench Program (the "Program") in 2017 and were referred to the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee ("NCAC") separately.

On December 20, 2017, the NCAC approved both Program applications, and discussed the cost of benches available for adoption under the Program. Considering these figures, the Committee made a motion to increase the Program's $10,000.00 adoption fee to $20,000.00 for all future participants.

At the time of this memo, participation in the Program requires a $10,000.00 adoption fee, and benches are made available for re-adoption after 10 years. In the event a bench needed to be replaced within a donor's 10-year adoption period, the cost of standard bench models used at our City's parks may vary between $1,800.00 and $2,800.00 at current market rate. Program proposals requesting a new bench placement will incur initial costs associated with purchase, shipping, and installation.

Ongoing maintenance includes a monthly pressure wash and repairs as needed, at an estimated annual cost of $216.00 including labor, and the estimated cost for design, fabrication and installation of a 3"h x 10"w stainless steel plaque is $300.00.

Legislative Tracking
Parks and Recreation

Sponsor
Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

ATTACHMENTS:

	Description
D	Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-30947

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, REPEALING RESOLUTION NO. 2018-30380, WHICH CREATED THE CITY'S BRICK PAVER PROGRAM; AND AMENDING RESOLUTIONS NO. 2016-29649 AND NO. 2018-30143, RESPECTIVELY, AND APPROVING THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY'S ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM (THE "PROGRAM"): 1) A TIERED FEE STRUCTURE; 2) DELEGATING THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WITH THE AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTRATIVELY APPROVE FUTURE APPLICATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM; 3) ELIMINATING THE ELEMENT OF COMMEMORATIVE BENCH PLAQUES FROM THE PROGRAM AND INSTEAD, PRESENTING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WITH CERTIFICATES; AND 4) PROVIDING THAT ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE PROGRAM GO TOWARD OFF-SETTING SUBSIDIES OFFERED TO PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE RECREATION PROGRAMS.

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 supporting the creation of the Adopt-A-Bench Program, which provides the public an opportunity to commemorate park benches in honor of loved ones at an initial adoption fee of $10,000; and

WHEREAS, at the January 17, 2018 Commission meeting, City Commission passed Resolution No. 2018-30143, supporting a fee increase associated with bench adoption from $10,000, to $20,000; and

WHEREAS, since adoption fees were increased in 2018, interested parties have contacted the Department by phone or email to request additional information; however, all potential applicants have declined to participate, citing the cost as a deterrent; and

WHEREAS, no other benches have been adopted to date; and

WHEREAS, on June 6, 2018, the City's Brick Paver Program was created via Resolution No. 2018-30380, to provide the public an opportunity to purchase commemorative brick pavers on the beachwalk corridor, between 53rd and 64th Streets, at a cost of $1,000 per paver, with no corporate sponsorship option; and

WHEREAS, although the Parks and Recreation Department has also received several inquiries regarding the program, no brick pavers have been sold to date; and

WHEREAS, after further evaluation, the Administration is recommending fee changes to these programs in the hope that fee reductions will foster the community's ownership and pride in our City's park system, and provide residents and visitors an opportunity to invest in our parks as individual entities; and

WHEREAS, to revive the Adopt-A-Bench Program, the Administration proposed an overall cost reduction and the implementation of tiered pricing as set forth in Exhibit "A" to this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, in the new fee structure set forth in Exhibit A, eligible parks are categorized into one of three tiers, and each tier features separate pricing for the adoption of existing benches and of new benches; and

WHEREAS, moreover, to incentivize participation in the Brick Paver Program, the Administration recommended lowering the required donation fee from $1,000 to $250, regardless of residence, with no corporate sponsorship option; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the application process for both the Adopt-A-Bench and the Brick Paver Programs has deterred some applicants, as it requires a public hearing process; an application must be vetted by the Neighborhoods and Community Affairs Committee; approved for public notice at a Commission meeting; and approved by 5/7th vote at such public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the process may take anytime between 2-3 months, and somewhat hinders the programs' potential to reach a larger audience; and

WHEREAS, the Administration recommended the City Commission delegate the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench and Brick Paver Program applications; and

WHEREAS, the Administration also recommended that proceeds from the Adopt-A-Bench and the Brick Paver Programs go toward off-setting City subsidies offered to Parks and Recreation program participants enrolled in after-school, summer camp, and athletic programming, who qualify for free or reduced-price recreation programs; and

WHEREAS, at the September 11, 2019 City Commission meeting, City Commission passed a motion to (1) eliminate the Brick Paver Program in its entirety, and (2) eliminate the element of commemorative bench plaques from the Adopt-A-Bench Program and instead, present program participants with certificates based on tiered pricing as set forth in Exhibit "A" to this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby repeal Resolution No. 2018-30380, which created the City's Brick Paver Program; and amend Resolutions No. 2016-29649 and No. 2018-30143,

respectively, and approve the following amendments to the City's Adopt-A-Bench Program (the "Program"): 1) a tiered fee structure; 2) delegating the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administratively approve future applications for the Program, 3) eliminate the element of commemorative bench plaques from the Program and instead, present program participants with certificates; and 4) providing that all proceeds from the Programs go toward off-setting subsidies offered to Parks and Recreation program participants who qualify for free or reduced-price recreation programs.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of September, 2019.

Dan Gelber, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

City Attorney

10/9/19
Date

Tiered Fee Structure for Adopt-A-Bench Program

Tier 1 Parks – Pocket/Mini Parks

(Hibiscus Island Park, Poinciana Park, Sunset Isle II Park, Sunset Lake Park, Washington Park, Washington Park Annex.)

- **Existing Bench:** $1,000
- **New Bench:** $4,000

Tier 2 Parks – Neighborhood Parks

(Allison Park, Altos Del Mar Park, Beach View Park, Belle Isle Park, Brittany Bay Park, Crespi Park, Fairway Park, Fisher Park, Indian Beach Park, La Gorce Park, Marjory Stoneman Douglas Park, Maurice Gibb Memorial Park, Muss Park, Normandy Shores Park, Palm Island Park, Parkview Island Park, Parkview Park Annex, Pine Tree Park, Polo Park, Stillwater Park, Tatum Park.)

- **Existing Bench:** $1,500
- **New Bench:** $4,500

Tier 3 Parks – Special, District & Regional Parks

(82nd Street Skatepark, Bandshell Park, Collins Park, Flamingo Park, Lummus Park, MB Golf Club, Normandy Isle Park, Normandy Shores Golf Club, North Beach Oceanside Park, North Shore Park & Youth Center, Scott Rakow Youth Center, South Pointe Park.)

- **Existing Bench:** $2,000
- **New Bench:** $6,000

MIAMIBEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: September 11, 2019

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, AMENDING RESOLUTIONS NO. 2016-29649, NO. 2018-30143, AND NO. 2018-30380, RESPECTIVELY, AND APPROVING THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY'S ADOPT-A-BENCH AND BRICK PAVER PROGRAMS: 1) A TIERED FEE STRUCTURE FOR THE ADOPT-A-BENCH PROGRAM; 2) LOWERING THE REQUIRED DONATION FEE FOR THE CITY'S BRICK PAVER PROGRAM; 3) DELEGATING THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WITH THE AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTRATIVELY APPROVE FUTURE APPLICATIONS FOR BOTH PROGRAMS; AND 4) PROVIDING THAT ALL PROCEEDS FROM SUCH PROGRAMS GO TOWARD OFF-SETTING SUBSIDIES OFFERED TO PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE RECREATION PROGRAMS.

RECOMMENDATION

Mayor and City Commission to amend resolutions 2016-29649, 2018-30143, and 2018-30380, respectively, and approving the following amendments to the City's Adopt-A-Bench and Brick Paver Programs: 1) A tiered fee structure for the Adopt-A-Bench Program; 2) Lowering the required donation fee for the City's Brick Paver Program; 3) Delegating the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administratively approve future applications for both programs, and 4) Provided that all proceeds from such programs go toward offsetting subsidies offered to Parks and Recreation program participants who qualify for free or reduced-price recreation programs.

ANALYSIS

On November 9, 2016, the City Commission passed Resolution No. 2016-29649 supporting the creation of the Adopt-A-Bench Program, which provides the public an opportunity to commemorate park benches in honor of loved ones at an initial adoption fee of $10,000.

At the January 17, 2018 Commission Meeting, City Commission passed Resolution No. 2018-30143, supporting a fee increase associated with bench adoption from $10,000, to $20,000.

Since adoption fees were increased in 2018, interested parties have contacted the Department by phone or email to request additional information; however, all potential applicants have declined to participate, citing the cost as a deterrent. No other benches have been adopted to date.

On June 6, 2018, the city's brick paver program was created via Resolution No. 2018-30380, to provide the public an opportunity to purchase commemorative brick pavers on the beachwalk corridor, between 53rd and 64th streets, at a cost of $1,000 per paver, with no corporate sponsorship option.

Although the Parks and Recreation Department has also received several inquiries regarding the program, no brick pavers have been sold to date.

At the present time, participation in the Adopt-A-Bench Program requires a $20,000 adoption fee, participation in the Beachwalk Bricks Program (the "Brick Paver Program") requires a $1,000 donation fee, and proceeds from both fundraising programs go toward funding public educational programs in the City.

After further evaluation, the Administration is recommending fee changes to these programs in the hope that fee reductions will foster the community's ownership and pride in our city's park system and provide residents and visitors an opportunity to invest in our parks as individual entities.

To revive the Adopt-A-Bench Program, the Administration proposes an overall cost reduction and the implementation of tiered pricing (Exhibit A). In the new fee structure, eligible parks are categorized into one of three tiers, and each tier features separate pricing for the adoption of existing benches and of new benches. In consideration of the initial costs associated with purchase, shipping, and installation of new bench placements, the adoption fee for new benches must be higher to offset costs.

Determined by the park type classification, Tier 1 features "Pocket Parks" and offer the most affordable bench adoption fees, starting at $1,000 for an existing bench and $4,000 for a new bench. Parks in Tier 2 are classified as "Neighborhood Parks" and fees start at $1,500 for an existing bench and $4,500 for a new bench. All parks in Tier 3 are classified as either, "District", "Regional" or "Special Use". Existing benches in Tier 3 parks may be adopted for $2,000, and new benches may be adopted for $6,000.

Moreover, to incentivize participation in the Brick Paver Program, the Administration recommends lowering the required donation fee from $1000 to $250, regardless of residence.

Additionally, the application process for both Adopt-A-Bench and the Brick Paver Programs has deterred some applicants, as it requires a public hearing process. The application must be vetted by the Neighborhoods and Community Affairs Committee, approved to for public notice at a Commission meeting, and approved by 5/7th vote at such public hearing. The process may take anytime between 2-3 months, and somewhat hinders the program's potential to reach a larger audience.

The Administration recommends City Commission delegate the Parks and Recreation Department with the authority to administer and approve any Adopt-A-Bench and Brick Paver Program applications.

Furthermore, the Parks and Recreation Department seeks to communicate its vision through a meaningful cause that is specifically aligned with its mission. In FY 18 alone, the Department subsidized 1,515 program registrations for children who qualified for free or reduced fees. As such, the Administration recommends that profits from the Adopt-A-Bench and the Beachwalk Bricks programs go toward offsetting city subsidies offered to parks and recreation program participants

enrolled in after-school, summer camp, and athletic programming, who qualify for free or reduced-price recreation programs.

Legislative Tracking
Parks and Recreation

Sponsor
Mayor Dan Gelber

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Exhibit A - Tiered Fee Structure Adopt A Bench
- Resolution

Exhibit A

Tiered Fee Structure for Adopt-A-Bench Program

Tier 1 Parks – Pocket/Mini Parks

(Hibiscus Island Park, Poinciana Park, Sunset Isle II Park, Sunset Lake Park, Washington Park, Washington Park Annex.)

- **Existing Bench:** $1,000
- **New Bench:** $4,000

Tier 2 Parks – Neighborhood Parks

(Allison Park, Altos Del Mar Park, Beach View Park, Belle Isle Park, Brittany Bay Park, Crespi Park, Fairway Park, Fisher Park, Indian Beach Park, La Gorce Park, Marjory Stoneman Douglas Park, Maurice Gibb Memorial Park, Muss Park, Normandy Shores Park, Palm Island Park, Parkview Island Park, Parkview Park Annex, Pine Tree Park, Polo Park, Stillwater Park, Tatum Park.)

- **Existing Bench:** $1,500
- **New Bench:** $4,500

Tier 3 Parks – Special, District & Regional Parks

(82nd Street Skatepark, Bandshell Park, Collins Park, Flamingo Park, Lummus Park, MB Golf Club, Normandy Isle Park, Normandy Shores Golf Club, North Beach Oceanside Park, North Shore Park & Youth Center, Scott Rakow Youth Center, South Pointe Park.)

- **Existing Bench:** $2,000
- **New Bench:** $6,000