

CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

Recommendation On Nomination For The Naming Of A Public Facility

NOMINATION DATE: received by City Clerk on July 8, 2019

PARCEL OR PARCELS PROPOSED TO BE NAMED: NW Pioneers Park (also listed as Pioneer Park, Northwest Pioneer's Park, and NW Pioneers' Park)

LOCATION OF PARCEL OR PARCELS: In Pioneer Park area of the City, between Avenues M & N & North 29th & North 33rd Streets

SIZE OF PARCEL OR PARCELS: 8.35 acres

DESCRIPTION OR PARCEL OR PARCELS: Land purchased by the City in 1979, and after community input, named NW Pioneers' Park on February 17, 1981 by the City Commission to honor the early black citizens, or black pioneers, of Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County.

NOMINATOR: Nominations received from Dawn A Alexander and Percy S Alexander, Sr.

PROPOSED NAME OF PARCEL OR PARCELS: Rufus J. Alexander, Sr.

DATE CONSIDERED BY THE PAC: January 14, 2020

DATE OF PAC RECOMMENDATION: January 14, 2020

OBJECTIVES FOR NAMING OF PUBLIC FACILITIES CONSIDERED: __X__ YES ___NO

CRITERIA FOR NAMING OF PUBLIC FACILITIES CONSIDERED: __X__ YES ___NO

DOES THE PROPOSED PARCEL OR PARCELS MEET THE OBJECTIVES: __X__ YES ___NO

DOES THE PROPOSED PARCEL OR PARCELS MEET THE CRITERIA: __X__ YES ___NO

DOES THE PROPOSED NAME FOR THE PARCEL OR PARCELS MEET THE OBJECTIVES:
__X__ YES ___NO

DOES THE PROPOSED NAME FOR THE PARCEL OR PARCELS MEET THE CRITERIA:
___YES __X__ NO

PAC CONCLUSIONS: See Attached

PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (APPROVE/DENY): Deny - See Attached

DATE: January 14, 2020

RECEIVED, FORT PIERCE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: _____, 20__

Parks Advisory Committee Conclusions:

Two parties have proposed that Northwest Pioneers Park be **renamed** Rufus J. Alexander Jr. Park. That 8-acre parcel was acquired by the City in early 1979 and appears to have originally been called (perhaps unofficially) 29th Street Park. After a number of public meetings and a Charrette, it was named Northwest Pioneers Park per a motion by Commissioner Havert Fenn and a unanimous Commission vote on February 17, 1981 for the express purpose of honoring the early citizens or pioneers of Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County. Pictures of the Park entrance and of the detailed original design (attached) draw a conclusion that the purpose was to honor many pioneers. This design has not been completed to date.

Rufus J. Alexander, Jr. was a long-time resident of Fort Pierce, residing in the area where the park is located. From the Nomination Forms, it is apparent the Mr. Alexander was for many years involved in numerous community affairs, including active engagement in several City Parks, although Northwest Pioneers Park is not mentioned as one of them.

The City Commission has adopted specific Guidelines for the purpose of “establishing a systematic and consistent approach” for the naming and renaming of public facilities and setting forth procedures to be followed (copy attached). The PAC has completed steps 1-3 and is now submitting conclusions to the Commission to be discussed during a Conference Agenda meeting.

The Nominations do meet the guidelines, as does the proposed name. However, the Guidelines established by the Commission specifically state that “renaming carries with it a much greater burden of process compared to initial naming. Tradition and continuity of name and community identification are important community values. Each request to rename must meet the criteria of this policy, but meeting all criteria does not ensure renaming.”

The Parks Advisory Committee, after considering the history surrounding the acquisition and naming of Northwest Pioneers Park, after considering the facts and purposes underlying that name, after considering the Guidelines and the Criteria contained therein, has unanimously concluded that the proposed renaming of the Park in question should be rejected by the Commission. The original intent of the Park was to honor many pioneers, and the Committee agrees that Mr. Alexander could be considered as one of those pioneers. A process for selecting these individuals has not been developed to date. A letter from Larry Lee suggesting a process is also attached.

Respectfully Submitted,

The City of Fort Pierce Parks Advisory Committee
January 14, 2020