

1 Introduced January 11, 2022, by Councilwoman
2 Denham, seconded by Councilman Pichon

3
4 **Item No. 22-01-3406**

5 **ORDINANCE NO. 4064**

6
7 An ordinance amending Chapter 2, Article I of the Code of Ordinances of the
8 City of Slidell, to add subsection 2-8 to name the pool at Possum Hollow Park the Lionel J.
9 Washington Community Pool.

10 WHEREAS, Lionel J. Washington served on the Slidell City Council for
11 twenty-four (24) years and was a tireless advocate for the people of Slidell, particularly
12 residents of District A; and
13

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Washington was also a distinguished and respected
15 educator in St. Tammany Parish, where he served as a teacher for thirty-five (35 years);
16
17 and
18

19 WHEREAS, among Mr. Washington's many accomplishments was his
20 substantial work in bringing the construction of a community pool at Possum Hollow Park
21 to fruition; and
22

23 WHEREAS, since Mr. Washington's passing in 2011, admiration and
24 appreciation for his efforts in our community have endured and grown; and
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26 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to publicly honor the life and work of Lionel J.
27 Washington; and
28

29 WHEREAS, in recognition of the legacy of Lionel J. Washington, the City
30 wishes to name the pool at Possum Hollow Park the Lionel J. Washington Community
31 Pool.
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3 **PAGE 2**

4 NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Slidell City Council that
5
6 Chapter 2 (Administration), Article I (In General) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of
7 Slidell is hereby amended to add subsection 2-8, to read and provide as follows:
8

9 **Sec. 2-8 – Pool at Possum Hollow Park named.**

10
11 The pool at Possum Hollow Park is hereby named the Lionel J. Washington
12 Community Pool.
13

14
15 **ADOPTED** this 8th day of February, 2022.

16 

17
18 Leslie Denham
19 President of the Council
20 Councilwoman, District A

21 

22
23 Greg Cromer
24 Mayor

25
26 

27 Thomas P. Reeves
28 Council Administrator

DELIVERED	2/9/22
10:45 am	to the Mayor
RECEIVED	2/14/22
11:00 am	from the Mayor

The City of Slidell
Application for Naming of City Building or Portion of a Building

Date of Application: December 21, 2021

Applicant's Name: Leslie Denham

Building or Part of Building to be Named: City Pool in Possum Hollow Park

Background Check Completed: _____ Date: _____ By Whom: _____

The City Council and Mayor acknowledge that the naming of a part of a public building is a rare and significant dedication to a special person(s) in our community.

Clear demonstration of a person's commitment to the City including, but not limited to, the commitment of time, talent and/or treasures that serve to improve and enhance the City of Slidell must be set forth

Please provide a narrative:

Attached.

Reviewed by:

Leslie Denham
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

Kenny Tambarella
Council Member

[Signature]
Mayor

Warren Crockett
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

Lin B. Harbison
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

Cindi E. King
Council Member

Lionel J. Washington, former longtime Slidell City Councilman, dies at 74

Published: Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 4:51 PM Updated: Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 4:51 PM



By **Ramon Antonio Vargas, The Times-Picayune**

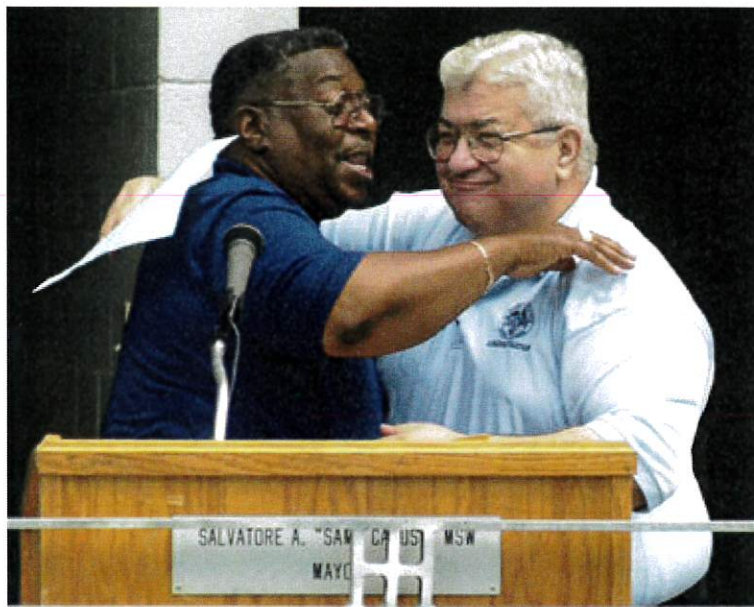
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Lionel J. Washington, a science educator who represented the south-central area of Slidell on the **City Council** for 24 years, died at a hospital on March 10. He was 74.



Times-Picayune archiveIn 2000, Lionel J. Washington, left, former councilman for Slidell's District A, embraces then-Mayor Sam Caruso near a public pool he pushed to build in his district. Mr. Washington died March 10.

Relatives believe he had suffered a heart attack, said Dorothy Hawkins Lewis, his sister-in-law.

Mr. Washington graduated from St. Tammany Parish Training School before earning a bachelor's degree in chemistry education and a master's degree in chemistry from Southern University in Baton Rouge. He later received advanced educational degrees from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond. He taught public school students in St. Tammany for 35 years prior to retiring in 2002.

However, most residents best remember Mr. Washington for his work as representative of District A on the Slidell City Council.

Voters elected Mr. Washington to the first of six four-year terms in 1978, making him the first African-American in the city to win a public office.

Colleagues and family say two notable triumphs, which involved erecting day-care centers and a public pool, illustrate his care for his constituents and their families.

In 2001, Mr. Washington successfully urged his fellow lawmakers to authorize the operation of day-care centers in his district, which was home to many low-income minorities. He sought the ordinance, he said, to provide supervision for the children of people coming off welfare and seeking employment after changes in federal and state aid programs at the time.

"He gave his all as a councilman," his sister-in-law said. "He loved his community."

Beforehand, Mr. Washington had pushed the city to use local and federal Community Development Block Grant program money to build a pool for the Boys & Girls Club of Southeast Louisiana in Slidell. He convinced his fellow Council members to approve the project in January 2000, and a \$350,000 swimming complex opened in Possum Hollow Park that summer.

"Education and children were a major part of Lionel's life," said current District A Councilman Lionel Hicks, a longtime friend of Mr. Washington's. "He wanted kids to have a chance to learn to swim."

Mr. Washington relied on a scientist's cold, calm thinking to navigate one of the most racially-charged controversies in recent city history, according to loved ones.

During the spring of 2001, black leaders in the area demanded that the city remove from its train station an official Confederate flag and bronze-plated bust of its namesake, Confederate diplomat **John Slidell**. Both symbolized racism and slavery, they argued.

But Mr. Washington disagreed. The flag flown was not among the Southern battle flags eventually co-opted by the Ku Klux Klan and other hate groups, and the city's founder undeniably named it for John Slidell, he reasoned.

"We can't rewrite history," Mr. Washington, who was Council president for six years and vice-president for four, told the public. "I do not agree with our past history, but what happened happened."

District E Councilman Sam Caruso, who was either Slidell councilman or mayor for much of Mr. Washington's career, admired his fellow leader's stance on the issue. He said, "Lionel was able to separate pure, raw emotion from logical thinking."

Mr. Washington was a 33rd Degree Mason and a member of Hartzell-Mount Zion United Methodist Church, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club and the Slidell Arts Commission.

Among Mr. Washington's survivors are his wife of 52 years, Rebecca Hawkins Washington; his children, Dr. Sheila Washington and Landon Washington; his sister, Leola McClelland; and four grandchildren.

Doyle's Funeral Home is handling arrangements. Visitation will be Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the funeral home, 2430 Fourth St., and Friday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, 2445 Fourth St. The funeral service is set for 11 a.m. Friday at the church.

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