



City Council Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Billings and Council Members

Cc: Michael Kovacs, City Manager and Vickey Raduechel, TRMC, City Secretary

From: Steve Gilbert, Director of Community Services & Building Safety and Jessica Larson, Deputy City Secretary / Assistant to the City Manager

Date: June 21, 2021

Agenda Item & Captions: Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action regarding naming the park adjacent to Harry Herndon Elementary School

Action Requested: Approve an official name of the new park adjacent to Harry Herndon Elementary School.

Overview and Background: The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met on May 4, 2021 to discuss the naming of the park adjacent to Harry Herndon Elementary School and moved to distribute a survey for public feedback. The online feedback was distributed through the Open Town Hall platform and had 121 visitors and 89 statements that calculated to 4.5 hours of public comment @ 3 minutes per statement. In addition, Facebook and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members comments were captured in one spreadsheet. At the June, 1, 2021, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, The ninety plus names were reviewed voted on. The Board settled on five name choices for Council final approval.

1. Zollner Park
2. Joe Burger Park
3. The Fate Girls Park
4. Friendship Park
5. Lafayette Park

This park has sometimes been referred to as south side park. However, this was not an official name, rather a directional indicator of where the park is located, on the south side of the City.

Financial Considerations: None

Supporting Documents (attached):

- History of Each naming Option
- Spreadsheet of All naming choices

History behind the names proposed for the Park adjacent to Harry Herndon Elementary School

Zollner Park

Massey Zollner and his wife, Elizabeth, established a ranch near Fate in Rockwall County in 1876. Immigrants from Germany by way of Australia, the Zollner's soon developed a successful cotton crop on 320 acres of North Texas land. For labor, they hired men of every profession who were temporarily unemployed. Because of this practice, their place became known as "Hobo Ranch." Zollner's son Matthew and grandson Henry continued this hiring practice until 1979.

For more information: www.cityoffate.com/363/Zollner-Hobo-Ranch

Joe Burger Park

Joe Burger, a long-time resident who currently lives in the southern side of the City of Fate. Mr. Burger has served in many roles from 2014 until 2021 including: City Council member, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, and Mayor Pro Tem. In 2019, voters elected Joe Burger as Mayor. Additionally, he served on the Fate Municipal Development District NO. 1 Board of Directors, Rockwall County Emergency Services Corporation, Rockwall County Road Consortium, Rockwall County Open Space Consortium. Furthermore, Mr. Burger volunteered his time with the Royse City ISD on the following committees: 2021 Bond Steering Committee, Strategic Planning 2.0 Committee, Naming of Facilities Committee, he attended the Discovery Education STEM Leader Retreat, and was a supporter of the Royse City ISD Education Foundation.

Joe Burger personified a servant's heart, leading with conviction, gently encouraging the City Council, its staff, and our citizens to think bigger while planning for the future.

He has been instrumental in the success of the City of Fate, economic development with projects such as bringing FRESH by Brookshire, the redevelopment of downtown, and spear heading the local option election that allowed for the wet alcoholic beverages sales status. The results brought Spec's Wine, Spirits & Finer Foods.

He was an advocate for the purchase of the park property and the park bond to grant access for all residents to have access to parkland within a 10-minute walk of their home. Mayor Burger met with any resident who had questions and wanted to understand decisions that were being made in our local government. Mr. Burger left Fate a City stronger than when he began his service.

The Fate Girls Park

In the 1990s a Fate Museum was founded by a group of girls who were born and attended school in Fate. The group, known as "The Fate Girls," started as a social group, who met once monthly and visited local towns within a radius of a day's journey. Later, they approached the City Council about using the walls of City Hall to display pictures of Fate and some of its citizens from years past. With the cooperation of many former Fate residents the history of Fate was soon preserved through these pictures. "The Fate Girls" campaigned to name Miss May Vernon Elementary School after their beloved teacher who taught first, second, and third grades for fifty years. "The Fate Girls" were asked to assist in naming streets in Woodcreek after some of the first prominent citizens of Fate. More recently in 2019, three ladies were interviewed to create a 17-minute video about the town's past.

Video: <https://youtu.be/mxPBZpW4M8Q>

Friendship Park

The name was proposed because Royse City ISD sold the property to the City. This commitment and partnership between the two organizations for the betterment of the community is a true “friendship.”

Lafayette Park

The unique name of our City is derived from a nickname of one of two residents, either William Lafayette Brown or GW Lafayette Peyton. Which former resident named the City has been debated for years. According to a 1976 City document, "there is considerable agreement that the town was named for William Lafayette Brown." However, there are no absolute evident records for verification of the inception of the town's name. Therefore, it will never be known for sure. What is known, is that there were two influential gentlemen nicknamed “Fate” who lived in the area during the 1860s. Three important aspects of life played a role in the naming of our City, land ownership, a post office, and the railroad. Since the town was small, it is likely that both the Brown and Peyton families were common relatives with Fate's first postmaster Harvey Peyton White and could have been named after either or both men.

The town of Fate was settled shortly after the Civil War in the 1860s and is located one-and-a-half miles to the north of its current location on Farm to Market Road 552. The area was known as an oasis for travelers as the wells never ran dry even during droughts. William Lafayette “Fate” Brown (1835-1903) was born in Mississippi and had three children with his wife Lilia A. Brown. Brown was a leading member of the community who ran a feed store. Brown was integral in establishing a Post Office in 1880. Until this time, the settlers received their mail by stagecoach. According to legend, he proposed calling the area Brown Springs after his surname and the natural springs on the land. However, being that there was already a Brown Springs Post Office in Texas, Mrs. Brown suggested calling the area Lafayette's nickname, “Fate.” The Fate post office was established on July 13, 1880 with Harvey Peyton White as the first postmaster.

William Lafayette “Fate” Brown moved to Rockwall to become the sheriff of Rockwall County from December 1886 until November 1892. After Brown's career as the Rockwall County Sheriff, he became the Rockwall Postmaster from 1893 until 1897. According to the 1900 census, at the age of 65 Brown was a landlord. Today, the Brown family remains lay in the Rockwall Memorial Cemetery along State Highway 66.

The little history that we know about George Washington Lafayette “Fate” Peyton (1835-1915) comes from the 1880 and 1910 Census and land records. He was born in Tennessee in 1835 and later moved to Texas to become a vast landowner and farmer. With his first wife Lucy A. Clayton Peyton (1833-1896), Lafayette had three children. After Lucy's death, the 1910 census reports that at the age of 65 he married Rebecca J. Peyton. Today, the Peyton family remains lay in the Mount Zion Cemetery along Farm to Market Road 552.

Community Park Names	Total Votes in Open Town Hall	Location	Second Location	Third Location	June 1 Parks Board Nomination
Athletic Complex		Parks Board Before Survey			
10 Million Dollar Park		- Facebook			
Admiral Park		- Open Town Hall			
Audie Murphy		- Open Town Hall			
Blackland Park		- Facebook	Parks Board Before Survey		
Bluebonnet Ridge Park		- Open Town Hall			
Bowen Park		- Facebook			
Brandon Cheney Park		- Facebook			
Briarland Park		- Facebook			
Buttercup Park		- Facebook			
Chief Akin Park		- Facebook			
Clint Willoughby Park		- Open Town Hall			
Willoughby Park		3 Open Town Hall	Parks Board Before Survey		
Clotho Park		- Open Town Hall			
Coming Together Park		- Open Town Hall			
COVID-19 Park		- Facebook			
Dale Earnhardt Memorial		- Open Town Hall			
David Karr Park		- Open Town Hall			
Destiny		- Open Town Hall	Facebook		
Fate Barnes Park		- Facebook			
Fate Brown Park		- Facebook			
Fate Citizen's Park		Parks Board Before Survey			1
Fate City Park		- Facebook			1
Fate Falcon Park		- Open Town Hall			
Fate Harmony Park		- Open Town Hall			
Fate Hero's Park		- Facebook			
Fate Place Park		- Open Town Hall			
Fateville Park		- Open Town Hall			
Fossil Park		Parks Board Before Survey			
Founder's Park		Parks Board Before Survey			
Freedom Fate Park		2 Open Town Hall			1
Freedom Park		2 Facebook			
Friendship Park		4 Open Town Hall	Parks Board Before Survey		2
Gaines Park		2 Open Town Hall			
Gathering Spot		Parks Board Before Survey			
Government Waste Park		- Open Town Hall			
Greenbriar Park		4 Open Town Hall	Facebook	Parks Board Before Survey	1
Greenland Meadows Park		2 Open Town Hall			
Greenland Park		- Open Town Hall			
Harvey Peyton White Park		- Facebook			
Heritage Park		- Facebook	Parks Board Before Survey		
Herndon Park		- Facebook	Parks Board Before Survey		
Jo Leonard Park		9 Open Town Hall	Facebook - 4 votes - added to the 9		1
Joe Burger Park		4 Open Town Hall	Parks Board Before Survey		2
Burger Park		- Facebook			
Jurassic Park		2 Open Town Hall			
Katherine Stevener Park		- Facebook			
Kevin Ruscitti Park		- Open Town Hall			
Kismet Park		- Open Town Hall			
L.F. Brown Park		- Open Town Hall			
Lafayette Park		6 Open Town Hall	Facebook		4
Leighton Grounds Park		- Open Town Hall			
Liberty Park		- Open Town Hall			
Lost 'n Fate Park		2 Open Town Hall			
Main Place Park		- Open Town Hall			
Memorial Park		- Open Town Hall			
Mis Amigos		- Open Town Hall			
Nichol Park		- Open Town Hall			
Paradise Park		- Open Town Hall			
Parkey Mc Park Park		- Facebook			
Parkey McParkenstein Park		- Open Town Hall			
Parkey McParkface		12 Open Town Hall			
Peyton and Brown Park		Parks Board Before Survey			
Pioneer Park		2 Open Town Hall	Facebook		
Postmaster Park		- Open Town Hall	Facebook		
PRB Community Park		- Open Town Hall			
Pres. Donald J. Trump Park		- Open Town Hall			
Preservation Park		Parks Board Before Survey			
Railroad Park		- Facebook			
Rainbow Park		- Open Town Hall			
Ralph Hall Park		2 Open Town Hall	Facebook		
Randy Earl Parks		- Open Town Hall			
Scott Ragsdale Park		3 Open Town Hall			
Screamin' Eagle Park		- Open Town Hall			
Serendipity Park		- Facebook			1
Serenity Community Park		- Facebook			
SouthPark		- Open Town Hall			1
Southside Landing		Parks Board Before Survey			
Southside Park		Parks Board Before Survey			1
Southside Recreation Complex		- Open Town Hall			
Striker Park		- Open Town Hall			
Symphony Park		- Open Town Hall			
The Fate Girls Park – amenities named after each member		3 Open Town Hall	Parks Board Before Survey		3
The Landing		Parks Board Before Survey			1
Unity Park		- Open Town Hall			1
Veteran's Park		- Facebook			1
W.E. Crawford Park		- Facebook			
Wildflower Park		Parks Board Before Survey			
Willoughby Park		3 Open Town Hall	Parks Board Before Survey		
Zollner Park		Parks Board Before Survey	Facebook		2

6/1 Parks Board Votes	Each Member Voted 3 Times
Zollner	6
Joe Burger Park	5
The Fate Girls Park	5
Lafayette Park	4
Friendship Park	4

Key
Indicates a simular name
Indicates a staff favorite
Indicates 6/1 Parks Board Choice