

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, Interim City Manager

DATE: July 24, 2024

TITLE: 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, AT ITS JUNE 5, 2024 MEETING, TO APPROVE THE PLACEMENT OF A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF PRIDE PARK NEAR A TREE IN HONOR OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND PRESERVATIONIST JOE TOM EASLEY; SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2024, PURSUANT TO SECTION 82-504 OF THE CITY CODE, TO CONSIDER THE INSTALLATION OF THE COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE; AND DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO PUBLISH THE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC NOTICE.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Accept the recommendation of the Public Safety Neighborhoods and Quality of Life Committee, at its June 5, 2024 meeting, to approve the placement of a commemorative plaque in the northwest corner of Pride Park near a tree in honor of civil rights activist and preservationist Joe Tom Easley; setting a public hearing on September 11, 2024, pursuant to section 82-504 of the City Code, to consider the installation of the commemorative plaque; and directing the City Clerk to publish the appropriate public notice.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

At the May 15, 2024 City Commission meeting, at the request of Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt, the Mayor and City Commission referred an item (C4 M) to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC"), to discuss the placement of a plaque in honor of civil rights activist and preservationist Joe Tom Easley at Pride Park. (Exhibit A). At the June 5, 2024 Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC") meeting, the item was moved to the full Commission with a favorable recommendation. (Exhibit B).

### **ANALYSIS**

Joe Tom Easley, who passed away in February of 2022, was a leading national civil and gay rights activist, a noted attorney instrumental in getting "don't ask/don't tell" repealed, and a fierce advocate for historic preservation, serving on the board of the Miami Design Preservation League for many years.

His marriage to husband Peter Freiberg was among the first same-sex unions announced in the New York Times. Mr. Easley served in the Navy during the Vietnam War, spent years fighting for the repeal of "don't ask/don't tell," and used his skills as a speaker, teacher and leader to serve the gay community. He was a chairman of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a group that sought to end discrimination against gay military personnel, served as chairman of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, an LGBT group, and as president of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.

His husband, Peter Freiberg, and the Palm View Neighborhood Association have requested that the City of Miami Beach honor Joe Tom Easley. They request doing so within the Palm View neighborhood, and are suggesting to place the plaque near a tree in the northwest corner of Pride Park. Mr. Easley fought hard to make Pride Park happen and therefore, they believe it would be a suitable place to honor his memory and legacy.

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Economic Development Department support placing a memorial plaque in the northwest corner of Pride Park near a tree. The cost to produce and install a 12" x 12" plaque and a supporting pedestal, is approximately \$3,000 - \$5,000.

### **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Parks and Recreation Department will be covering the costs through its current budget, estimated at approximately \$3,000 - \$5,000.

### **Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?** (FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on . See BIE at:  
<https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Account: 011-0950-000343-28-406-545-00-00-00-  
Amount: \$3,000.00 – \$5,000.00

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **Applicable Area**

South Beach

**Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?**

Yes

**Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?**

No

**Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying?** No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

#### **Department**

Parks and Recreation

#### **Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

**Co-sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Laura Dominguez

**Condensed Title**

Set PH, Install Commemorative Plaque for Joe Tom Easley in Pride Park. (Bhatt/Dominguez)  
PKS