

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON, ED FLYNN, JULIA MEJIA, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, DURKAN, FITZGERALD, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, WORRELL, AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION TO RENAME THE SOUTH END BRANCH OF THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY IN HONOR OF MEL AND JOYCE KING

WHEREAS, Melvin Herbert King was born on October 20, 1928 in the South End neighborhood of Boston, one of eleven children to parents Ursula and Watts King, themselves immigrants from Guyana and Barbados, respectively; *and*

WHEREAS, Friends since childhood, Mel King married his wife Joyce in 1951, and they remained together for nearly 72 years until his passing on March 28th, 2023; *and*

WHEREAS, After graduating from Boston Technical High School and later Boston State College with a Masters of Arts in education, King found his calling as a community activist and neighborhood leader, founding the Community Assembly for a United South End (C.A.U.S.E.) to give tenants and community residents a voice; *and*

WHEREAS, Thanks to the efforts of Mel King and others, residents in the South End and Roxbury successfully fought against the expansion of Interstate 95 through the heart of these two neighborhoods, saving the community from utmost destruction, displacement, and environmental catastrophe; *and*

WHEREAS, Elected in 1973 to represent the Massachusetts' 9th Suffolk district, King advocated for a number of progressive policies, including championing divestment from Apartheid in South Africa and supporting LGBTQ+ rights at a time when few were willing to speak up; *and*

WHEREAS, In 1983, King ran for Mayor of Boston, making him the first African American to make it to the general election for Mayor in the history of Boston, running a grassroots campaign focusing on neighborhood supports, easing racial tension, and promoting access to high-quality education for all; *and*

WHEREAS, From the time after the election up until his passing in early 2023, Mel King continued to provide guidance, wisdom, and insights to organizers of all backgrounds, going on to found the Rainbow Coalition Party in Massachusetts and the South End Technology Center to provide computer training for low-income people; *and*

WHEREAS, King passed away in March of 2023 at the age of 94, remembered as one of Boston's most celebrated civil rights leaders of the 20th century; *and*

WHEREAS, Originally founded in 1877, the South End Branch of the Boston Public Library is currently undergoing a major renovation to its existing building erected in 1971, presenting an opportunity to rename the library in honor of one of Boston's most significant and honored historical figures; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED, That the Boston City Council supports renaming the South End Branch of the Boston Public Library to the The Melvin & Joyce King Branch of the Boston Public Library.

Filed on: August 7, 2024