

**PROCLAMATION
CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
OAK PARK VILLAGE BOARD'S ADOPTION OF THE
FAIR HOUSING ORDINANCE**

Whereas, on May 6, 1968 the Village of Oak Park adopted a Fair Housing Ordinance, which was among the first of its kind in the nation and has served as a model to many communities; and

Whereas, the new Fair Housing Ordinance was codified as part of the Oak Park Village Code, Chapter 13 and entitled Human Rights; and

Whereas, today Chapter 13 protects the rights of individuals within the protected classes of race, sex, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, familial status, source of income, or disability in full and equal access to all public places of accommodation, purchasing, leasing, securing a loan, renting or occupying housing or other real estate in the Village; and

Whereas, the action of the Village only occurred after many years of progressive work toward fair housing in the face of aggressive opposition, which called the initiative forced housing; and

Whereas, the efforts of the non-governmental Citizens Committee for Human Rights and later the Village's Community Relations Commission established in 1963 led the public community conversation; and

Whereas, more than 10,000 signatures were obtained on a petition calling for a referendum on the Fair Housing as the Community Relations Commission held hearings to draft recommendations to the Village Board for a Fair Housing Ordinance; and

Whereas, on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and riots broke out across the country and in Chicago where much of the Lawndale neighborhood on the west side of the city was destroyed; and

Whereas, in the aftermath of the riots which followed Dr. King's death, the Village President and Board of Trustees held their Regular Meeting on May 6, 1968 at 7:35 p.m. in the Oak Park and River Forest High School Auditorium at 201 S. Scoville before about 500 citizens to consider the Fair Housing recommendations of the Community Relations Commission and the petition for a referendum; and

Whereas, after much debate, Oak Park Village President John C. Donaker along with Village Trustees Mark H. Brooks, Jr., Isadore M. Fixman, John J. Gearen, Sr., Hazel N. Hanson, George Vician and Rupert Wenzel determined that as a representative democracy, the decision lay with the Village Board and that an advisory referendum was not informative to this matter of public policy and placing a referendum on the ballot was tabled with four affirmative votes and three in opposition; and

Whereas, a motion to table adoption of the ordinance applicable to all single family homes sales failed with two affirmative votes and five Trustees opposing the matter prior to adoption of Oak Park's historic Fair Housing Ordinance with five affirmative votes and two Trustees opposing the matter.

Whereas, following further extensive debate regarding two alternative ordinances, a motion to table adoption of the ordinance which applied to all single family homes sales without exception failed by a two to five vote prior to adoption of Oak Park's historic Fair

Housing Ordinance which applied to all single family sales with five affirmative votes and two Trustees opposing the matter.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois that we reflect upon the actions taken 50 years and one day ago and consider the importance of that public policy and grassroots advocacy for Open Housing and consider the Fair Housing stewardship we have in our role as the governing body for the Village of Oak Park; and

Be it Further Resolved, by the Board of Trustees that we acknowledge the courage and resilience of the earliest black individuals and families who came to Oak Park both before and after the adoption of the Fair Housing Ordinance; and

Now Therefore, I, Anan Abu-Taleb, President of the Village of Oak Park and the Board of Trustees, do hereby call upon each citizen to celebrate 2018 as the 50th Anniversary of the Village of Oak Park's Fair Housing Ordinance.

APPROVED this 7th day of May, 2018

Anan Abu-Taleb, Village President

ATTEST:

Vicki Scaman, Village Clerk