

RESOLUTION 2020-08

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND APPLAUDING THE LASTING CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHY ALTENBERN TO THE CITY OF BELLE MEADE

WHEREAS, Cathy Altenbern has served loyally as Commissioner of the City of Belle Meade for twelve years (2008 – 2020) and,

WHEREAS, the duties required of a Commissioner are not proportional to the size of the city, as the City of Belle Meade still presents the same issues of governance, politics, long range planning and allocation of scarce resources as cities many times its size; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to those duties required of anyone involved the governance of a city, the City of Belle Meade presents unique challenges to those charged with preserving its substantial assets, both tangible and intangible;

WHEREAS, in addition to those duties routinely required of those who assume such responsibilities, she has faced major floods, other stormwater events, (sometimes minor except in the minds of the residents), droughts both climatic and financial, and the pestilence of litigation;

WHEREAS, she became a commissioner in 2008 becoming the first of two commissioners to be a part of the expansion to five commissioners from the original three.

WHEREAS, she has contributed to the public discourse of current events and governmental affairs on which this great Country was founded more than two hundred years ago, eschewing the anonymity of the internet (reportedly founded by Belle Meade resident Al Gore) in honor of the proud traditions of the Constitutional debates of 1787 and our legal council's attempt at enforcement of Sunshine Laws.

WHEREAS, having undertaken these serious duties, fully understanding the burden of exercising her discretion in deciding matters that encourage legitimate debate, and exercising the courage to resolve important issues for the long-term benefit of all our citizens, she has contributed daily to the welfare of this City and its citizens;

WHEREAS, she has made these contributions using her unique combination of intellect, experience, wisdom, judgment, finely tuned political instincts, public trust and business acumen, not to mention the ability to field random calls at all hours of the day and night about matters not within her control. She still considers her favorite things about being a commissioner has been the people; meeting residents she would never have known, and the amazing and dedicated staff that runs our city so well.

WHEREAS, In addition to her primary duties as Commissioner, Cathy held various assignments: she has valiantly led the effort to preserve the beauty of our fair city without falling back on architectural review and other obstacles; successful reenergizing the Ceres Society and taking annual fund raising to record levels, then serving as representative of the formalized Beautification Committee. Cathy was an active participant in the first annual Commissioner retreat held at Loews Vanderbilt Plaza and has remained a strong advocate of these retreats. The second year retreat, lack of adequate space and noisy ongoing construction, forced a move of future retreats to the friendly and convenient confines of Belle Meade Country Club. These annual retreats have created prioritized lists of hopeful improvements which have become a regular function of Commissioner duties. Cathy, even without initial unanimous agreement, supported Harding Place sidewalk construction. This proved to be a vote with positive long-term consequences. Conversely, she supported, albeit with hesitation, the recommendation of one-lane closures to allow for bicycles and pedestrian traffic along the south portion of Belle Meade Boulevard. The turning point in the discussion was led by a postman's rant at

Commissioner meeting, then exacerbated by the traffic engineer's failure (and the commissioners failure also) to recognize the number and size of crosswalks and other road markings used following the repaving of Belle Meade Boulevard. Several of the city's frequent flyers called to suggested re-naming Belle Meade Blvd (BMB 000/180).

WHEREAS, as a result of her leadership, including delegating expertise, the City of Belle Meade has been well-managed fiscally while preserving public services, improving its infrastructure and assuring the general satisfaction of its very demanding citizens; Cathy oversaw the decisions following Hall Tax elimination. Mechanisms were established that assures the City will continue to be fiscally healthy and a desirable place to live.

WHEREAS, she has done so as a volunteer without monetary compensation, acting as an involved and responsible steward of this City's assets, while always planning for its future; Major events during her reign as Commissioner; the devastating flood of 2010 and the COVID-19 pandemic. The city was so well managed during both of those times that there was no disruption of service to residents. Lest we forget, the 'Crazy, who marched alone on BMB with a long gun, attended one of our meetings proving his freedom of expression and the second amendment. The purchase and final installation of the Video Surveillance System was not easily or quickly decided. Several systems were considered...obstacles such as NES, improving technology funding, residents privacy concerns were overcome and now accolades from police, nearby communities, residents have been overwhelming

WHEREAS, Cathy Altenbern sees the Master Plan, *Belle Meade Together*, as the beginnings of reality for what was a pipe dream twelve years ago. This one won't go into a drawer and forgotten. Cathy has served this City with selfless devotion and time-consuming effort, is highly regarded by her fellow Commissioners and respected as leader on our Board of Commissioners and in our community for her invaluable contributions to this City; and her contributions to the City of Belle Meade will always be appreciated, her presence in the future missed, and her sacrifice for the benefit of our fair City always celebrated;

WHEREAS, and most importantly, her fellow commissioners have said "Cathy cares deeply about Belle Meade, its citizens and the issues the city is facing; she strives to leaves things better than she found them. She is passionate, opinionated and willing to fight for what she believes in. She is funny, witty and likes to share a cocktail or glass of wine at the end of the day. She adds "I know the city is in good hands with Bob, Rusty, Louise, Haley, and Jim. I look forward to more great work from our Commission. Beth and Lyle are leading our staff well and the future looks very bright, in spite of the challenges of a pandemic, metro tax issues, and other hiccups along the way. It has been an honor and a privilege Jim. I am not going anywhere, so maybe I will find a different way to be involved!"

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of her many contributions to the City of Belle Meade, be it resolved; The City of Belle Meade, while bemoaning the retirement of its selfless public servant, Cathy Altenbern, recognizes her many contributions and wishes her the best in her retirement from public service to this city.

SECTION 1. The City of Belle Meade, acting through vote of its Commissioners, recognizes, lauds and applauds Cathy Altenbern upon his retirement as Commissioner of the City of Belle Meade and thanks her for her lasting contributions and enduring legacy of service to its citizens.

SECTION 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after the date of its adoption, the welfare of the City of Belle Meade requiring it.

Date of Adoption:
November 18, 2020



Mayor James V. Hunt



City Recorder Edie Glaser