



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation

ACM: Christine Taylor

DATE: November 18, 2025

SUBJECT

Consider a resolution of the city of Denton renaming the Juneteenth Softball Tournament to the John Royston Juneteenth Softball Tournament; and providing an effective date. The Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board voted to deny the proposed naming application (5-0).

BACKGROUND

Summary of Current Naming Applications Under Consideration

Recently, the City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department received three naming applications for Park Board consideration. These applications seek to rename the Civic Center, Juneteenth Classic Softball Tournament, and Denton Day Labor Site, respectively. Denton Parks and Recreation considers naming applications on a rolling basis, as soon as an actionable number of applications have been submitted.

Current City Naming Policy

Denton Parks and Recreation currently operates under an updated City of Denton naming policy for city buildings, facilities, land parcels, parks, and trails. This policy was adopted as Ordinance 20-2001 and approved by the City Council on October 20, 2021 (see **Exhibit 1**). The changes to the naming policy were included I amendments to Chapter 25 of the Code of the City of Denton passed under Ordinance 21-2177 on October 19, 2021.

The current policy discourages *renaming* parks, parks properties, and parks facilities that already have established, recognized names. Additionally, the naming policy includes the following naming guidelines:

- To name a park after an individual that person must have been a resident of Denton in good standing and must have made an exceptional contribution to society at the local, state, national or global level.
- City properties may be named after individuals who died in honorable service to the City, State, or Nation, or who were known for profound contributions to humanitarian causes.
- City properties (or portions thereof) may also be named after foundations or organizations that have made a lasting and exceptional positive impact on life at the local, state, national, or international level
- City properties (or portions thereof) may also be named after organizations who have provided a unique and extraordinary contribution in support of developing all or a portion of a City building, facility, parcel of land, or other City property.

Under the naming policy, the City Council has the authority to establish an ad hoc committee to review submitted applications from individuals and organizations. In April 2021, the City Council tasked the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board with the responsibility to review incoming naming applications. In its advisory role, the Park Board considers each naming applications and offers its recommendation. City

Council makes the ultimate determination on all naming applications and is not bound by Park Board recommendations. The Park Board considered each of these naming applications at its meeting on August 4, 2025.

Juneteenth Softball Tournament Naming Application

The Juneteenth Softball Tournament is facilitated by Denton Parks and Recreation that takes place at Fred Moore Park on the Juneteenth Holiday. The current naming application, submitted by David Martin of the North Texas Umpire Association, asks to change the name of the softball tournament to “The John Royster Juneteenth Classic” to honor a long-serving umpire who passed away in March 2022. The submitted application notes John Royster’s years of service as a softball umpire and the fact that he was named 2019 Umpire of the Year by USA Softball of Texas. Royster’s service also included volunteering with Special Olympics events, local tournaments, and State Championships. The application speaks to the high esteem in which he was held by his colleagues and his generous spirit and sense of humor.

Organizers of the Juneteenth Celebration are not in favor of the name. At the February 24, 2025, SEDNA (Southeast Denton Neighborhood Association) meeting, consensus was also against the name change.

The Park Board unanimously recommended denying this renaming application at its meeting on August 4, 2025.

Public Input Process

Staff from the Parks and Recreation Department conducted a virtual meeting on January 9, 2025, explaining the City’s naming policy, providing maps and contextual information for each application, and receiving input from member of the public at the virtual meeting. Additionally, on February 24, 2025, staff presented the naming applications at that evening’s SEDNA meeting.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROJECT

Parks and Recreation staff will provide Park Board’s consideration of the naming applications to the City Council for their consideration and final determination. The naming applications will be presented to Council in November.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends denying renaming the Juneteenth Softball Tournament in line with Park Board’s recommendation.

FISCAL INFORMATION

If a facility or park requires new signage as a consequence of naming, this will represent a new unbudgeted expense. Staff cannot guarantee that a sign will be constructed soon or even placed on the list of short-term park priorities, unless a funding source for new signage is identified.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1- Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2- Resolution

Exhibit 3- Naming Policy

Exhibit 4- Blank Naming Application

Exhibit 5- Presentation

Exhibit 6- Juneteenth Tournament Naming Application

Respectfully Submitted:

Gary Packan, Parks and Recreation Director

Prepared by:

