





Tammy Etheridge, Clerk to the Board, 400 South Street • P.O. Box 999, Titusville, Florida 32781-0999

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April 29, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Commissioner Jim Barfield, District 2

RE: Item I.B., Resolution for Major League Baseball Retiring Roberto Clemente's Number 21

The Board of County Commissioners, in regular session on April 28, 2015, adopted Resolution No. 15-040, supporting and requesting Major League Baseball to retire Roberto Clemente's number 21 as both a fitting tribute to a remarkable athlete and human being and as a testament of the best that America's "National Pastime" has to offer. Enclosed is a copy of the Resolution.

Your continued cooperation is always appreciated.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK

Tammy Etheridge, Deputy Clerk

/af

Encl. (1)

Brevard



County

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

*Resolution*

WHEREAS, Roberto Clemente-Walker was born on August 18, 1934, in Carolina, Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, for 18 seasons from 1955 through 1972, ROBERTO CLEMENTE played Major League Baseball and wore the number 21 for the Pittsburgh Pirates, where he excelled as an athlete, and as a human being; and

WHEREAS, as a Spanish speaking black man he battled against discrimination in America and was outspoken about the inequities he faced; he was not afforded the comfortable amenities, fed up with such atrocities, he finally coerced the Pittsburgh Pirates front office management to allow the black players to travel in their own station wagon, Clemente said that enduring the unjust racial divide during spring training was like being in prison; and

WHEREAS, Clemente's accomplishments as a major league baseball player includes collecting 3,000 hits, winning four National League batting titles, a .317 lifetime batting average, and 12 Gold Glove awards, making him arguably the best defensive right fielder of all time; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE confronted and overcame the dual obstacles of racism and language to become the first dark-skinned Latino to achieve unquestioned superstar status as a Major League Baseball player; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE'S admiration for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his participation in the civil rights movement was spurred by the racism he experienced in the United States and during his professional career he saw significant change in both Major League Baseball and American society; Clemente was an intelligent and politically charged activist who marched in the street protest of the 60's and spent time with the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. when the civil rights leader visited him at this farm in Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968, Pittsburg Pirates All-Star ROBERTO CLEMENTE was devastated by the news, he gathered up his teammates for a meeting to prevent the Pirates and Astros from opening their season on April 6<sup>th</sup>, the day before King's burial; he convinced his fellow Pirates, which included 11 African-Americans, to stand with him in unity; as a result of his extraordinary call to action in honoring his fallen hero, Pirates 1968 Opening Day was postponed to April 10<sup>th</sup> in observance of King's memorial service; Clemente once said, "Anytime you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world, and you don't, then you are wasting your time on this earth"; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE'S career was marked by unselfish caring, compassion, and a willingness to give of himself, thus personifying a genuine compassion and humanitarian concern which survives as a role model today's athletes would do well to emulate; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE exhibited a passion for young fans, becoming a role model for all players, but particularly for Latinos who played with him and against him, and for succeeding generations of players, who owe him a debt which can never be repaid; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE was the acknowledged leader on the field of the 1971 World Champion Pittsburg Pirates, a diverse international collection of gifted and talented athletes who helped usher in a new era in professional baseball; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE was voted the Most Valuable Player of the 1971 World Series, then made history by addressing a national television audience in Spanish during the clubhouse celebration; and

WHEREAS, on December 31, 1972, the plane carrying ROBERTO CLEMENTE, on a relief mission to provide emergency assistance to the victims of a Nicaraguan earthquake, crashed into the sea, and all on board perished; and

WHEREAS, ROBERTO CLEMENTE was posthumously inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973, becoming only the second player for whom the five year mandatory waiting period was waived, and posthumously presented three civilian awards of the United States government from the President of the United States, including the first Presidential Citizens Medal: President Richard Nixon - May 14, 1973; Roberto Walker Clemente Congressional Gold Medal; The Presidential Citizens Medal; and President George W. Bush - July 23, 2003 - the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Florida Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Inc., the United Third Bridge, Inc., the Brevard County School Board, and other partners named the largest sports complex in Palm Bay, Florida, located at Heritage High School, Palm Bay, after ROBERTO CLEMENTE Sports Complex; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of ROBERTO CLEMENTE extends beyond the Island of Puerto Rico and the Latino Community, and his most significant contributions to a better world are recorded in the history books, not the baseball record book; and

WHEREAS, Major League Baseball is in desperate need of positive heroes and role models at a time when the integrity of the game is under assault, as it has not been since the infamous "Black Sox" scandal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, does hereby support and respectfully requests and calls upon Major League Baseball to retire

ROBERTO CLEMENTE'S

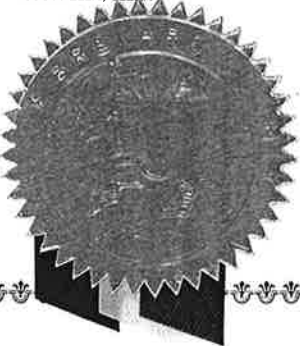
number 21 as both a fitting tribute to a remarkable athlete and human being and as a testament of the best that American's "National Pastime" has to offer.

DONE, ORDERED AND ADOPTED, in regular session, this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015

ATTEST:

SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK

ROBIN FISHER, CHAIRMAN  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA



## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente-Walker was born on August 18, 1934, in Carolina, Puerto Rico, and

**WHEREAS**, for 18 seasons, from 1955 through 1972, Roberto Clemente played Major League Baseball and wore the number 21 for the Pittsburgh Pirates, where he excelled as an athlete, and as a human being, and

**WHEREAS**, as a Spanish speaking black man he battled against discrimination in America and was outspoken about the inequities he faced; he was not afforded the comfortable amenities, fed up with such atrocities, he finally coerced the Pittsburgh Pirates front office management to allow the black players to travel in their own station wagon, Clemente said that enduring the unjust racial divide during spring training was like being in prison, and

**WHEREAS**, Clemente's accomplishments as a major league baseball player includes collecting 3,000 hits, winning four National League batting titles, a .317 lifetime batting average, and 12 Gold Glove awards, making him arguably the best defensive right fielder of all time, and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente confronted and overcame the dual obstacles of racism and language to become the first dark-skinned Latino to achieve unquestioned superstar status as a Major League Baseball player, and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente's admiration for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his participation in the civil rights movement was spurred by the racism he experienced in the United States and during his professional career he saw significant change in both Major League Baseball and American society, Clemente was an intelligent and politically-charged activist who marched in the street protests of the 60's and spent time with the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. when the civil rights leader visited him at his farm in Puerto Rico, and

**WHEREAS**, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968, Pittsburgh Pirates All-Star Roberto Clemente was devastated by the news, he gathered up his teammates for a meeting to prevent the Pirates and Astros from opening their season on April 8<sup>th</sup>, the day before King's burial; he convinced his fellow Pirates, which included 11 African-Americans, to stand with him in unity; as a result of his extraordinary call to action in honoring his fallen hero, Pirates 1968 Opening Day was postponed to April 10<sup>th</sup> in observance of King's memorial service; Clemente once said, "Anytime you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world, and you don't, then you are wasting your time on this earth", and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente's career was marked by unselfish caring, compassion, and a willingness to give of himself, thus personifying a genuine compassion and humanitarian concern which survives as a role model today's athletes would do well to emulate, and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente exhibited a passion for young fans, becoming a role model for all players, but particularly for Latinos who played with him and against him, and for succeeding generations of players, who owe him a debt which can never be repaid, and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente was the acknowledged leader on the field of the 1971 World Champion Pittsburgh Pirates, a diverse international collection of gifted and talented athletes who helped usher in a new era in professional baseball, and

**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente was voted the Most Valuable Player of the 1971 World Series, then made history by addressing a national television audience in Spanish during the clubhouse celebration, and

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**WHEREAS**, Roberto Clemente was posthumously inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973, becoming only the second player for whom the five year mandatory waiting period was waived, and posthumously presented 3 civilian awards of the United States government from the President of the United States, including the first Presidential Citizens Medal: President Richard Nixon - May 14, 1973 - 1) the Roberto Walker Clemente Congressional Gold Medal and 2) the Presidential Citizens Medal; 3) President George W. Bush - July 23, 2003 - the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and

**WHEREAS**, in 2009, the Florida Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Inc., the United Third Bridge, Inc., the Brevard County School Board and other partners named the largest sports complex in Palm Bay, Florida, located at Heritage High School, Palm Bay, after Roberto Clemente Sports Complex, and

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***DONE, ORDERED AND ADOPTED***, in regular session, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015 A.D.

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Robin Fisher, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners  
Brevard County, Florida

ATTEST:

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Scott Ellis, Clerk