

CITY COUNCIL**The City of Orange Township, New Jersey**

June 16, 2020

268-2020

DATE _____

NUMBER _____

TITLE:**A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LONA WIGGINS NIXON. (Sponsored by Council Member Donna K. Williams)**

WHEREAS, the City of Orange Township, New Jersey mourns the passing of **Lona Wiggins Nixon**; and

WHEREAS, we come together during this time of sadness to pay tribute to and celebrate the life of **Lona Wiggins Nixon** who was a vital and central force in her family and valued member of the community; and

WHEREAS, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** was born in Cairo, GA, on April 18, 1932, the grandchild of sharecroppers. Early in life, she learned that the key to surviving meant you had to get active. Her family's wisdom, teachings, and religion provided the tools that guided her family through the Jim Crow era and proved to be the source of her real strength; and

WHEREAS, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** later moved to Orange, New Jersey and was a long-time activist. Her community activism in the City of Orange spanned over forty years. In collaboration with (Retired) Orange Police Captain, Don Wactor, Neighborhood Crime Watch was established within the Father Acursio Rasi Family Homes, that lasted for 23 years. During those years, she worked with the Orange City Council and Mayor's Offices to designate every first Tuesday in August as National Night Out to "Say No Against Drugs" for the City's youth. Captain Wactor specifically credited her with steering changes in attitudes and protections with public housing and remained a cherished friend ever since; and

WHEREAS, while residing at Father Rasi, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** was instrumental in organizing tenant jobs as security guards, and summer youth work programs thru Man Power, Peer Leadership groups for kids, after school programs, youth basketball teams, home economics, and arts and crafts classes for kids and adults. She worked tirelessly to garner votes on specific legislation in the City of Orange that was targeted to improve life in that community and supported countless political campaigns to elect Councilmembers and Mayors. Years later, she supported the Borough of Roselle with her gifts upon relocation from Orange; and

WHEREAS, while a fierce and tireless community activist, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** raised five children, one daughter and four sons. Despite never having attained an advanced formal education, she inspired her children and grandchildren, to achieve higher education for themselves. Many of them hold several degrees, which was a source of great pride for her. She also found joy at the countless children at Father Rasi she blessed with her prayers and talents, who went on to enjoy successful careers; and

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2007, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** married the love of her life, Goven Frank Nixon, and remained devoted to him to the end; and

WHEREAS, **Lona Wiggins Nixon** passed away on April 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Lona Wiggins Nixon was preceded in death by her sons Anthony and Kenneth Norwood. She is survived by her: husband, Goven Frank Nixon; daughter, Riva I. Wiggins; sons, Hershel and Ronald Norwood; eight grandchildren; 10 great grandchildren; and a host of godchildren, and extended family; and

WHEREAS, Lona Wiggins Nixon was full of purpose and touched many lives with her kindness, compassion and wisdom. Although the light of this shining star has dimmed, her legacy will blaze on forever serving as a source of joy, comfort and inspiration to those fortunate to have known her.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Orange Township do hereby offer sincere condolences to the family of **Lona Wiggins Nixon**. May the warm memories bring joy and comfort in the days ahead.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council urges residents, following the passage of this Resolution to do random acts of kindness towards other in the memory of **Lona Wiggins Nixon**.

Adopted:

Joyce L. Lanier
City Clerk

Tency A. Eason
Council President