

# MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 5(J)

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**TO:** Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** October 16, 2024

**FROM:** Geri Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Resolution codesignating, by a three-fifths vote of Board members present, that portion of Northwest 69th Street between Northwest 22nd Avenue and Northwest 27th Avenue as "H.T. Smith Street"

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The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Marleine Bastien and Co-Sponsor Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III.

  
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Geri Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

GBK/jp



**MEMORANDUM**  
(Revised)

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Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Statement of social equity required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present \_\_\_\_, 2/3 membership \_\_\_\_, 3/5's , unanimous \_\_\_\_, majority plus one \_\_\_\_, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) \_\_\_\_) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item No. 5(J)  
10-16-24

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION CODESIGNATING, BY A THREE-FIFTHS VOTE OF BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT, THAT PORTION OF NORTHWEST 69TH STREET BETWEEN NORTHWEST 22ND AVENUE AND NORTHWEST 27TH AVENUE AS "H.T. SMITH STREET"

**WHEREAS**, H.T. Smith, Jr. ("Smith") was born on April 10, 1947, in Miami, Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, a graduate of Miami's public schools, Smith graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in 1968, following which he was commissioned as an officer in the United States Army, where he served a tour of duty in the Vietnam War; and

**WHEREAS**, on his return home, Smith enrolled in the University of Miami School of Law, from where he graduated with his Juris Doctor degree in 1973; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith began his legal career by blazing new trails, first as Miami-Dade County's first African-American assistant public defender, then as the County's first African-American assistant county attorney; and

**WHEREAS**, thereafter, Smith continued blazing new trails as he entered private practice as Miami's first Black-owned law firm practicing in downtown Miami; and

**WHEREAS**, for the past 51 years, Smith has practiced law in Miami, specializing in criminal defense, civil rights and personal injury; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith was voted the Top Trial Lawyer for 2017 by the 4,500 members of the Dade County Bar Association, listed in The Best Lawyers in America for over 20 years, listed in Florida Super Lawyers, selected as one of the Top 10 Trial lawyers of the Year by the National Law Journal, is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell, and has been recognized by the National Law Journal as one of the top trial lawyers in America; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith was the founding President of the Black Lawyers Association of Miami-Dade County (now known as the Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Association), where he served four terms as its President, and a Founding member of the Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith served as President of the 20,000 member National Bar Association, which is the oldest and largest bar association in America for people of color, and also of the Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter of the National Bar Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith led the hugely successful BOYCOTT MIAMI Campaign — the *Quiet Riot* – for 1,000 days in response to local politicians snubbing Nelson Mandela when he visited Miami in 1990; and

**WHEREAS**, this effort led to the development of the first African American owned convention quality hotel in America – built on the ocean on Miami Beach; 25 full-tuition hospitality management scholarships at Florida International University in perpetuity; and many other economic and political benefits for people of color; and

**WHEREAS**, in a letter to the National Bar Association, former President of South Africa, the late Nelson Mandela, once wrote: “We join your members in paying special tribute to your retiring President, H.T. Smith, whose name became well-known for his consistent and courageous contribution and support for the struggle of our people against apartheid. We wish H.T., well, we are confident that wherever injustice and racism raise their ugly heads, H.T. will be there to raise his powerful voice of protest and resistance”; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1995, Smith, with the strong support of the South Florida Super Bowl Host Committee, local businesses, firms and organizations, raised \$4 million to construct an NFL Youth Education Town (YET) Center at Gwen Cherry Park, which provides after school and summer programming, computer literacy, financial literacy, music and media training, arts and crafts, and all types of sporting activities for approximately 500 kids daily; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith was a founding board member of OUR KIDS of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, which provides support and services to all abused, abandoned and neglected children in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith has served as Chairman of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission, member of the Florida Sentencing Guidelines Commission, as a member of the Board of Directors of Legal Services of Greater Miami, and as a member of the Third District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, also in 2003, Smith was tapped to become the first Director of the Trial Advocacy Program at Florida International University (FIU) College of Law, where, under his leadership, the Trial Advocacy Program and the Mock Trial Team have gained statewide recognition as one of the best among Florida’s 10 law schools; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2005, Smith joined the Board of Trustees of the University of Miami in where he has served as Vice-Chairman, as well as Chairman of the Student Affairs, Membership and Governance Committees; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2006, the FIU student body honored Smith by presenting him with the prestigious “Spirit Award” for his consistent commitment to excellence as a legal educator, and the Black Law Student Association (BLSA) Chapter at FIU College of Law named its chapter in his honor; and

**WHEREAS**, Smith has received the Top Scholar Award and the FIU Medallion, and the Pioneer Award from the College of Law; and

**WHEREAS**, in recognition of Smith’s decades of honorable and outstanding service to this community, the University of Miami named its Student Services Building in Smith’s and Harold Long, Jr.’s honor; the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Historical Society and the Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Association named him a Legal Legend; the Dade County Bar Association awarded him its prestigious David W. Dyer Professionalism Award and its Icon Award; the National Bar Association inducted him into the National Bar Association’s Hall of Fame and awarded him the Gertrude E. Rush Achievement Award; Legal Services of Greater Miami named an advocacy fellowship in his honor, and the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce named its highest award in his honor; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to his many professional achievements, Smith is the proud father of three daughters – Wyndi, Katrell, and Talia; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board wishes to recognize Smith’s outstanding contributions to this County, by naming that portion of Northwest 69th Street between Northwest 22nd Avenue and Northwest 27th Avenue as “H.T. Smith Street”; and

**WHEREAS**, that portion of Northwest 69th Street between Northwest 24th Avenue and Northwest 27th Avenue is a County-maintained road in County Commission District 2; and

**WHEREAS**, that portion of Northwest 69th Street between Northwest 22nd Avenue and Northwest 24th Avenue is an undedicated road that runs through Gwen Cherry Park, which is maintained by the County and is in County Commission District 2; and

**WHEREAS**, Rule 9.02(d) of the Board's Rules of Procedure provides that the Commission may, by a three-fifths vote of Board members present, name a County road, facility or property after a living individual who has not served as an elected official within the past five years and who "has made a direct, significant lifetime contribution to this community,"

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**, that:

**Section 1.** The foregoing recitals are hereby incorporated into this resolution and this Board finds that H.T. Smith has made a direct, significant lifetime contribution to this community pursuant to Rule 9.02(d).

**Section 2.** Having considered this matter at a public hearing and by a three-fifths vote of Board members present, this Board codesignates that portion of Northwest 69th Street between Northwest 22nd Avenue and Northwest 27th Avenue as "H.T. Smith Street".

**Section 3.** This Board directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the United States Postal Service, the Traffic Signals and Signs Division of the Department of Transportation and Public Works, the Development Services Division of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department, the Miami-Dade County Police Department, and the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Marleine Bastien and the Co-Sponsor is Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III. It was offered by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Chairman	
Anthony Rodríguez, Vice Chairman	
Marleine Bastien	Juan Carlos Bermudez
Kevin Marino Cabrera	Sen. René García
Roberto J. Gonzalez	Keon Hardemon
Danielle Cohen Higgins	Eileen Higgins
Kionne L. McGhee	Raquel A. Regalado
Micky Steinberg	

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2024. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
BY ITS BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JUAN FERNANDEZ-BARQUIN, CLERK

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency.

D.P.C

Dale P. Clarke