



Legislation Text

File #: RES 18-1202, **Version:** 2

Recognizing a model public private partnership serving Saint Paul youth and families.

WHEREAS, Saint Paul's Highwood Hills neighborhood is home to approximately 400 East African families; and

WHEREAS, the Highwood Hills neighborhood lacks a free or low-cost public gathering space since the Highwood Hills Recreation Center closed in 2008; and

WHEREAS, East African families living in the Highwood Hills neighborhood have an ongoing, unmet need for a year-round community gathering space, which is acutely experienced during Ramadan, which takes place each year in May and June; and

WHEREAS, the Horn of Africa Community USA, representing Highwood Hills families, approached the City of Saint Paul and Saint Paul Public Schools, seeking to schedule youth and family activities during Ramadan at the former recreation center attached to Highwood Hills Elementary School and its gymnasium; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department for the City of Saint Paul and the Office of the Superintendent of the Saint Paul Public Schools joined in partnership to open the gymnasium and recreation center and provide two staff members from Wednesday through Sunday evenings throughout Ramadan from May 17 to June 15; and

WHEREAS, Horn of Africa Community USA provided the volunteer leadership to engage children and teens in activities from crafting, painting and writing to games and open gym each evening before and after Iftar, the evening meal to break the fast of Ramadan; and

WHEREAS, Highwood Hills families and nearby neighbors were gratified that these activities were available during the late-night hours, when outdoor play had previously led to neighborhood disruption and noise as well as curfew violations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Saint Paul commends the following people: Parks and Recreation Director Michael Hahm and Saint Paul Public Schools Chief Operations Officer Jackie Turner for their leadership in forging this creative partnership to serve youth and families; Saint Paul Schools Board Member Jon Schumacher, Saint Paul Public Schools staff Tom Parent and the entire facilities department, Laura Olson and the entire Safety Department, Heather Kilgore and Muhammad Hadi and the entire Family Engagement Department, Parks and Recreation staff Mike Whaley, Ibrahim Abdelkadir, Tekeste Dinberu, Hassan Askar and Guled Hassan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Saint Paul acknowledges and thanks the Horn of Africa Community volunteers Amin Omar, Mohamed Hadi, Yasmine Muridi, Abdullahi Khalif, Laura Mayo and Derek Pasley for their leadership in designing and carrying out a successful comprehensive program of evening activities for children and teens, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Saint Paul applauds this public private partnership as a model

of what is possible when our Saint Paul community comes together to tackle challenges in a way that serves the greater good.