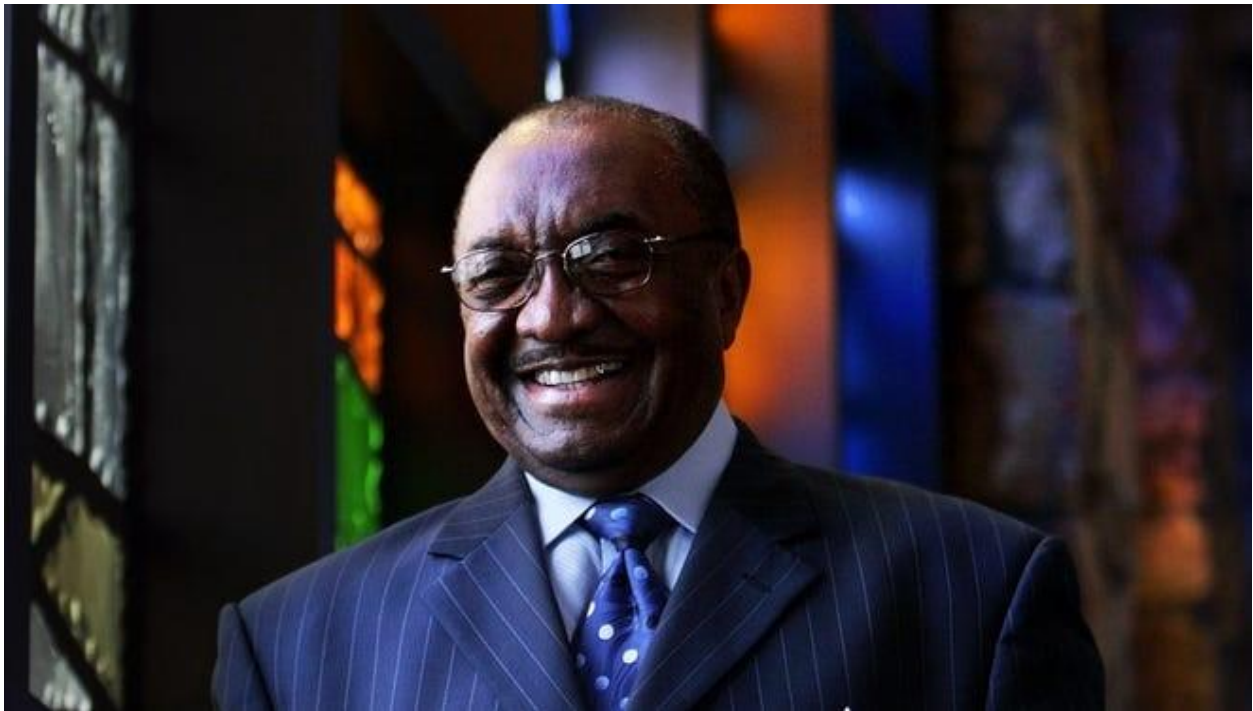


Good Evening Memphis.



Rev. Dr. James L. Netters was a man of action and force of immeasurable change.

When I learned of his passing earlier this week, I immediately reflected upon the manner in which he lived over the last 93 years. Rev. Netters was a dedicated husband, father of three, spiritual leader, scholar, educator, and Civil Rights trailblazer. However, what made him special was his ability to lead a life of service, dedicated to bringing light to the darkest corners of our community.

By repeatedly answering the call, Rev. Netters championed progress for the disenfranchised, routinely embodying the leadership required to combat injustice along the way. In this sense, Rev. Netters undoubtedly leaves an indelible mark upon the City of Memphis and its residents.

So, as we recall his contributions, let us remember the manner in which he risked his well-being to bring an end to segregation on buses, at restaurants, and at parks. Let us also honor his courage to integrate our local government as one of the **first** elected African American councilmen to the inaugural Memphis City Council in 1968.

In a time of turbulence, Rev. Netters stood on the precipice of uncertainty, and yet, did not flinch. Rather, he pressed on, guided by his faith and hope that our nation would one day reach its full potential for the benefit of all mankind.

Although Rev. Netters is no longer physically with us, the legacy of his character remains. Looking forward, let our endeavors be informed by his spirit of tenacity, commitment to fairness, and willingness to stand for what is right on behalf of others.

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With that in mind, this week your Memphis City Council met to discuss measures focused on improving the City of Memphis for all in the areas of public health, economic assistance, historic preservation, public works, and community inclusivity initiatives. If you were not able to virtually participate in the meeting via live-stream on the Council website, YouTube, or 88.5 FM (WQOX), a full review is provided, [here](#).

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Honoring the 2020 Memphis City Council Humanitarian Award Recipients:

Since 1993, the Council has selected a person to receive its highest honor: the Memphis City Council Humanitarian Award. The award commemorates the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by recognizing a Memphian who has dedicated his or her life to the betterment of their fellow man and to the promotion of harmony among all men. This year, the Council selected the late-Rudi and Honey Scheidt as the 2020 Humanitarian Award Recipients.

On Tuesday, Rudi and Honey Scheidt were posthumously honored with the Council's 2020 Humanitarian Award and their loving family accepted the award on their behalf. Joined in matrimony in 1954, the charitable couple enjoyed a passion for the arts, which through their philanthropic generosity over decades of stewardship, transformed the Memphis community into a place where access to the wonders of the creative arts could be accessed by all.

In the early 1960s, their combined efforts played a pivotal role in bringing the Metropolitan Opera to Memphis, developing the groundwork for what we know today as Opera Memphis. Then in 2000, Rudi and Honey Scheidt led the push

to revive, reshape, and expand music education at the University of Memphis, where the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music was named in gratitude for Mr. Scheidt's contributions that helped the school to reach an international reputation for excellence.

Throughout their lives, the duo garnered various awards and countless recognition for their impeccable service and impassioned pleas that people come together at a table of cultural understanding and brotherhood, reminiscent of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call for unity on the basis of equality and mutual respect. Please join the Council in commemorating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by honoring the contributions of Rudi and Honey Scheidt, the 2020 Humanitarian Award Recipients.

Funding for Continued Testing and COVID-19 Vaccine Education, Distribution, and Administration:

As our City adapts to the challenges of COVID-19, the Council remains committed to taking action that will keep Memphians safe. As such, on Tuesday, we passed a resolution amending the Fiscal Year 2021 General Fund Operating Budget in the amount of \$5,000,000 as a bridge for the City to continue its response to the public health emergency in an uninterrupted manner. The measure will ensure that the City of Memphis is able to provide continued testing, as well as COVID-19 vaccine education, distribution, and administration, as we work to find solutions to the pandemic in the coming weeks and months.

Requesting the State of Tennessee to Adopt a Historic Tax Credit Program:

The Council believes in the power of Memphis' built environment, namely our historic building infrastructure. Moreover, we recognize the importance of renovating and preserving said buildings, as doing so creates new employment opportunities, revitalizes communities, encourages innovation, and promotes tourism.

The State of Tennessee has the ability to enact such an initiative, and considered doing so via proposed Senate Bill 2837, which would have facilitated the preservation and redevelopment of the State's most historic assets. Unfortunately, the bill recently failed to receive the requisite support in the General Subcommittee of the State's Senate Commerce and Labor Committee.

Nonetheless, the Council remains committed to supporting the benefits that would be possible if Senate Bill 2837 were passed. Therefore, on Tuesday, the Council passed a resolution requesting the General Assembly to refile the bill for reconsideration, adopting a State Historic Tax Credit Program to work in tandem with the Federal Historic Tax Credit.

Repairing Bridges over Sam Cooper Boulevard:

The Council values the City of Memphis' extensive public works network. As such, we take pride in its upkeep. With this in mind, on Tuesday, the Council approved a resolution accepting \$2,818,188.80 in additional grant funds from the Tennessee Department of Transportation, transferring \$1,400,000 to repair eleven bridges on or over Sam Cooper Boulevard. Taken together, the measure will work to provide quality public works infrastructure for all Memphians.

Extending the City Council Renaming Commission Term Three Months:

The City Council Renaming Commission has met monthly as a full body since October 2020. Since that time, they have established four subcommittees to work toward accomplishing their task of advising the Council regarding the potential renaming of public streets, parks, and related places. To give the members one full calendar year to work together toward securing community inclusion, on Tuesday, the Council passed a resolution extending the City Council Renaming Commission's term three months from July 21, 2021 to October 21, 2021, i.e., one year from the month of their first full meeting.

If you have any recommendations or comments for the City Council Renaming Commission, please contact the members at ccrc@memphistn.gov.

Passing the Gavel to Chairman-Elect Frank Colvett, Jr.:

As is our tradition, at the conclusion of the final Council meeting for the month of December, the night ended by *passing the gavel* to reflect the annual transition in Council leadership. On Tuesday, it was my pleasure to virtually pass the gavel to Chairman-Elect Frank Colvett, Jr., whose tenure will begin January 1, 2021.

Chairman-Elect Colvett has served as my Vice Chairman for the last twelve

months, and I am excited to support him in the new year, as we work to reach new heights on behalf of the citizens of the City of Memphis.

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Looking Forward:

2020 has been an eventful year, one with challenges and successes alike. Through it all, serving as your Council Chairwoman has represented one of the great joys of my personal and professional life, as I worked as part of a thirteen-councilmember team to transform our great city into a place of opportunity for all.

Stay tuned in the coming days for my final correspondence as Council Chairwoman, in which I will provide a retrospective covering the Council's progress since January 1, 2020.

With earnest appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrice J. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P".

Patrice Jordan Robinson
Chairwoman, Memphis City Council
District 3