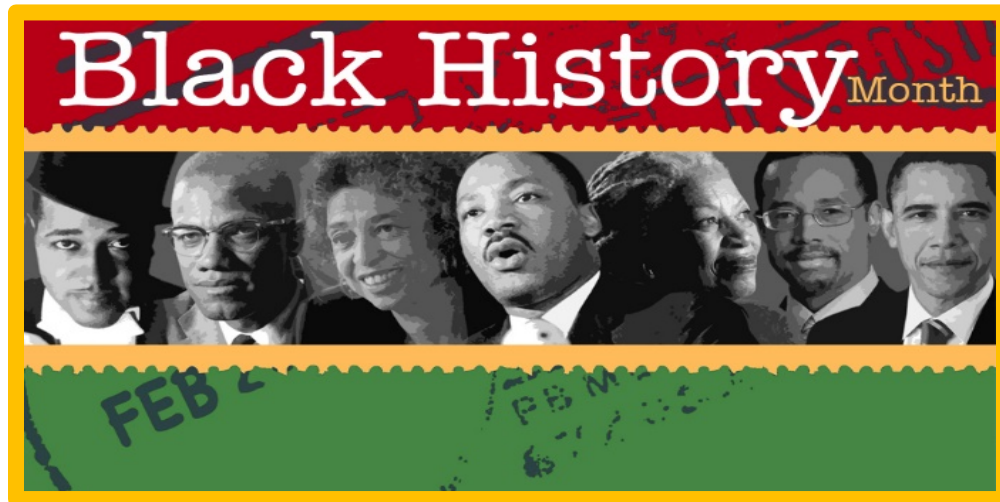


Happy Black History Month, Memphis



February is always an important and personal month to me, along with many others. Black History Month is a time for us all to reflect on the many achievements by African Americans throughout history. Each year [the Association for the Study of African American Life and History](#) designates a theme Black History Month. For 2022, the theme is “Black Health and Wellness.” This theme pays tribute to the legacy of Black scholars and medical practitioners. As you reflect this month, I encourage you and your family to explore the rich exhibits at the National Civil Rights Museum; visit the Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum which is housed inside the historic Burkle Estate – one of the Underground Railroad stops offering refuge for runaway slaves on their way to freedom; and spend some time at the stunning Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Reflection Park in downtown Memphis.

2021 Memphis City Council Humanitarian Award:

Since 1993, the Memphis City Council has selected a person(s) to receive its highest honor – the City Council Humanitarian Award. This award commemorates the 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 the promotion of racial harmony among all men. Past recipients have included the 1968 sanitation strikers, Mr. Phil Trenary (2018), and Dr. Kenneth Robinson (2019).

On Tuesday, we honored my late aunt, the **Honorable Barbara Swearengen Ware, as our esteemed 2021 Memphis City Council Humanitarian Award recipient.** My aunt was a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, stateswoman, trailblazer, abiding friend and evangelist. She distinguished herself as a Memphis City Councilwoman representing District 7 for 16 years – serving as Council Chairwoman in 2000. During her tenure, she guided the City Council fearlessly into the 21st century, working tirelessly alongside her fellow council members to lay the groundwork for success that we enjoy in the present-day. The entire Memphis City Council extends their praises to Councilwoman Barbara Swearengen Ware for her notable leadership, vision, substantial community impact, and commitment to

the City of Memphis, as these invaluable contributions have made us better in the present day. The Honorable Barbara Swearengen Ware's legacy lives on through each life she touched; she is truly missed.



The honorable Barbara Swearengen Ware

Transit Equity Day:

It is the duty and pleasure from time to time for your Memphis City Council to celebrate and recognize pioneers such as the phenomenal Rosa Parks. We **proclaimed Friday, February 4, 2022 as Transit Equity Day**; a national day of action to commemorate the February 4th birthday of Rosa Parks, an iconic figure in the movements for social justice and racial equality who played a major role in the inception of the Civil Rights movement. Transit Equity Day highlights Rosa Parks' 1955 pivotal work and her brave and determined advocacy for safe and reliable public transportation for all people and communities both then and today.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital on 60 years:

This month **St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, founded in 1962 by the late entertainer Danny Thomas in the heart of Memphis, Tennessee, celebrates 60 years of service.** Treatments developed at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital have helped push the overall survival rate for childhood cancer from 20% when the hospital opened in 1962 to more than 80% today in the United States. My colleagues and I were pleased to recognize St. Jude for its continued commitment to research and treatment of children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. It is truly a gem we are fortunate to have right here in Memphis.

Keeping you informed:

At our February 1st meeting, we were introduced to the **new leadership team at The City of Memphis Office of Business Diversity & Compliance (OBDC).** I was delighted to meet Director Marvell Mitchell and Administrator Zanderia Davidson. The Office of Business Diversity and Compliance is an agency of the City of Memphis which promotes Minority, Woman, and Small Business Enterprises by creating or identifying opportunities to for them to compete for municipal contracts and expand their market share in the local private sector. The work this office does to promote diversity is of great importance to myself and the Council, we are happy to support their work and welcome Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Davidson to City Hall. Learn more by visiting memphisobdc.org

On Tuesday we approved a resolution to appropriate **\$5 million of Tourism Development Zone funding to Memphis River Parks Partnership for Tom Lee Park improvements.** This \$5 million completes

our \$10 million pledge to help fund the \$62 million redesign of Tom Lee Park. The City of Memphis commitment is matched by Shelby County and the State of Tennessee. Construction is currently underway and is expected to be completed by 2023. Memphians will have a whole new riverfront to be proud of and enjoy. The new Tom Lee Park will accommodate spaces for sports and fitness, children's play, outdoor education, community dinners and dances, private events, concerts, festivals, and more. To learn more about the history of Tom Lee Park and updates, check out this [video](#).

The redistricting of City Council districts is one of the most important undertakings the Council oversees. We are charged with creating fair and representative districts and we take that responsibility seriously. City Council Attorney Allan Wade **presented an update on the Council's redistricting efforts**. It was noted that TN General Assembly completed its districting work this past week, however due to the City of Memphis having a different elections calendar, Council has additional time to complete their district maps. Attorney Wade shared that an ordinance proposing maps and recommendations will be completed by May 2023. In the interim, the Council will continue to provide the public with updates on our efforts.

Finally, we heard from the Economic Development Growth Engine for Memphis & Shelby County (EDGE) regarding the proposed **Northside Renaissance Development Project. The proposed redevelopment will transform Northside High School, vacant and blighted 270,000 square foot building in Klondike-Smokey City, into a vibrant and thriving community hub.** The project will provide new rental housing options for the neighborhood and house a wide-range of organizations that will providing technical skills training, comprehensive health care, work force development, literacy advocacy, athletic and fitness opportunities, and performing and visual arts. This is an ambitious and large development project that has the potential to transform communities. The Memphis City Council is always supportive of those who choose to invest in Memphis and make our city great.

A moment of gratitude:

I am fortunate to serve you each day along with my colleagues working to advance our great city. Stayed tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall. As always, for an archive of meeting recordings, you may visit <https://www.memphistn.gov/government/watch-public-meetings-online/>.



Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamita E. Swearengen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jamita Swearengen
Chairwoman, Memphis City Council
District 4