

**RESOLUTION HONORING
WAYNE COUNTY SHERIFF BENNY NAPOLEON
POSTHUMOUSLY**

- WHEREAS** Native son Benny Napoleon became a beloved and respected Detroit icon through his candor, integrity, and humble bearings as he achieved great milestones and success in law enforcement, government, and politics. On Thursday, December 17, 2020, a wave of sadness traveled around the world with news of the untimely passing of the Wayne County Sheriff and retired Detroit Police Chief from his illness with COVID-19; and
- WHEREAS,** Many knew Benny Napoleon early in life as one of the seven children of Rev. Harry and Betty Napoleon, whose loving home instilled strong values and community responsibility. A Cass Tech High School graduate, Benny soon became part of Mayor Coleman Young's historic reforms to the police department; and
- WHEREAS,** the fledgling Board of Police Commissioners began working with Police Officer Benny Napoleon upon his graduation from the Detroit Police Academy on June 24, 1975. Our relationship grew as Officer Napoleon excelled in his many duties and diverse assignments to rise through the ranks. He earned promotions to Lieutenant on January 20, 1983, Inspector on October 9, 1987, and Commander on August 27, 1993. He became a Deputy Chief in 1994 and Assistant Chief in 1995. Mayor Dennis Archer appointed him as Detroit's top cop; Police Chief Napoleon served from July 17, 1998 until his retirement in 2001. While his 26 years with the Police Department saw many notable feats, his investigative leadership reached legendary status in 1994 when police exposed one of the greatest scandals in sports: Tonya Harding's plotted attack against Olympic rival Nancy Kerrigan at Cobo Hall; and
- WHEREAS,** His public service continued as Assistant Wayne County Executive in 2004 and as Sheriff starting in 2009. Sheriff Napoleon supported many community events and causes, including in 2019 Detroit's 45th Anniversary of the Board and civilian oversight. He also supported the city's historic selection as host for the annual conference by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. The Board joins a vast community in mourning, and our members extend our sympathies to his family and friends.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**
- RESOLVED** That the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners, speaking for the citizens of Detroit and the Detroit Police Department, awards this resolution posthumously to Wayne County Sheriff Benny Napoleon for his 45 years of dedicated public service and community leadership. His life's works endure in the eternal spirit of Detroit and the city's people and history.