

DRAFT

Resolution for Citywide and 12th Precinct Police/Community Relations Leader Ruth Barton

Whereas, Ruth and Richard Barton always loved calling Detroit home and became active in the community to improve the quality of life for everyone. They were among the millions of City residents and stakeholders who sought lasting reforms to the Police Department following the 1967 civil rebellion against police racism and brutality. Ruth Barton grew even more determined for positive change after a Michigan Chronicle article stated the “bridge between the police and the black community is a gap that threatens the (City’s) peace.” She committed her time and energy to building a better bridge to close the gap; and

Whereas, Mrs. Barton joined others in advocating for civilian oversight, police “mini” stations in neighborhood centers, and a process for residents to meet regularly with commanders at local precincts. Her work helped establish the organization known today as the Citywide Police/Community Relations Council. She also helped launch a local council in her community, an area served today by the 12th Precinct. Along with other activists and advocates, she helped ensure the citywide and precinct councils established meetings and activities for open dialogue and engagement between police officers and the communities they served; and

Whereas, Police Commissioners since 1974 often worked with or heard from Mrs. Barton about police actions or community safety. A librarian by profession, she always made herself available as a resource for accurate and important information. Both she and her husband enjoyed long careers at the Detroit Public Library while raising their son Edward. After retiring in 1991, Mrs. Barton continued to contribute to the library, and won awards for her dedicated volunteer service. However, she spent even more time tirelessly supporting police-community relations and mentoring new community leaders during her decades-long retirement. Her numerous civic contributions, including her leadership in the 12th Precinct and in police-community relations, will be celebrated Saturday, February 17, 2024 in honor of her 98th birthday.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, The Board of Police Commissioners, speaking on behalf of the residents of the great City of Detroit, salutes Ruth Barton for her pioneering contributions in bridging the gap between Detroit police and residents. Our City is forever indebted to her for helping to organize the Citywide Police/Community Relations Council and the precinct councils that still serve as vital groups for police officers and the community to work together for positive changes in community policing, neighborhood safety, and the Detroit Police Department.