

Item Title: Renaming Village Regional Library to Oberlin Regional Library

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners approves renaming the Village Regional Library to Oberlin Regional Library.

Item Summary:

Purpose: Naming or renaming of property owned by Wake County requires Board of Commissioners approval. This naming request is consistent with the Board's "Policy for Naming Property Belonging to the County of Wake."

Background: Cameron Village was built on land that once held enslaved people. The shopping center, built in 1949, was named for the Cameron family.

In 1974, the City of Raleigh opened the Cameron Village Branch as a 2,500 square foot storefront library. In the early 1980's Wake County took over the operation of the Cameron Village branch and in 1985 relocated it to a larger space. Since then, the library has gone through additional renovations and expansions at the current site and is now the library system's largest regional library at 36,000 square feet. The library is a leased facility, with a 20-year term and a current termination date of June 30, 2025.

The property owners (Regency Centers) announced in 2021 that they were renaming "Cameron Village" to the "Village District" and dropping its connection to the Cameron family. The Wake County Board of Commissioners has made name changes for County facilities where the changes remove negative associations and reflect values and respect for all citizens of Wake County. On March 1, 2021, the Board of Commissioners renamed the library to "Village Regional Library."

At the September 13, 2021 Work Session, Commissioners considered a proposal to change the name of the "Village Regional Library" to the "Oberlin Regional Library." Oberlin Village was established in the late 1860s in the immediate area and was the largest Reconstruction-era Black settlement in Wake County.

Board Goal: This action supports Great Government Goal 2: Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Fiscal Impact: The expenditures related to this effort are estimated to be minimal and can be accommodated within the General Fund budget.

Additional Information:

Library staff will develop an interpretive display to be located within the branch explaining the name change to educate the public on why the change has been made.

The Oberlin Regional Library name will be reflected on the facility storefront, digital media, and printed materials. Staff will transition these changes as soon as possible after the Board's approval.

Attachments:

1. Policy for Naming Property Belonging to Wake County