

A U S T I N C I T Y C O U N C I L
AGENDA

Thursday, May 25, 2006

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#18


**Parks and Recreation
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Subject: Approve naming of the Fiesta Gardens Pavilion, located at 2101 Bergman Street, as the "Johnny Degollado Pavilion at Fiesta Gardens". (Related to item 11 and items 19-22)

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

Additional Backup Material

(click to open)

 Johnny Degollado
Supporting Documents**For More Information:**

Boards and Commission Action: Recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board.

The Parks and Recreation Department received a request on January 26th, 2006 to name the pavilion for Johnny Degollado. The City of Austin Public Information Office began the official process for nominations to name the facility in February, 2006. The deadline for submitting nominations was March 17, 2006. The following applications were received: 1) "Johnny Degollado" by John Michael Cortez & Isidoro Lopez, Board of Directors of Austin Latino Music Association; and 2) "Ruben Ramos Pavilion" by Erica Ramos. The Parks and Recreation Board met on April 25, 2006 and recommended the pavilion be named "Johnny Degollado Pavilion at Fiesta Gardens. The vote was 6-0. The pavilion at Fiesta Gardens recommended to be named for Johnny Degollado is one facility out of a series being recommended to celebrate a trail for Tejano Music Legends.

The pavilion at Fiesta Gardens was built in 2004 as a cooperative project between the Parks and Recreation Department and Austin Energy as part of the Holly Good Neighbor Program. The pavilion is a very popular rental facility and is used for many community based festivals and concerts.

APPLICATION FOR FACILITY NAMING

We, John-Michael Cortez and Isidoro Lopez, members of the board of directors of the Austin Latino Music Association (ALMA), request that the names listed below be considered for the corresponding public facilities:

(A) Name the Mexican American Cultural Center located at 600 River St. for the Perez and Ramos Families that include among them the band leaders Ruben Ramos, Alfonso Ramos, Ruben Perez and Ernest Perez.

(B) Re-name Festival Beach Road located just North of Town Lake and just East of I-35 for the band leader Nash Hernandez.

(C) Name the Fiesta Gardens Pavilion located near the Western boundary of Fiesta Gardens at 1901 Bergman St. for the band leader Johnny Degollado.

(D) Name the Fiesta Gardens East Meeting Hall located at 2101 Bergman St. for the band leader Manuel "Cowboy" Donley.

(E) Name the Town Lake Scenic Overlook located near the intersection of Canterbury St. and Pleasant Valley Road for the band leader Roy Montelongo.

(F) Name the Medina St. Plaza to be built on the Medina right-of-way located between E. 5th St. and E. 6th St. and South of the alley for business and civic leader Roy Velasquez and band leader Matt Velasquez. Roy and Matt Velasquez are brothers.

Ruben Ramos, Alfonso Ramos, Johnny Degollado, Manuel "Cowboy" Donley and Roy Montelongo have all been inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame. The Nash Hernandez Orchestra is the longest running big band in Austin and has been performing in Austin for more than 50 years. Matt Velasquez is a 50's era band leader, and his brother Roy Velasquez was the founder of Roy's Taxi, the only Latino-owned taxi cab company in Austin.

Biographical Synopsis: Refer to Attachment 1

Individual's Involvement in the Community: With the exception of Roy Velasquez, the individuals whose names are being recommended for naming the noted public facilities are important Latino musicians and families in Austin who helped establish Austin as the Live Music Capitol of the World. Roy Velasquez was a local entrepreneur and civic leader who helped establish the Austin Chapter of LULAC in 1935 and very active in local politics.

Please refer to Attachment 2(A) – 2(F) for additional information about the families and individuals for whom the specified facilities are proposed to be named.

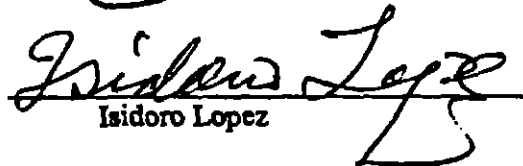
- 2(A) Perez & Ramos Families
- 2(B) Nash Hernandez
- 2(C) Johnny Degollado
- 2(D) Manuel "Cowboy" Donley
- 2(E) Roy Montelongo
- 2(F) Roy & Matt Velasquez

Individual's Connection to the Facility: Ruben Ramos, Alfonso Ramos, Ruben Perez, Ernest Perez, Manuel "Cowboy" Donley, Roy Montelongo, Nash Hernandez, Roy Velasquez and Matt Velasquez all lived in central East Austin where all of the proposed facilities to be named are located. Several of these artists still live in that area. Johnny Degollado has lived in the Montopolis community/neighborhood all his life and has hosted the Austin Conjunto Festival at Fiesta Gardens for more than 10 years. Roy Velasquez established Roy's Taxi in the early 1930's and for many years operated his business on the block adjacent to the proposed Medina St. Plaza.

ALMA will work to identify funding for signs and plaques if it is deemed necessary by the City of Austin.

Submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department this ^{26th} ~~25th~~ day of January, 2006.


John-Michael Cortez


Isidoro Lopez

ATTACHMENT 1

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS FOR FACILITY NAMING PROPOSAL

(A) PEREZ-RAMOS FAMILIES

The Perez -- Ramos Families have a long musical tradition that stretches back several generations. The two families are connected by brothers Don Louis Perez and Don Tranquilino Perez. Don Louis Perez and his wife Trinidad are the parents of Elvira Perez who is the mother of Ruben Ramos and Alfonso Ramos. Don Tranquilino Perez and his wife Carolina are the parents of Blas Perez who is the father of Ernest Perez and Ruben Perez.

Ruben Ramos, Alfonso Ramos, Ruben Perez and Ernest Perez have all led their own Tejano orchestras. Ruben and Alfonso have often performed and recorded together. Many of Ruben and Alfonso's brothers were and continue to be members of their musical groups. In recognition of their accomplishment, Ruben Ramos and Alfonso Ramos have both been inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame. As a member of Los Super Seven, Ruben Ramos is a grammy award winner.

Accomplished local musicians such as Alfonso Ramos and Manuel "Cowboy" Donley played with the Ruben Perez Orchestra early in their careers. In addition to leading his own orchestra, Ernest played in his brother's orchestra for many years as well as other local groups such as Johnny Degollado and Los Cinco Reyes.

(B) NASH HERNANDEZ

The Nash Hernandez Orchestra, Austin's longest running big band, has been playing big band, swing and Latino styles of music for generations of fans throughout Central Texas. Nash Hernandez fell in love with the big band style while in the Army during World War II. When he returned to Austin, he worked with Matt Velasquez before starting his own band in 1949. In 1975, Nash Hernandez was named Ambassador of Goodwill by Governor Dolph Brisco for whom he had performed in 1973 at the Governor's Inaugural Ball. He was also recognized for his musical contributions by the City of Austin in 1975 and 1993, by the Texas Senate in 1993 and by Vice President Al Gore in 1994. Nash Hernandez passed away on June 26, 1994, but the band continues to perform under the direction of Nash's son, drummer Ruben Hernandez, who began playing with the group at the age of eleven.

(C) JOHNNY DEGOLLADO

Johnny Degollado is the premier conjunto accordionist, band leader, and song writer in Austin and the surrounding areas. In 1952, at the age of 15, he started his own conjunto along with his neighbor, Vicente Alonzo, who still is a member of the conjunto. Johnny studied under Camilo Cantu, another important conjunto band leader from the Austin area. Cantu also taught Johnny to tune and repair accordions. Johnny has composed more than 200 songs, and he is the event coordinator for the Austin Conjunto Festival that has been held in May for the last 20 years. He was inducted into the Tejano Music Hall of Fame in 1986.

(D) MANUEL "COWBOY" DONLEY

Manuel Donley is considered a pioneer of Tejano music. An accomplished musician, arranger and composer, Manuel Donley is well respected by his musical peers. In addition to fronting a Tejano orquesta, he also performs in traditional "Trio" and "Mariachi" ensembles. Manuel Donley has also composed and performed for movie soundtracks. He has taught guitar lessons at Huston-Tillotson College and still gives lessons at his home. His orquesta, Las Estrellas, is famous for its tight horn section as well as for the many different styles of music they played such as boleros, rancheras, polkas, rock-n-roll, rhythm-and-blues, big band-swing, etc. Manuel Donley formed his orquesta in 1949 and continues to perform with them occasionally.

(E) ROY MONTELONGO

Roy Montelongo is an original Tejano legend who started playing in his teens with the legendary orquesta of Beto Villa. He then went on to play with the orquestas of Isidro Lopez and Alfonso Ramos before forming his own band. One of his first picks for a sideman was Agustine Ramirez. Roy Montelongo recorded many hits and toured nationally. His unique singing style and his accomplishments as a saxophonist and arranger brought him much acclaim. Roy Montelongo recorded over 20 albums and was selected to be an original member of "The Legends" of Tejano music along with the likes of Freddie Martinez and Sunny Ozuna. Eventually, he settled on broadcasting as a career and for many years was heard on the Austin airwaves.

(F) ROY & MATT VELASQUEZ

Matt Velasquez' Latinaires, that pre-dated Little Joe's Latinaires by several years, performed from approximately 1946 to 1959. Vocalist-guitarist Matt Velasquez was a member of several ballroom bands including "Big Poppa's Band," the group with which he started playing when he was 14 years old. After returning from the service in 1946, he formed his own band, playing sorority parties, debutante balls and major parties. He also donated services to all Catholic churches. Matt Velasquez and his band played for the grand opening of Palmer Auditorium in 1959. He worked with Eduardo Martinez and Emilio Caceres. His brother, James Velasquez, played drums.

Roy Velasquez is an important local Hispanic businessman and community leader. He established Roy's Taxi in 1931 at the age of 21 when construction jobs dried up in the years following the great depression. He started the business with one car and within a year had 35 cars working for him on a contract basis. The company was located in various locations in and around East Austin, but in 1957 he moved the company to 90 East Avenue where the business headquarters remain today. Roy was active in political circles since his early years in business. He sold the poll tax to help minorities gain a voice in government. He also was active in supporting many political candidates and was a friend of leaders such as President Lyndon B. Johnson, Mayor Tom Miller, City Council Member Emma Long, Judge Homer Thornberry, and Congressman Jake Pickle. In 1935, Roy was co-founder of the Austin Chapter of LULAC, Council 85 and was one of the charter members of the Austin Citizen's League which was organized in the mid-1960's.

ATTACHMENT 2(C)

Johnny Degollado

JOHNNY DEGOLLADO

Johnny Degollado is the premier conjunto accordionist, bandleader, and songwriter in the Austin area. Johnny was born on November 24, 1935 in Travis County. Johnny has written over one hundred songs, received numerous awards, and is a member of the Tejano Music Hall Of Fame. When Johnny was a young boy, he would go to dances with his family and listen to Camilo Cantu, the most famous of the early Austin area conjunto accordionists. Johnny's father wanted him to learn to play accordion, and bought him a two row button accordion for forty dollars on East Sixth Street. Johnny began playing about 1952 and Camilo Cantu gave him some instruction and taught him to repair and tune accordians. Another early influence on Johnny's style was Valerio Longoria. In 1952, at age fifteen, Johnny started his conjunto with his neighbor, Vicente Alonzo, who still plays bajo sexto with him. In the late fifties, and in the sixties, there was not much work for conjuntos in Austin because of the popularity of orchestra music. Around 1970, Johnny got a break when the orchestras began to play his songs. Because of the exposure for his songs, Johnny's conjunto became more and more successful and in 1973, he was given an award for Songwriter Of The Year. Ten years ago, he added a saxophone player to his conjunto, and the result was a distinct, modern conjunto sound. Johnny has continued to work steadily and in 1986, he was inducted into the Tejano Music Hall Of Fame.

**Biography Courtesy of
Texas Music Museum**

Johnny "J. D." Degollado

"Composer, Band-Leader, Singer and Accordionist"

Johnny Degollado is the premier conjunto accordionist, band-leader and song-writer for the Austin and surrounding areas and was born on November 24, 1935 in Travis County, Texas.

When he was a young boy, Johnny would go to dances with his family to listen to accordion players perform in the Austin area. His determination in wanting to learn to play the accordion and his love for music influenced Johnny's father. Johnny's father wanted Johnny to learn the accordion, so he bought Johnny his very first accordion, a two row button accordion.

Johnny Degollado began playing the accordion in 1952 and at the early age of 15 years, started his own conjunto with neighbor, Vicente Alonzo. Today, Alonzo still performs with Johnny's conjunto, playing the bajo-sexto. Vicente and Johnny have been performing together for the past 45 years.

In the late 50's and early 60's, there was not much work for conjuntos in Austin because of the popularity of big-band (orchestra) music. In the 70's, Johnny Degollado got a big break when the bands began to play and record his original compositions. Because of his exposure and his songs, Johnny and his conjunto became more and more successful.

In 1973, Johnny won the award of *"Song of the Year"* at an event held in Austin by Carlos Velasquez. He is a member of the Tejano Music Hall of Fame and was inducted into the Tejano Hall of Fame in 1986.

J. D. has written over 200 songs and is a member of the broadcasting Music, Inc. of New York. He has received numerous awards and is presently recording for Tejano Stars Records of San Antonio, owned by Salome Gutierrez and is working on another CD release soon.

Johnny Degollado Songbook

Johnny Degollado Article continued from page 6.

Johnny has appeared on the "Siempre en Domingo Show" and has appeared in National Geographic Magazine and is planning to appear on the Sabado Gigante Show with host Don Francisco in Florida. He has performed many times at many Conjunto Festivals held every year in San Antonio, Texas. For the past ~~five~~ years, Johnny has been the Event Coordinator for the Conjunto Festival held in May every year in Austin.

Johnny Degollado (J. D.) has a new video on "*How To Play The Button Accordion*," which is on sale everywhere and if you would like to order your copy simply call Johnny at (512) 385-2147.

Many artists such as Ramon Ayala, Ruben Vela, Johnny Hernandez, Gilbert Alba, Ruben Ramos, Alfonso Ramos, Los Aguilares, George y Maggie, Los Chamacos, Augustin Ramirez and the Home Town Boys have recorded Degollado's music in different styles and arrangements.

Johnny Degollado would like to thank all of his fans, wife, and family that have supported him throughout his years as a band-leader and performer. As to his plans, Johnny plans to continue performing, and to express himself through his original songs. From all his fans everywhere, we wish Johnny Degollado and his conjunto continuing success with his recordings and more originals compositions coming soon..

Johnny Degollado has recorded over 350 songs (*polkas, redovas, cumbias, boleros*) plus many of his own compositions. Johnny's credentials in the music field are truly impressive and surely continues to make an impact to audiences everywhere he performs.

Article written by
Jesse C. Hernandez

Alexander, Jason

From: webadmin@ci.austin.tx.us
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2006 3:18 PM
To: Alexander, Jason; Esquibel, Matthew
Subject: Application for Facility Renaming

Date/Time Submitted: Wednesday, 2/22/06, 1517 hours

Facility Name: Fiesta Gardens Pavilion

Suggested New Name: Ruben Ramos Fiesta Gardens

Biographical Synopsis: Ruben Ramos has been part of the Austin music scene for almost 50 years. He has received various accolades including induction into the Tejano Music Awards Hall of Fame, as well as the Pura Vida Hall of Fame. In addition, he has received numerous Tejano Music Awards and received a Grammy Award in 1998 as a member of Los Super Seven.

Community Involvement: Ruben Ramos hosts an annual Golf Tournament and Concert to benefit the children of Austin.

Connection to the Facility: Ruben Ramos lived (until recently) only blocks away from Fiesta Gardens at the home he grew up in on Willow Street. Mr. Ramos also continues to perform at Fiesta Gardens for Dies y Seis de Septiembre as well as Cinco De Mayo Festivities. In addition, Mr. Ramos has hosted his annual "Golf Tournament Concert" there at Fiesta Gardens.

Reason for non-individual nomination:

Percentage of Cost: \$100.00

Nomintator's Name: Erica Ramos

Address: 910-B Cardinal Lane, Austin, Tx 78704

Phone Number: 512-626-9830