



Community Conversation

Metz Recreation Center Renaming



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Community Services Coordinator

Agenda

- Introductions
- Explanation of the renaming process
- Background on Hamilton M. Metz
- Background on Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez
- Small group discussion
- Community sharing

90 days

- Initiated by Council resolution and notice
- Survey and community comments ends May 2

PARB

- Parks and Recreation Board reviews comments
- Public hearing in May; sends recommendation

Council

- City Council receives PARB recommendation
- City Council makes final decision

December 5, 2019

The Austin City Council initiated the process to rename

Metz Recreation Center
(located at 2407 Canterbury Street)

to

Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez Recreation Center.



RESOLUTION NO. 20191205-117

WHEREAS, Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez, a native Austinite, early in life developed a passion for dance, performance arts, and community service; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez studied dance theory, technique, and composition in New York through a scholarship from the Martha Graham School, studied Flamenco in Spain, toured with various companies, and performed in off-Broadway shows; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez’s passion for community service led him to Chile and Costa Rica, where as part of the Peace Corps, he worked with the minister of Education in each country and to develop performing arts and outreach programs for youth; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Rudy Mendez founded Ballet East Dance Company, which has for over 40 years, been true to its mission to provide a platform for young choreographers and dancers on a national and international level and to develop vigorous outreach to Black and Hispanic communities in East Austin; and

WHEREAS, Rudy Mendez has been driven in his work by a conviction that theater and dance can transform lives and serve as powerful community development tools to equip young people in East Austin with discipline and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Rudy has selflessly dedicated his work to providing free lessons to multiple generations of young students and provided paid opportunities to dancers and choreographers; and

The report described by Resolution No. 20171005-31 consists of three parts:

- A. Identifying all City-owned monuments and memorials of the Confederacy located on City-Owned property, including, an without limitation, streets and buildings located on City of Austin property.
- B. Producing an analysis of the cost of removal, replacement, or renaming of these icons, monuments, and memorials of the Confederacy; and
- C. Making recommendations for disposition of artifacts of historic value, including preservation, storage, and maintenance for educational purposes.

Additional Background

- Confederate Monuments Resolution (No. 20171005-31)
- Confederate Monuments Report (Equity Office, 2018)
- Guidance on Renaming (Women's Commission Resolution No. 20171011-05a)



Rodolfo “Rudy” Mendez

1944-2019

- Born in Austin
- Studied dance in New York and Spain
- Served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile and Costa Rica
- Founded Ballet East Dance Company
- Program Specialist for PARD at Metz Recreation Center 1978 to 2000
- Developed “Dare to Dance”
- Created Folklorico Dance and Mentoring Program for students in East Austin

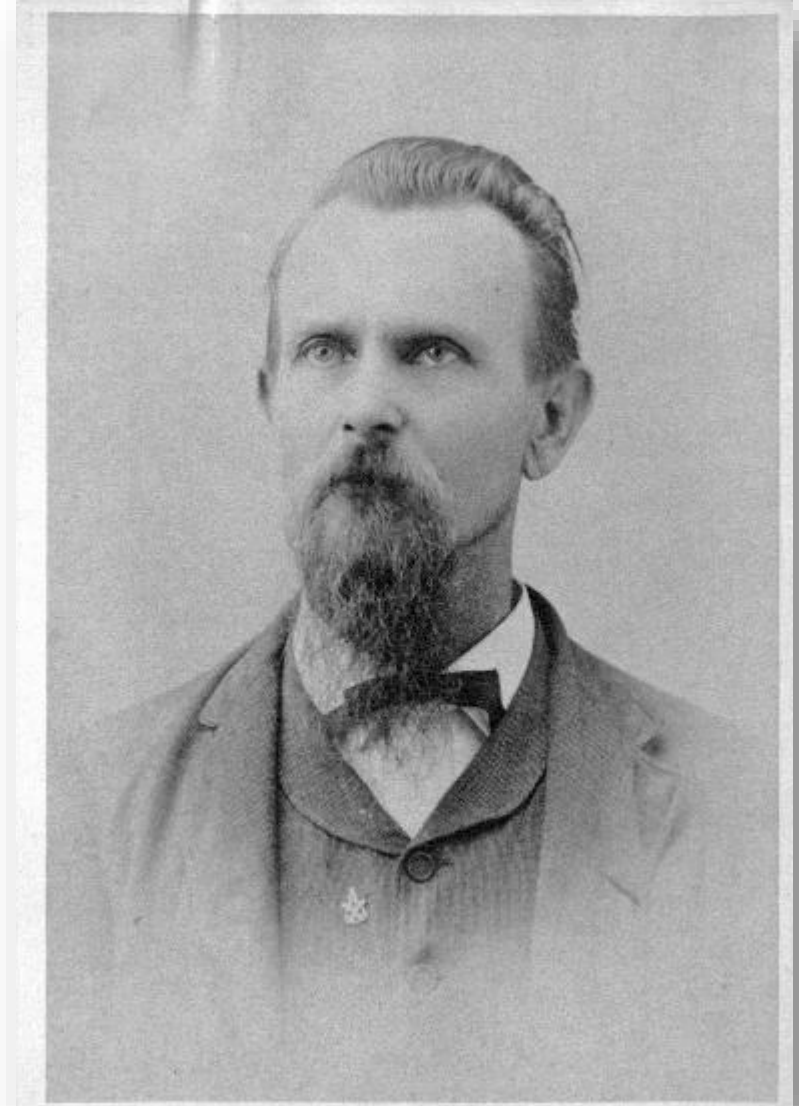


City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Hamilton M. Metz

1840-1915

- Austin firefighter
- Captain in Texas Cavalry of the Confederate Army
- Travis County Tax Assessor
- Austin School Board member and president
- Involved in other civic organizations



Austin ISD Archives

Confederate Monuments Report

Equity Office, 2018

“It is essential to acknowledge that societal values are fluid, and they can be and are different today compared to when our city made decisions to name and/or place these Confederate symbols in our community,” the Equity Office’s report notes.

“It is also important to acknowledge that nearly all monuments to the Confederacy and its leaders were erected without a true democratic process. People of color often had no voice and no opportunity to raise concerns about the city’s decision to honor Confederate leaders.”

Discussion in small groups

- What additional information would you like people to know about Mr. Metz or Mr. Mendez?
- What does it mean to “honor the history” of the community?
- How are you deciding whether you want to support the name change or not?

Community Sharing

What would you like to share with the group as a whole?

Next Steps

- Complete feedback form/survey by May 3, 2020
- All comments and feedback will be shared with the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) at their May meeting
- PARB May meeting will also be a public hearing for community members to also speak
- PARB will then pass on their recommendation if they have one
- City Council will make final decision

Share the opportunity with friends

www.austintexas.gov/departments/metz-recreation-center-renaming

