



CITY OF HAMMOND ORDINANCE

No. _____ C. .S.

An Ordinance to Name the Safe Haven Building in Martin Luther King, Jr Park in honor of Dr. Clara V. Robertson

WHEREAS, Dr. Clara V. Robertson was a distinguished educator, trailblazer, and community leader whose life’s work helped open doors for generations of students and professionals; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robertson was a native of Independence, Louisiana, and longtime resident of Hammond, Louisiana. She was the daughter of the late Rev. B. Self and Mrs. Luberta Kimble Self, and the devoted wife of the late Mr. William Robertson. She was the proud mother of Dr. Schellia Robertson, Mr. Pierre Robertson, and Dr. Shirley Robertson, and a loving grandmother of eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robertson received her early education in the Tangipahoa Parish School System before pursuing higher education and achieving numerous historic milestones. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Southern University, followed by a Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1967. Dr. Robertson made history as the first African American to earn both a Master’s Degree (1967) and a Specialist Degree (1972) from Southeastern Louisiana University. She later continued her academic journey by earning a Doctorate in Education from the University of Denver in 1978; and

WHEREAS, Throughout her career, Dr. Robertson consistently broke barriers and created opportunities for others. She began as a sixth-grade teacher and basketball coach at Burger Elementary School and later served as a Guidance Counselor at Greenville Park High School and Hammond High School, where she mentored and guided countless students; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robertson continued to make history when she became the first African American teacher at the Southeastern Louisiana University Laboratory School, where she taught seventh grade. In 1973, she again broke barriers when she became the first African American faculty member in the College of Education at Southeastern Louisiana University. In this role, she served as a Graduate Professor and Supervisor of Student Teachers, helping shape the next generation of educators; and

WHEREAS, Her leadership continued to expand when she became Director of Continuing Education at Southeastern Louisiana University in 1980, and she later retired as Director of Developmental Education, leaving a lasting mark on the institution and its students; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robertson’s legacy extended beyond the classroom into public service and educational leadership. She made history as the first African American female elected to serve on the Tangipahoa Parish School Board, where she later served as President of the School Board and chaired numerous committees. Her influence reached across the state when she became the first African American elected President of the Louisiana School Boards Association. She also served as State President of the Louisiana Counseling Association, further demonstrating her commitment to educational leadership and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, In addition to her professional achievements, Dr. Robertson was deeply rooted in her faith and church community. She was a faithful and active member of Baker’s A.M.E. Zion Church, where she served in numerous leadership roles including Deaconess, Chairman of the Trustee Board, Sunday School Teacher, Superintendent of Sunday School, and Church Secretary. She also served for more than 20 years as Local President of the Women’s Home and Overseas Missionary Society of the New Orleans District. At the district and conference levels of the Louisiana Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church, she served as District President of the Women’s Home and Foreign Missionary Society,

Louisiana Conference Secretary, Delegate to the A.M.E. Zion General Conference, Financial Secretary, and in many other capacities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Clara Vee Robertson’s life was defined by faith, perseverance, education, and service. She was a pioneer who broke barriers in higher education, educational leadership, and public service at a time when opportunities for African Americans, particularly women, were limited. Her courage, determination, and dedication to education helped shape institutions and open doors for those who followed; and

WHEREAS, Her legacy continues through the many lives she influenced, the institutions she helped transform, the generations of educators, leaders, and students who stand on the foundation she helped build and whose life should be memorialized by naming the Safe Haven Building in The Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in her honor.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Hammond City Council that:

1. The Safe Haven Building in Martin Luther King, Jr Park shall be named in honor of Dr. Clara V. Robertson.

The above and foregoing ordinance having being duly submitted to the Hammond City Council in writing; introduced at a public meeting on _____, 2026 of the Hammond City Council and discussed at a public meeting held on _____, 2026.

On a motion by _____ and second by _____ the foregoing ordinance was hereby declared adopted on _____ by the following roll call vote:

VOTE: Kip Andrews (), Carlee White Gonzales (), Sam DiVittorio (), Steve Leon () Devon Wells (). Motion _____

WHEREFORE the above and foregoing ordinance was declared duly adopted on this _____ day of _____, 2026 at Hammond, Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana.

Kip Andrews President,
Hammond City Council

Honorable Pete Panepinto, Mayor

Lisa Cockerham, Clerk Hammond City Council