



APPLICATION FORM

City Facility Naming/Renaming

City Manager's Office
City of Topeka
215 SE 7th Street, 3rd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603
Phone 785-368-3725 Fax 785-368-2535
www.topeka.org

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Submitted _____

Council District: District 3

NIA/NA: East Topeka South NIA

NIM Date: _____



By K. Miller

Applicant Information

Applicant(s): Delbert Wilburn

Organization (if applicable): _____

Street Address: P.O. Box 1274 City: Topeka

State: KS Zip: 66601 Phone: (785) 220-5493 E-mail: Wilburn66601@yahoo.com

Requested Action

Check one: ☐ Renaming of City facility (currently named) ☒ Naming of City facility (not currently named)

Current Name: _____ Proposed Name: Nick Chiles Memorial Bridge

Location of property to be re-named or named:

Bridge at 10th Ave & Brauner

On a separate sheet, describe the contribution(s) of the individual(s) for whom the naming/renaming is proposed or the reasoning for the name proposed (if not an individual), and the background history on the present name of the premises. Strong consideration will be given to maintaining current names of City facilities named for individuals whose contributions were previously honored.

The application shall clearly state the contributions made by the proposed named person of the City of Topeka. Said contributions shall include, but not be limited to, donations of time, money, land, gifts or services which directly or indirectly benefited the City of Topeka and its citizens.

Attach written statement.

Was a pre-application meeting held? ☒ Yes ☐ No If Yes: Date Held Dec 5, 2016

The following items should be attached as determined by the City Manager's Office.

- Written statement as explained above on File
- Acknowledgment/support of next of kin
- Letters of support from impacted neighborhood organization(s) or affected stakeholders
- Neighborhood Information Meeting minutes and sign-in sheet

Applicant Signature: Delbert Wilburn Date: 3-16-2017

Typing your name here constitutes your signature attesting that everything above is true to the best of your knowledge.

I would like to see the City of Topeka honor the accomplishments of Nick Chiles who came to this city in 1877 and stayed to his death in 1929. Mr. Chiles was a businessman owning, at various times, a restaurant, pool hall and hotel, his most success came as the owner and editor of the Topeka Plaindealer. He used this paper to champion the civil rights of Afro-Americans, both nationally and locally; for this it had the largest circulation of any black owned newspaper in the nation. The function of a free press is important in a democracy. Nick Chiles fought attempts by Southern politicians and state legislatures to repeal the 14 and 15 Amendments of the Constitution through Jim Crow laws, disfranchisement and the re-establishment of a new form of slavery known as peonage; South Carolina Senator Ben Tillman and Mississippi Governor and Senator J.K. Vardaman were his favorite targets to ridicule for their hypocrisy of freedom. Chiles kept the Afro-American community informed of current events not covered by the White owned press: How Black soldiers saved Roosevelt at the Battle of San Juan Hill; anti-lynching matters; and lynching and race riots to name a few. Locally, he called on Blacks to start businesses to attend the Topeka Institute or Western University and to return to farming to make a living. Mr. Chiles praised and criticized every president from McKinley to Harding. This is just a few things Nick Chiles did. Sadly, most Topekans, Black and White have heard of this man and that is a shame. Hopefully, I believe when people see his name on the 10th ave bridge, they will go to our library to read his newspaper, then, wonder how this amazing was forgotten.

*Kansas Afro-American Historical
and Genealogical Society*

Del Wilburn

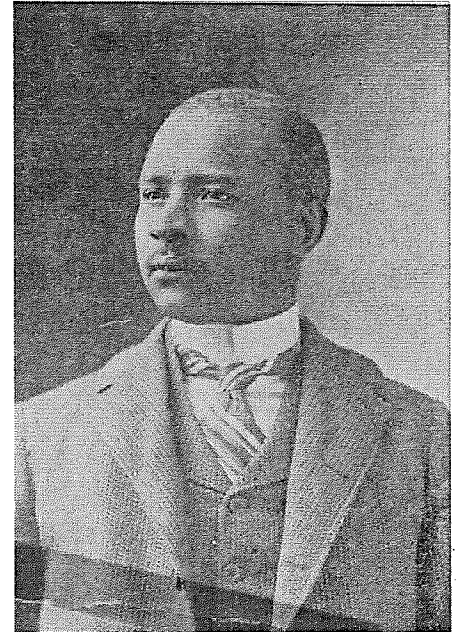
3-20-2017

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TOPEKA, KANSAS

Nick Chiles

African American newspaperman

Nick Chiles was born in South Carolina and in 1886 moved to Topeka, Kansas. There he founded and edited the *Plaindealer*, a newspaper that ran from January 1899 to November 1958. Chiles's *Plaindealer* was said to be the most successful African American newspaper in Kansas and one of the strongest in the nation. It became the longest running black newspaper in the United States.



Entry: Chiles, Nick

Author: Kansas Historical Society

Author information: The Kansas Historical Society is a state agency charged with actively safeguarding and sharing the state's history.

Date Created: April 2010

Date Modified: June 2011

The author of this article is solely responsible for its content.