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**Resolution for Refurbishment of the Greg Marius Court in Holcombe Rucker Park – NYC
Parks and the National Basketball Players Association**

WHEREAS Holcombe Rucker Park (Park ID M216) is a 3.05 acre located on West 155th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard in the Borough of Manhattan in Community Board 10; and

WHEREAS Many who played at the park in the Rucker Tournament achieved a level of fame for their abilities, and several have gone on to play in the National Basketball Association (NBA); and

WHEREAS The park is named after Holcombe Rucker, a local teacher and a playground director for the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. Rucker started a basketball tournament in 1950 in order to help less fortunate kids stay off the streets and aim for college careers; and

WHEREAS Ruckers gave black players an opportunity to play at a time when the NBA, founded in 1949, first started, there were only about 1 or 2 Blacks per team. There were few opportunities like the Harlem Globe Trotters where teams of Blacks played together. And also players who didn't have the opportunity to go to college had the opportunity to go to the Rucker to play; and

WHEREAS Although many professional basketball players have played at the court after gaining prominence, many others developed their basketball skills at Rucker prior to becoming notable in the sport, including: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Rafer Alston, Kenny Anderson, Nate Archibald, Metta Sandiford-Artest, Sylvester Blye, Conney Hawkins, Roger Brown, Julius Erving, Bill Bradley, Joe Hammond, Earl Manigault, Jackie Jackson, Richard "Pee Wee" Kirkland, Larry "Bone Collector" Williams, Rafer "Skip to My Lou" Alston, Herman "Helicopter" Knowlins, Conrad "McNasty" Macrae, Charlie Scott and Wilt Chamberlain; and

WHEREAS NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio joined former NBA players and celebrities on June 26th, 2017 for a ceremony to rename the court "Greg Marius Court." is named in honor of Gregory Marius (1958-2017), founder and CEO of the popular Entertainers Basketball Classic at Rucker Park. Born in Harlem on March 18, 1958, Gregory Alexander Marius was a lifelong Harlem resident; and

WHEREAS Greg Marius founded the Entertainers Basketball Classic in 1982, when he was a young rapper in with the Disco Four. Initially organized as a tournament between rival hip-hop crews, Marius's basketball showcase ingeniously connected the worlds of basketball and hip-hop. Expanding on Rucker Park's existing history as a place where neighborhood talent could play

sports celebrities, Marius invited basketball stars to the weeks-long tournament. The growing number of players from the National Basketball Association (NBA) drew enormous crowds, and in 1984 the tournament moved from Fred Samuel Playground (formerly Readers Digest Park) to Holcombe Rucker Park. Since its founding, NBA superstars like Kobe Bryant, Allen Iverson, Stephon Marbury, LeBron James, and Shaquille O'Neal have held court at the Classic. In the 1990s, Marius expanded his vision integrated entertainers like Michael Bivins, Fat Joe, Jay Z, P. Diddy, Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Mary J. Blige in the program. Political and business leaders such as United States President Bill Clinton and NBA Commissioner David Stern have also joined the jubilant crowds at the Entertainers Basketball Classic; and

WHEREAS on Thursday, December 24th, 2020 wind gusts of 65 miles per hour [National Weather Service] whipped through New York City along with heavy rains, which knocked over trees and power lines. The wind gusts and rain impacted Holcombe Rucker Park; completely uprooting trees, and damaging the Frederick Douglass side benches, basketball stand/rim and; and

WHEREAS New York City Parks has secured the Holcombe Rucker Park from further damage and has provided protective barriers for the community; and

WHEREAS The National Association of Each One Teach One Rucker Pro Legends presented at the Wednesday, April 14th Manhattan Community Board 10 Parks and Recreation Committee meeting to introduce the project; and

WHEREAS The main features of the plan to refurbish the .26 acre court include: (1) custom-made basketball goals, styled after the backboards and hoops in the 30 NBA arenas and practice facilities; this will be the only outdoor court in the world with these high-quality goals, (2) a new surface for the court, eliminating the cracks and other defects in the current pavement, (3) new bleachers and team benches, (4) new scoreboard, (5) new gates and (6) repairs to the fence; and

WHEREAS The court will have the potential for events outside of basketball tournaments such as concerts; and

WHEREAS The National Basketball Players Association and New York City Parks held a Community Preview meeting on May 4th, 2021 to present design plans for refurbishment and upgrade to the Greg Marius Basketball Court and to garner community feedback; and

WHEREAS The National Basketball Players Association and New York City Parks met with the CB 10 Parks and Recreation Committee on May 12th, 2021 to present design plans for refurbishment and upgrade to the Greg Marius Basketball Court and to garner community feedback; and

WHEREAS The project has a budget of approximately \$360,000, funded by the National Basketball Players Association; and

WHEREAS New York City Parks and the National Basketball Players Association will oversee the project design and construction; and

WHEREAS New York City Parks and the National Basketball Players Association will provide maintenance and repairs to ensure that the new facility continues to serve the public at the highest standard; and

WHEREAS The National Basketball Players Association will provide free and youth-focused staffed programming which will be reassessed at the end of three years; and

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 10 also recommends the upgrade of the Holcombe Rucker Park Playground and landscape to entail a Pro-Rucker Legend theme; and

WHEREAS The National Basketball Players Association and New York City Parks anticipate that the project groundbreaking will take place on August 16th, 2021. Construction is expected to be completed in October, 2021; and

WHEREAS The National Basketball Players Association is working with New York City Parks to develop a plan to minimize inconvenience and to identify interim locations for all existing programs including the National Association of Each One Teach One Rucker Pro Legends Summer Program during the construction period; and

THEREFORE NOW be it resolved that on June 3, 2021, Manhattan Community Board 10 voted to support the joint efforts of The National Basketball Players Association and New York City Parks to upgrade the Greg Marius Basketball Court at Holcombe Rucker Park while preserving its renowned character through these renovations with a vote of 40 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions 1 recusal.