



AGENDA REPORT

City Council

DATE:	January 27, 2026
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Councilmember Soheila Bana
SUBJECT:	Proclamation Honoring the Legacy of Douglas Ellison and Inez Watson and Recognizing the Work of the Watson Ellison Foundation in Alzheimer's and Dementia Awareness
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	None.
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	<p>A proclamation honoring the lives and legacies of Douglas Ellison, a trailblazing Richmond police officer, and Inez Watson, a longtime childcare provider and community caregiver. Their stories exemplify Richmond's values of public service, family support, and community strength.</p> <p>Both Mr. Ellison and Ms. Watson experienced dementia later in life, and their legacies continue through the work of the Watson Ellison Foundation, a Richmond-based nonprofit founded by their granddaughter, Anjanette Ellison.</p> <p>The Foundation works to support moderate-income families—especially in communities of color—who are navigating the challenges of Alzheimer's and dementia with limited resources. The Foundation's mission aligns with broader public health goals and community wellness initiatives supported by the City.</p>

RECOMMENDED ACTION:	PROCLAMATION honoring Douglas Ellison and Inez Watson for their distinguished service and lasting contributions to the Richmond community and recognizing the work of the Watson Ellison Foundation in raising awareness and supporting families impacted by Alzheimer's disease and dementia - Councilmember Soheila Bana (510-672-3490).
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DISCUSSION:

A proclamation honoring the lives and legacies of Douglas Ellison, a trailblazing Richmond police officer, and Inez Watson, a longtime childcare provider and community caregiver. Their stories exemplify Richmond’s values of public service, family support, and community strength.

Both Mr. Ellison and Ms. Watson experienced dementia later in life, and their legacies continue through the work of the Watson Ellison Foundation, a Richmond-based nonprofit founded by their granddaughter, Anjanette Ellison.

The Foundation works to support moderate-income families—especially in communities of color—who are navigating the challenges of Alzheimer’s and dementia with limited resources. The Foundation’s mission aligns with broader public health goals and community wellness initiatives supported by the City.

Douglas Ellison was a lifelong Richmond resident and a trailblazer in local law enforcement. Mr. Ellison Began his career at the Richmond Police Department on November 1, 1946, becoming the City of Richmond’s second African American police officer. In April 1967, he became Richmond’s first African American Police Sergeant. He dedicated 27 years to the Richmond Police Department. He also served with BART Police from January 29, 1973, to March 1, 1983

In addition to public service, he was also known in Richmond as a professional boxer and was among the founding members of the Guardians of Justice (also known as “Black Nine”).

A list of Mr. Ellisons training and education achievements include, USC Juvenile Law Enforcement Officer Training Certificate (April 30, 1966), Contra Costa College graduate (June 14, 1968), B.S. in Police Science (June 10, 1972), Master’s in Public Administration (September 9, 1979) and POST Supervisory Certificate (California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training).

Inez Watson was a Richmond resident whose life reflected decades of caregiving and service to local families. She moved to Richmond in 1967 and remained connected to the community for decades. After initially working cleaning homes in Richmond, she realized she wanted to dedicate her life to helping children and supporting families.

Ms. Watson became a licensed daycare provider in 1971 (in Contra Costa County), serving generations of Richmond-area families with consistent, trusted care. She received community recognition with a Certificate of Appreciation on June 18, 1977, from the Contra Costa Teenage Parent Program, recognizing her support of young parents and families.

Mr. Ellison passed away in 2006 at age 81 following a battle with Alzheimer's disease. Ms. Watson passed away at 85 due to dementia, their legacy is central and honored through the Alzheimer's and dementia awareness work of the Watson Ellison Foundation.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Proclamation