

By: Hodge

H.R. No. 297

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The retirement of Dr. J. B. Gassaway in April 2004
2 brings to a close a remarkable 32-year tenure with the City of
3 Dallas Park and Recreation Department; and

4 WHEREAS, After serving in the U.S. Navy and graduating from
5 Bishop College, Dr. Gassaway embarked upon his career with the
6 Dallas park department in 1972; initially athletic coordinator and
7 athletic director, he was promoted in 1982 to district manager and
8 then again in 1996 to assistant general manager of Fair Park,
9 thereby becoming the first African American to hold that
10 prestigious position; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Gassaway may indeed look back with pride at his
12 many accomplishments during his tenure at the City of Dallas Park
13 and Recreation Department; those innumerable achievements include
14 the initiation of a federal job program to design and renovate 23
15 playgrounds, the creation of a one-of-a-kind playground at Kiest
16 Park, the construction of two new recreation centers, the expansion
17 of a municipal athletic program from 350 teams in 1974 to more than
18 6,000 teams in 1982, the development of the existing regional
19 boundaries for the Dallas Park System, and the increase of the
20 number of annual events held at Fair Park from 25 in 1996 to more
21 than 100 in 2003; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1998, Dr. Gassaway also coordinated the first
23 Veteran's Day celebration in Dallas since 1949; held at Fair Park,
24 the event was attended by more than 125,000 participants and viewed

1 by more than 1.4 billion people around the world via satellite;
2 earning the Mayor's Special Recognition Award that year, as well as
3 in 1985 and 1986, this dedicated professional has been the
4 recipient of more than 130 commendations and special awards; and

5 WHEREAS, While attending to the demands of his job, Dr.
6 Gassaway earned a master's degree in 2001 and a Ph.D. in 2002 in
7 religious education from the School of the Scripture, where he
8 currently serves on the faculty; he is a member of Christ Memorial
9 Missionary Baptist Church and the International Free & Accepted
10 Modern Masons, Inc.; a 33rd degree Mason, he was appointed Grand
11 Master of Texas at the age of 23, making him the youngest grand
12 master ever of a Masonic body, and he also served as National
13 District Grand Master of the Gulf Coast District; and

14 WHEREAS, With his unwavering dedication to excellence and
15 outstanding leadership ability, Dr. Gassaway has truly been an
16 asset to Fair Park and to the City of Dallas Park and Recreation
17 Department; although he will be missed by his colleagues, the
18 record of accomplishments that he leaves behind will not soon be
19 forgotten; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
21 Legislature, 4th Called Session, hereby recognize Dr. J. B.
22 Gassaway on the occasion of his retirement as assistant general
23 manager of Fair Park and extend to him sincere best wishes for
24 continued success and happiness as he begins the next chapter of his
25 life; and, be it further

26 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
27 prepared for Dr. Gassaway as an expression of high regard by the

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1 Texas House of Representatives.