

File No. 221088

Committee Item No. 4

Board Item No. _____

COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA PACKET CONTENTS LIST

Committee: Public Safety and Ngbh Services

Date: May 11, 2023

Board of Supervisors Meeting:

Date: _____

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- Introduction Form
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OTHER

- Referral FYI – October 23, 2022
- _____
- _____
- _____
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- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Prepared by: John Carroll

Date: May 5, 2023

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

1 [Urging the Recreation and Park Commission to Remove the Name Stow from the Lake in
2 Golden Gate Park, the Boathouse Located at the Lake, and the Drive Circling Strawberry Hill]

3 **Resolution urging the Recreation and Park Commission to remove the name Stow from**
4 **the Lake at John F. Kennedy Drive and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, the Boathouse**
5 **located in Golden Gate Park surrounding Strawberry Hill, and the Drive circling**
6 **Strawberry Hill; and to rename the Lake, Boathouse, and Drive to a name that reflects**
7 **San Francisco’s expressed values of celebrating diversity.**

8
9 WHEREAS, In 1893, Stow Lake was completed in Golden Gate Park and named after
10 former California State Assembly Speaker, William W. Stow; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1854 William W. Stow ran for California Assembly and served two terms
12 representing the County of Santa Cruz, becoming Speaker of the California Assembly in
13 1855; and

14 WHEREAS, During his time as Assembly Speaker, William W. Stow made headlines
15 for his anti-Semitism, speaking against Jewish people directly from the Assembly floor; and

16 WHEREAS, Stow tried to pass a Sunday “closing law” for businesses in Santa Clara
17 and Santa Cruz, which he represented at the time, receiving pushback and scrutiny from
18 Jewish tradesman Louis Schwartz, a constituent of Stow, and the larger Jewish community
19 across the State; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1855, Assemblymember Stow declared during session: “I have no
21 sympathy with the Jews and would it were in my power to enforce a regulation that would
22 eliminate them from not only our county but from the entire state! I am for a Jew tax that is so
23 high that [Jews] would not be able to operate any more shops. They are a class of people
24 here only to make money and who leave the country as soon as they make money;” and
25

1 WHEREAS, In his ongoing efforts against Jewish business owners, Stow proposed a
2 tax on Jews that he claimed "would act as a prohibition to their residence amongst us,"
3 demonstrating a clear goal of discouraging Jews from moving to California and
4 disenfranchising the Jewish residents in California; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1856, Assemblymember Stow ran an unsuccessful campaign for
6 Governor of California on the Know-Nothing political party ticket; and

7 WHEREAS, The Know-Nothing party stemmed from a secret society known as the
8 Order of the Star Spangled Banner (OSSB) that was notorious for its xenophobia, whose
9 members, sworn to secrecy, when asked anything by outsiders would respond with "I know
10 nothing;" and

11 WHEREAS, It is well recorded that Know-Nothing Party members supported
12 deportation of foreign "beggars" and "criminals", a 21-year naturalization period for
13 immigrants; mandatory Bible reading in schools; and the elimination of all Catholics from
14 public office; and

15 WHEREAS, Around 1856, he quit his political career and moved to San Francisco.
16 Stow became a partner in the law firm Patterson, Wallace & Stow, which handled primarily
17 land use issues; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1889, he was appointed to the San Francisco Park Commission and
19 immediately began complaining about the lack of funds for Golden Gate Park, which,
20 ironically, funding he himself cut by half during his tenure as Assembly Speaker; and

21 WHEREAS, Records show that then Commissioner William W. Stow significantly led
22 and fundraised for the development of the lake and the waterfall, known as Huntington Falls
23 after Collis P. Huntington who Stow convinced to donate \$25,000 donation secured by Stow;
24 and

25

1 WHEREAS, It's unclear how the decision was made to name the lake after Stow,
2 according to the park department's historian-in-residence Christopher Pollock, it was common
3 during Golden Gate Park's early days for landmarks to be named after park commissioners;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, It is evidently recorded that William W. Stow promoted racist and
6 exclusionary sentiments and policies; and

7 WHEREAS, A study commissioned by the Jewish Community Federation and
8 Endowment Fund reports that the Bay Area has the fourth largest Jewish population in the
9 country; and

10 WHEREAS, Stow Lake is the biggest lake in Golden Gate Park and attracts many
11 tourists and residents as a prominent site for outdoor enjoyment and activities, making it a
12 landmark representing San Francisco and our values; and

13 WHEREAS, The City's parks and outdoor spaces are for everyone in this diverse
14 community and should not enshrine names of persons who utilize their positions of power to
15 promote hatred or exclusion; and

16 WHEREAS, There is broad community support for the removal of William W. Stow from
17 the lake, boathouse, and drive; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco urges the Recreation and
19 Park Commission to remove William W. Stow from the name of "Stow Lake", "Stow Lake
20 Boathouse", and "Stow Lake Drive;" and, be it

21 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Recreation and Park
22 Commission to remove the name of William W. Stow from the lake and all related locations
23 after conducting a thorough community renaming process; and, be it

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1 FURTHER RESOLVED, Urging these locations will be renamed to recognize the
2 multicultural diversity and the values, as a Sanctuary City, of the City and County of San
3 Francisco.

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Carroll, John (BOS)

From: Marc Eis <marc@eisdesigninc.com>
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2022 10:29 AM
To: Carroll, John (BOS)
Subject: Stow Lake

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hello Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Commission, I have read about the attempt to rename Stow Lake, Boathouse, and Drive.

I believe this to be unnecessary work for the city. The reason I believe this is that only a select few people know that the lake is actually named after a person, let alone a person who had objectionable views about Jewish people way back in the 1850's. With so little knowledge about the name, and with such long history, it doesn't reflect or not reflect SF values. It is only a name that for 99.9% of people do not think about.

This rename attempt harkens back to the attempt to rename city schools. Where the school board decided to spend much needed resources naming, rather than do the difficult work of running and opening schools during COVID.

I do not feel that it should be a priority for the city to spend money to change a name. If it was someone who had objectionable views about Mexicans, myself with ancestors from there, I would still feel this is unnecessary. The way to reflect SF values is to look forward. Not spending city resources to research obscure old names about views from distant history.

Thanks,
Marc Eis
District 7

From: [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Cabrera, Stephanie \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: 4 Letters Regarding Renaming of Stow Lake
Date: Thursday, October 27, 2022 9:39:50 AM
Attachments: [4 Letters.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

221088

Alisa Somera

Legislative Deputy Director
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.554.7711 direct | 415.554.5163 fax
alisa.somera@sfgov.org

(VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS) To schedule a “virtual” meeting with me (on Microsoft Teams), please ask and I can answer your questions in real time.

Due to the current COVID-19 health emergency and the Shelter in Place Order, the Office of the Clerk of the Board is working remotely while providing complete access to the legislative process and our services.

Click [HERE](#) to complete a Board of Supervisors Customer Service Satisfaction form.

The [Legislative Research Center](#) provides 24-hour access to Board of Supervisors legislation, and archived matters since August 1998.

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**From:** Board of Supervisors (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 27, 2022 9:37 AM  
**To:** BOS-Supervisors <bos-supervisors@sfgov.org>  
**Cc:** Calvillo, Angela (BOS) <angela.calvillo@sfgov.org>; Mchugh, Eileen (BOS) <eileen.e.mchugh@sfgov.org>; Somera, Alisa (BOS) <alisa.somera@sfgov.org>; Ng, Wilson (BOS) <wilson.l.ng@sfgov.org>; De Asis, Edward (BOS) <edward.deasis@sfgov.org>  
**Subject:** 4 Letters Regarding Renaming of Stow Lake

## Arthur Khoo

Office of the Clerk of the Board  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 554-5184 | (415) 554-5163  
[board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org](mailto:board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org) | [www.sfbos.org](http://www.sfbos.org)



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**From:** [Rosalinda Callejas](#)  
**To:** [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** Stow Lake  
**Date:** Thursday, October 20, 2022 10:52:43 PM

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This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

I am appalled and frankly sick and tired of the WOKE BS and Cancel Culture that you continue to perpetuate in this city.

I am a first generation Latina born and raised in San Francisco. I am very proud that part of my heritage is Jewish. Never have I seen my city and state go hell due to the idiotic ideology that all of you who are in office hold. This is what is wrong when people elect Socialists and one party rule. There is absolutely no diversity of thought or a fair balance in government.

Stop this ridiculous nonsense of spending our hard earned taxes on stupidity such as this. Leave Stow Lake Alone! Stow Lake has been part of the history of our Golden Gate Park and now you want to screw with this too. If you can't learn from our history that is on you! We learn from the past in order to do better for the future generations. But, that doesn't mean tearing down our statues or renaming schools, the Lake etc. Where does this end....are you going to rename our last names and our history if it doesn't fit with your ideology. What the hell is wrong with all of you! There are more critical things that are at the top of our minds such as crime, inflation, high taxes, high prices, education..can I say more. People are tired of this crap.

Focus on the issues that impact our daily lives. If you believe it is okay for citizens to arm themselves with bats to protect themselves from criminals then something is wrong with you. Stop this madness of tearing down our city and state's history and do something about the things that matter to people in their daily lives. No person or child should watch a person defecating or doing drugs on the street. These are the things that all of you have enacted. This city and state has gone to hell since people elected individuals like you in our government. Common sense be damned! Well, I hope that people continue to wake up like they did with Chelsa Boudin and members of the SFUSD Board and vote Cancel Culture and Woke ideology out of office.

Enough of this Cancel Culture and WOKE BS and leave our Stow Lake alone! If you feel that you can't find anything meaningful to enact that impacts the daily lives of your constituents then you shouldn't be in office. Shame on all of you.

A Common Sense Citizen,

Rosalinda Callejas

**From:** [Nancy DeStefanis](#)  
**To:** [Ginsburg, Phil \(REC\)](#); [Commission, Recpark \(REC\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** PROPOSAL TO RENAME STOW LAKE- BLUE HERON LAKE  
**Date:** Monday, October 24, 2022 3:21:23 PM

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This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

October 24, 2022

Dear Phil and Members of the RPD Commission,

I am urging the RPD Commission to rename Stow Lake- Blue Heron Lake.

I strongly support changing the name of Stow Lake. Mr. Stow was a terrible antisemite and his name should no longer grace the beautiful lake that his name is attached to. Other lakes in GG Park have appropriate place names like Mallard Lake, Elk Glen Lake, North Lake, Middle Lake and South Lake.

I think it's time to get away from naming the lakes in GG Pk. after park commissioners and prominent San Franciscans ie. former Julius Kahn playground (Alvord, Lloyd, Spreckels lakes, et al). Then there isn't any risk of other lakes needing to be renamed in the future because of untoward politics and behavior.

As you know, Great Blue Herons have nested at Stow Lake since 1993. Since then, 270 chicks have fledged there. See: <https://www.sfnature.org/heron-chronology>

I am the Exec. Director of San Francisco Nature Education. We teach children and adults about the Great Blue Herons that breed at Stow Lake. We started our programs in 2000. I discovered the first nest in 1993 and founded San Francisco Nature Education to bring this exciting phenomenon to underserved school children and the public in 2000.

SF residents know these birds very well. We have shown them to over 30,000 people since the beginning 1993 using high powered telescopes. Our Heron Watch volunteers explain the behavior of the birds to the public. Our new movie "Great Blues of the Golden Gate" is on our home page. We installed a Heron Cam in 2015 and for one year everyone could see the herons all day.

Then the herons moved to a different spot nearby.

I recommend that you rename the lake "Blue Heron Lake". If you look at my website [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org) you will see photos of these beautiful birds. The Stow Lake Heron colony has been featured on KQED/PBS (see listings under film) and newspapers and magazines throughout California.

I would appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Nancy H. DeStefanis

--

Nancy H. DeStefanis, Executive Director  
San Francisco Nature Education  
office: 415-205-0776  
[nancyd@sfnature.org](mailto:nancyd@sfnature.org)  
[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)

Monitoring the Great Blue Heron colony in Golden Gate Park since 1993.

**From:** [Leaette Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Convenience  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 12:57:00 PM

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This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Good day.

My name is Leaette Sullivan and I work here in San Francisco as a drug counselor.

I feel the need to share that I am Jewish, and my husband is Native American.

I was born and raised here in the Bay Area and find it very difficult to deal with how you guys pick and choose monuments to tear down or names to change.

This affects all of us and I take it as a personal insult that we are not involved in the decision making of our city??

First you remove the Native American monument from Civic Center, which makes me cringe to this day.

And now again with Stow Lake.

Something like removing a monument or changing a name should be a little more difficult then you guys make.

Any piece of history you disagree with, you simply throw away.

Have you ever thought that maybe since you were not born at the time in question that you might misunderstand the information?

I am betting that if you had all the facts you would not take this so lightly.

I am organizing a movement to return the Native American statue.

My husband is Native American and finds your behavior simply negative.

You guys really have nothing better to do then make office documents, remove monuments and change names.

How nice for you.

Really?

Thank you for your time in reading my email.

Leaette Sullivan

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. This communication may contain material protected by HIPAA legislation (45 CFR, Parts 160 & 164) or by 42 CFR Part 2. Federal rules prohibit you from making any further disclosures of this information. If you are not the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this email in error and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing or copying of this email is

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**From:** [Nancy DeStefanis](#)  
**To:** [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#)  
**Cc:** [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: SUPPORT FOR CHANGING NAME OF STOW LAKE TO HERON LAKE  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 6:04:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [The-Blue-Heron-Newsletter-Apr22-FINAL.pdf](#)

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This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Supervisor Melgar,

**I was surprised today in sfgate your response that our request for changing the name Stow Lake to Blue Heron Lake was "because Herons hang out there".**

Apparently you and your staff failed to read the email sent to you on 8-4-22.- see below.

We also sent an email to the RPD Commission two days ago and copied the Board of Supervisors. - I am forwarding the email to you directly.

Since the Great Blue Herons have **nested** at the Lake since 1993, I'm surprised that you were unaware of this spectacular event that takes place every year from December through July. We have received copious publicity since we began showing the herons to the public and schoolchildren and two movies shown on KQED/PBS.

Since the Lake now falls under your purview, I would be happy to give you and your staff a tour of the Lake and particularly the Great Blue Heron colony.

We have shown the heron chicks to over 22,000 visitors and over 20,000 SF school children since 2002.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Nancy H. DeStefanis

Nancy H. DeStefanis, Executive Director  
San Francisco Nature Education  
office: 415-205-0776

[nancyd@sfnature.org](mailto:nancyd@sfnature.org)  
[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)

Monitoring the Great Blue Heron colony in Golden Gate Park since 1993.

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**SUPPORT FOR CHANGING NAME OF STOW LAKE TO HERON LAKE

**Date:**2022-08-04 14:00

**From:**Nancy DeStefanis <nancyd@sfnature.org>

**To:**MelgarStaff@sfgov.org, Supervisor Connie Chan <chanstaff@sfgov.org>, Board of Supervisors <Board.of.Supervisors@sfgov.org>

Dear Supervisor Melgar,

I strongly support changing the name of Stow Lake. Mr. Stow was a terrible antisemite and his name should no longer grace the beautiful lake his name is attached to. Thank you for taking the lead.

I am the Exec. Director of San Francisco Nature Education. We teach children and adults about the Great Blue Herons that breed at Stow Lake. We started our programs in 2000. I discovered the first nest in 1993 and founded San Francisco Nature Education to bring this exciting phenomenon to underserved school children and the public in 2000.

SF residents know these birds very well. We have shown them to about 30,000 people since the beginning using high powered telescopes. Our Heron Watch volunteers explain the behavior of the birds to the public. Our new movie "Great Blues of the Golden Gate" is on our home page. We installed a Heron Cam in 2015 and for one year everyone could see the herons all day. Then the herons moved to a different spot nearby.

I recommend that you rename the lake "Heron Lake". If you look at my website [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org) you will see photos of these beautiful birds. Please let me know if I can be of any help going forward.

Sincerely,

Nancy H. DeStefanis

--

Nancy H. DeStefanis, Executive Director  
San Francisco Nature Education  
office: 415-205-0776  
[nancyd@sfnature.org](mailto:nancyd@sfnature.org)  
[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)

Monitoring the Great Blue Heron colony in Golden Gate  
Park since 1993

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Will antisemite's name finally be stripped from Golden Gate Park lake? – J.

**Date:**2022-08-04 03:50

**From:**Nancy DeStefanis <[sfnature1@icloud.com](mailto:sfnature1@icloud.com)>

**To:**Nancy DeStefanis <[nancyd@sfnature.org](mailto:nancyd@sfnature.org)>

<https://jweekly.com/2022/07/25/will-antisemites-name-finally-be-stripped-from-stow-lake-in-golden-gate-park/>

Nancy DeStefanis  
Executive Director  
San Francisco Nature Education

Sent from my iPhone

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Nancy H. DeStefanis, Executive Director  
San Francisco Nature Education  
office: 415-205-0776  
[nancyd@sfnature.org](mailto:nancyd@sfnature.org)  
[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)

Monitoring the Great Blue Heron colony in Golden Gate  
Park since 1993



BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689  
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184  
Fax No. (415) 554-5163  
TDD/TTY No. (415) 554-5227

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Phil Ginsburg, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Department

FROM: Stephanie Cabrera, Assistant Clerk, Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee, Board of Supervisors

DATE: October 26, 2022

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

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The Board of Supervisors' Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Supervisor Melgar on October 18, 2022:

**File No. 221088**

Resolution urging the Recreation and Park Commission to remove the name Stow from the Lake at John F. Kennedy Drive and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, the Boathouse located in Golden Gate Park surrounding Strawberry Hill, and the Drive circling Strawberry Hill; and to rename the Lake, Boathouse, and Drive to a name that reflects San Francisco's expressed values of celebrating diversity.

If you have any additional comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: [Stephanie.Cabrera@sfgov.org](mailto:Stephanie.Cabrera@sfgov.org).

cc: Sarah Madland, Recreation and Parks Department  
Ashley Summers, Recreation and Parks Commission

# Introduction Form

By a Member of the Board of Supervisors or Mayor

Time stamp  
or meeting date

I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

- 1. For reference to Committee. (An Ordinance, Resolution, Motion or Charter Amendment).
- 2. Request for next printed agenda Without Reference to Committee.
- 3. Request for hearing on a subject matter at Committee.
- 4. Request for letter beginning : "Supervisor  inquiries"
- 5. City Attorney Request.
- 6. Call File No.  from Committee.
- 7. Budget Analyst request (attached written motion).
- 8. Substitute Legislation File No.
- 9. Reactivate File No.
- 10. Topic submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the BOS on

Please check the appropriate boxes. The proposed legislation should be forwarded to the following:

- Small Business Commission
- Youth Commission
- Ethics Commission
- Planning Commission
- Building Inspection Commission

**Note: For the Imperative Agenda (a resolution not on the printed agenda), use the Imperative Form.**

Sponsor(s):

Subject:

The text is listed:

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor:

For Clerk's Use Only