

1 [Street Name Change - From Avery Street to Boswell Way]

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3 **Resolution renaming Avery Street, between Geary Boulevard and Post Street to**
4 **“Boswell Way,” in recognition of Reverend Hamilton T. Boswell, the longtime pastor of**
5 **Jones Memorial United Methodist Church; and directing the Municipal Transportation**
6 **Agency and County Surveyor to prepare street signs and enter the new street name**
7 **into the official records of San Francisco.**
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9 WHEREAS, Reverend Hamilton T. Boswell moved to San Francisco in 1947 to assume
10 the pastorship of Jones Memorial United Methodist Church, where he served as senior
11 minister for 29 years; and

12 WHEREAS, Reverend Boswell quickly became a leader who helped organize the
13 community, advocate for civil rights, and build diverse coalitions to establish a power base for
14 San Francisco’s African American community to fight institutional racism in the workplace,
15 government, public spaces, and criminal justice system; and

16 WHEREAS, Reverend Boswell helped establish essential civic institutions for the
17 Western Addition and Fillmore communities such as the Jones Methodist Credit Union and
18 the Jones Memorial Homes, which was the first federally financed senior citizen housing in
19 San Francisco; and

20 WHEREAS, Reverend Boswell’s commitment to public service led him to serve on the
21 City’s Juvenile Justice Commission from 1953 to 1962 and as a San Francisco Housing
22 Authority Commissioner from 1964 to 1974; and

23 WHEREAS, San Francisco Police Chief Thomas J. Cahill appointed Reverend Boswell
24 to be the first African American police chaplain in the City’s history; and
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1 WHEREAS, In recognition of his lifetime of work, Reverend Boswell received such
2 awards as the NAACP's Freedom Award and the Human Rights Award from both the
3 California State Senate and Assembly; and

4 WHEREAS, Reverend Boswell served as a mentor to many in the Western Addition
5 community, including Mayor Willie Brown; and

6 WHEREAS, Avery Street is a short street that runs alongside Jones Memorial United
7 Methodist Church and Jones Memorial Homes; and

8 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 542-08 (District 5,
9 Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi was the sponsor) in December 2008 to initiate the process of
10 renaming Avery Street to Boswell Way in his honor; and

11 WHEREAS, Resolution No. 542-08 is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
12 in File No. 081284 and incorporated herein by reference; and

13 WHEREAS, Although the Board of Supervisors did not pass a subsequent Resolution
14 to effectuate an official renaming of the street, San Francisco ("City") staff installed signs that
15 reflected the intended Boswell Way street name on Avery Street in 2009; and

16 WHEREAS, The Boswell Way signs remained until 2026, when the Department of
17 Public Works and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency ("MTA") discovered
18 that the Boswell Way street name had not been legislated and, as a consequence, City staff
19 reverted the street signage name back to Avery Street; and

20 WHEREAS, The reversion of signage to Avery caused navigational confusion and
21 emotional distress for church community members who had been used to the Boswell name
22 and also gave the impression that the City is erasing the legacy of Rev. Boswell; and

23 WHEREAS, The Department of Public Works and District 5 Supervisor Bilal Mahmood
24 are in receipt of a request from Jones Memorial United Methodist Church leadership and
25 community to officially rename Avery Street between Geary Boulevard and Post Street to

1 honor Reverend Boswell’s distinguished career and change the street signs back to the name
2 Boswell Way as it appeared for the preceding 17 years; and

3 WHEREAS, When changing the name of existing streets, the City follows the
4 applicable practices specified in Public Works Code, Section 423, Public Works informational
5 bulletin entitled “Street Name Establishment/Street Name Change,” California Government
6 Code, Section 34091.1 and California Streets and Highways Code, Sections 970.5, 971,
7 and 5026; and

8 WHEREAS, In Public Works Order No. _____, dated _____, 2026, the
9 Public Works Director, in accordance with Public Works Code, Section 423 certified that
10 Public Works determined that renaming Avery Street to Boswell Way does not conflict with the
11 names of existing streets located in the City; and

12 WHEREAS, This Order also states that Public Works conducted the required notice to
13 adjacent property owners and provided a report on its findings concerning the street
14 renaming; and

15 WHEREAS, A copy of Public Works Order No. _____ is on file with the Clerk
16 of the Board of Supervisors in File No. _____ and is incorporated herein by
17 reference; and

18 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors acknowledges the affidavit from Public Works
19 that states it properly posted the affected segment of existing Avery Street that is the subject
20 of the street name change for the specified period of time in compliance with California Street
21 and Highways Code, Section 970.5; now, therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, In order to honor the historic contributions of Reverend Boswell, the
23 Board of Supervisors officially changes the street name of Avery Street between Geary
24 Boulevard and Post Street to “Boswell Way,” so that Reverend Boswell’s legacy is not
25 forgotten; and, be it

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with
2 Transportation Code, Section 2.2, directs MTA to prepare street signs showing only the new
3 official street name "Boswell Way" in recognition of the fact that this street name appeared on
4 the street signs for the preceding 17 years; and, be it

5 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board
6 to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to the County Surveyor in accordance with
7 California Streets and Highways Code, Section 5026 in order to enter "Boswell Way" in the
8 official records of San Francisco street names.