

**RESOLUTION NO. 32**  
**Recognizing Women in Law Enforcement in the City of St. Louis**

**WHEREAS**, in 1854, the first known police matrons (also called jail matrons) were hired by New York City to search and guard female prisoners and to protect and shelter women and children in police custody; early police matrons, unlike policewomen, did not have sworn powers and were not able to make arrests; and

**WHEREAS**, in the late 1890s and early 1900s, policewomen, sworn to duty with equal authority as their male counterparts, were found on police rolls in several major American cities: pioneers, like Marie Owens of the Chicago PD and Lola Greene Baldwin of the Portland PD; Ms. Baldwin's 1908 hiring as a full-time civil service employee is widely recognized to be the first formal post held by a woman in law enforcement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Police Matron's Association meeting here in St. Louis for the 1904 World's Fair was a precursor to the founding of the International Association of Policewomen by Alice Stebbins Wells in 1915; Wells was a pioneer in the national movement to make departments more inclusive and is widely recognized as the first woman to be granted arrest powers; and

**WHEREAS**, in the early 1920s the first female precinct leader was appointed in New York City and the International Association of Chiefs of Police affirmed that women were essential members of any modern police department; and

**WHEREAS**, by 1948 nearly 30 percent of the FBI workforce was female, and female law enforcement employees began to organize themselves, establishing the International Association of Policewomen in 1956 as a continuation of earlier organizing efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of policewomen doubled in the 1960s, and in 1961 the landmark court case *Shpritzer v. Lang* ended the established practice of prohibiting policewomen from being promoted through the ranks despite their performance; in 1967 the first policewomen were assigned duties in a patrol car; and

**WHEREAS**, a 1969 Executive Order of President Nixon lifted a ban on women being employed as federal special agents, authorizing women to carry firearms, make arrests and execute search warrants; and

**WHEREAS**, an amendment to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in 1972 empowered the EEOC to enforce antidiscrimination laws that applied to state and local government agencies (including police departments), providing legal support for the demands of policewomen; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1985 Penny Harrington was appointed as the first Police Chief of the Portland Police Department and the first female chief in the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, today women make up more than 12 percent of the law enforcement profession nationwide and are a vitally important to improving public safety in St. Louis and throughout the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, we show special gratitude this day and every day to all women in law enforcement, acknowledge the barriers faced in this historically male-dominated profession, and recognize the strides that have been made and the opportunities for further empowerment.

**NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED** by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to join with Breath of Life Christian Fellowship Church and Global Outreach Ministries who, on May 19, 2016 at their 8th Annual “Blue and White Appreciation and Awards Program” acknowledged and celebrated the brave women in law enforcement in the St. Louis region. We further direct the Clerk of this Board to include a copy of this Resolution in the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a memorial copy for presentation at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 19th day of May, 2016, by:

**The Honorable Lewis E. Reed, President St. Louis Board of Aldermen**

Adopted this the 19th day of May, 2016, as attested:

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Timothy O’Connell  
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

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Lewis E. Reed  
President, Board of Aldermen