

Y A W K E Y F O U N D A T I O N S

Yawkey Foundations Statement April 26, 2018

We are deeply disappointed with today's decision by the City's Public Improvement Commission to grant John Henry's petition to rename Yawkey Way at Fenway Park.

As we have said throughout this process, the effort to expunge Tom Yawkey's name has been based on a false narrative about his life and his historic 43-year ownership of the Red Sox. The drastic step of renaming the street, now officially sanctioned by the City of Boston (and contradicting the honor the City bestowed upon Tom Yawkey over 40 years ago), will unfortunately give lasting credence to that narrative and unfairly tarnish his name, despite his unparalleled record of transforming the Red Sox and Fenway Park and supporting the city he loved through his philanthropy.

We have always acknowledged that it is regrettable that the Red Sox were the last Major League baseball team to integrate. We also realize there were strong feelings in favor of renaming Yawkey Way based on that painful fact and other criticisms about the team's record concerning race and inclusivity. But we also believe that consideration of the whole story of the team's efforts to integrate and the full picture of Tom Yawkey's life more than justified keeping the name Yawkey Way.

The Yawkey Foundations will carry on the mission of Tom and his wife, Jean, a legacy of giving that has provided more than \$300 million to organizations throughout Boston. The charitable work he began when he was alive is as important as ever, and we will continue to focus our efforts on sustaining his dedication to helping those in need.

We want to thank those who supported us in opposing the name change, especially our grantees, many of whom have proudly put the Yawkey name on the buildings and facilities made possible by gifts from the Foundations. We also appreciate the countless e-mails, phone calls and notes we received asking, as we did, why the Red Sox would seek to dishonor a man who did so much for the team and the City.

This a sad day for all of us at the Foundations. Tom Yawkey deserved to have his name live on at Fenway Park. We can't change today's decision, but we remain hopeful that he will be remembered as the good and decent man he truly was.

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