



# City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building  
414 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

## Text File

**Introduced:** 9/8/2023

**Bill No:** 2023-1924, **Version:** 1

**Committee:** City Council

**Status:** Adopted

**WHEREAS**, founded in 1958 by John Edward Connelly, the Gateway Clipper Fleet is celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> season; and,

**WHEREAS**, while helping to revitalize the Three Rivers as Treasurer for ALCOSAN, Mr. Connelly realized the potential of the Pittsburgh rivers and turned his vision of an excursion boat into a reality. The first vessel he purchased was christened the "Gateway Clipper", as Pittsburgh was known as the "Gateway to the West." Its maiden Pittsburgh voyage was on May 17, 1958, during Pittsburgh's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and sailed for four months touring the three rivers with over 25,000 passengers becoming the city's first official sightseeing boat; and,

**WHEREAS**, due to the tremendous popularity of the cruises, two more boats were added in 1959, thus creating the "Gateway Clipper Fleet." More than 20 boats have since sailed the three rivers as vessels of the fleet; and,

**WHEREAS**, today, third generation owner and the grandson of John Connelly, President Terry Wirginis oversees a fleet of five - Countess, Duchess, Empress, Princess and Three Rivers Queen which are moored at Station Square. The fleet is the largest inland riverboat fleet in America; and,

**WHEREAS**, the family-owned and operated fleet proudly sails Pittsburgh's three rivers and offers a wide variety of cruises including dining cruises, sightseeing cruises, wedding ceremonies & receptions, private events, and shuttle service to/from North Shore stadium events; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 2023, the Gateway Clipper fleet hosted more than 250,000 guests, from local residents to tourists from around the world. The Clipper Fleet also takes pride in supporting local organizations through donations, community enrichment and hosting educational seminars on board; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby congratulate the Gateway Clipper Fleet on its 65<sup>th</sup> season and thank them for their service to the City of Pittsburgh; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Tuesday, September 12, 2023 to be the "Gateway Clipper Fleet Day" in the City of Pittsburgh.