



TOWN OF DURHAM
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RESOLUTION #2023-17 OF DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

RECOGNIZING JUNE 19TH AS JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY AND REAFFIRMING DURHAM'S OPPOSITION TO ANY FORM OF OPPRESSION.

WHEREAS, news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and the other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2½ years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were free; and

WHEREAS, African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as "Juneteenth Independence Day", as inspiration and encouragement for future generations; and

WHEREAS, African Americans from the Southwest have continued the tradition of observing Juneteenth Independence Day for more than 150 years; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth Independence Day began as a holiday in the State of Texas and is now celebrated in 48 States and the District of Columbia as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

WHEREAS, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures; and

WHEREAS, the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves and the descendants of former slaves remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race; and

WHEREAS, systems of oppression including Jim Crow, sharecropping and redlining diminished African American wealth into the twentieth century, and inequities remain to this day; and

WHEREAS, the Juneteenth Presidential Proclamation calls for Americans to celebrate the emancipation of all Black Americans and commit together to eradicate systemic racism that can never be tolerated and must always be fought against; and

WHEREAS, slavery was legal, condoned, and existed in Durham for many years; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Durham has a long history of supporting emancipation and the rights of every human, including recognition in the Congressional Record of May 21, 1838, of the pro-abolition acts of Lucy Parker and 118 other women of Durham in the State of New Hampshire.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham Town Council, the governing and legislative body of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire, does hereby adopt Resolution #2023-17 recognizing every June 19th going forward as Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of Durham to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the United States.


NOW BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Juneteenth Independence Day recognizes the important role of emancipation, and that the Town of Durham respects the dignity of every human being and opposes any form of oppression.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 5th day of June 2023 by a majority vote of the Durham Town Council with 9 voting in favor, 0 voting against, and 0 abstentions.



Sally Needell, Chair
Durham Town Council

ATTEST:



Rachel Deane
Town Clerk-Tax Collector