

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING JUNETEENTH AS A RECOGNIZED CITY HOLIDAY

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 two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863;

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;

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;

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

WHEREAS, Juneteenth Independence Day began as an observed holiday in the State of Texas, became an observed federal holiday on June 17, 2021, and is now recognized as a holiday or observance by all 50 states and the District of Columbia;

WHEREAS, at least 21 states and the District of Columbia have designated Juneteenth as a permanent paid and/or observed holiday through adoption of legislation or executive action as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

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;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution is adopted by the Charlotte City Council that:

- (1) Recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day;
- (2) Supports the continued celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day in observance of the end of slavery as part of the history and heritage of the United States;
- (3) Designates June 19, 2023, as “Juneteenth Independence Day” in which the City of Charlotte offices will be closed; and
- (4) Establishes “Juneteenth Independence Day” as an annually observed holiday for the City of Charlotte.