

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2020-083

Declaring Juneteenth a Holiday for the City of Columbia beginning June 19, 2021

WHEREAS, Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States, and is also known as Emancipation Day, Juneteenth Independence Day, and Black Independence Day; and,

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln decreed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. The proclamation declared "that all persons held as slaves" "are, and henceforward shall be free," but was limited only to enslaved people in the Confederacy, and not to those in states that remained loyal to the Union; and,

WHEREAS, news of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation was withheld in parts of the United States for two and one half years, only reaching authorities and African-Americans in the South and Southwestern United States, where more than 250,000 enslaved people learned they had been freed, on June 19, 1865; and,

WHEREAS, although the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863, many slave owners continued to hold their slaves captive after the announcement, so the June 19, 1865 announcement became a symbolic date representing African American freedom known as Juneteenth; and,

WHEREAS, because freedom from slavery in the United States came to enslaved black people in different parts of the United states at different times, emancipation celebrations are often called by different names and take place on different dates; and,

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration honoring the end of slavery in the United States, and was officially declared a state holiday in Texas in 1980, and a number of other states subsequently followed suit; and,

WHEREAS, organizations across the world in a number of countries also recognize June 19 as the end of slavery and to celebrate the culture and achievements of African Americans globally; and

WHEREAS, racial injustice and violence toward African-American citizens have resulted in national protests, demonstrations, and a unification of voices crying out a need for judicial racial reform; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia, South Carolina this 18th day of August, 2020 that Juneteenth is hereby declared a holiday for the City of Columbia beginning June 19, 2021; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state and other local governments are encouraged to recognize and implement Juneteenth as a holiday in order to pay tribute and recognize its enormous racial and cultural significance and that citizens participate in its observance.

Requested by:

Mayor Benjamin _____



Mayor

Approved by:



City Manager

Approved as to form:

T. A. Knox

City Attorney

ATTEST:



City Clerk

Introduced: 8/18/2020
Final Reading: 8/18/2020

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