

City of Highland Park Mayoral Proclamation



In Recognition of

Juneteenth

Whereas, for 155 years, Juneteenth National Freedom Day continues to be the oldest and most recognized African American observance in the United States. Also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation Celebration, Freedom Day, Cel-Liberation Day, Juneteenth Independence Day, Jubilee Day, and Juneteenth, Juneteenth National Freedom Day commemorates the survival of African Americans, who were involuntarily brought to this country stacked in the bottom of slave ships in a month-long journey across the Atlantic Ocean known as the Middle Passage; and

Whereas, approximately eleven and one-half million African Americans survived the voyage to the New World, the number that died is likely greater, only to be subjected to whipping, castration, branding, rape, tearing apart of families and forced to submit to slavery for more than 240 years after arrival in the United States and, despite emancipation under the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, they and their descendants still have not yet experienced full freedom for over 400 years, with many people failing to recognize that reality; and

Whereas, Juneteenth commemorates the day freedom was proclaimed to all enslaved people in Texas by Union Major General Gordon Granger, on June 19, 1865, in Galveston, Texas, more than two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln; and

Whereas, today Juneteenth celebrates African American freedom and achievement, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures; and is a recognition of the many contributions that African Americans have made throughout America's history and presently, both while enslaved and liberated; and

Whereas, Americans of all colors, creeds, cultures, genders, religions, orientations, abilities, and countries-of-origin share in a common love of and respect for freedom, as well as a determination to protect their right to freedom. Juneteenth completes the cycle of freedom for America's Independence Day observances, recognizing that ***until we are all free, none of us are free.***

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor of Highland Park, do hereby declare Friday, June 19, 2020 as

Juneteenth National Freedom Day

in our City and urge all residents to join us in reflecting on this historic occasion by reading the Emancipation Proclamation, singing or listening to *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* and *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, and exploring history to learn more about the contributions of African Americans to the American dream and way of life.

Dated this 17th day of June, 2020.

A handwritten signature of Nancy R. Rotering.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor

A handwritten signature of Ghida S. Neukirch.

Ghida S. Neukirch, City Clerk

