

Proclamation

Whereas, the first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619; and

Whereas, Black people were bought and sold as slave labor for at least 245 years and suffered unspeakable acts of violence; and

Whereas, President Abraham Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation effective January 1, 1863, freeing the enslaved people in the Confederate states. However, Southern slave owners ignored that order even as enslaved people in the South worked for freedom, ran to U.S. lines, and fought for the U.S. Army; and

Whereas, on June 19, 1865, U.S. soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas with the orders to enforce the presidential proclamation and Black Texans used this moment to claim the freedom they had long fought for in the face of white Texans' continued efforts to retain slavery. This day has since come to be known as Juneteenth; and

Whereas, Juneteenth is celebrated as an observance in many cities, towns, and villages on June 19th but is not a federal holiday;

Whereas, other Black communities have long celebrated other dates to mark emancipation, including West Indian Emancipation Day, Watch Night, Eighth of August in Tennessee, Memorial Day in Charleston, and July 4 in Vicksburg, but Juneteenth has emerged as the most-celebrated emancipation day holiday in the United States and, particularly, in California;

Whereas, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishes slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, and was ratified by the required number of states on December 6, 1865; and

Whereas, other systems of oppression, such as sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining, human bondage and trafficking, and mass incarceration, and the police violence against Black bodies continued throughout our Country's history and perpetuated the racist legal and social systems that persist to this day; and

Whereas, the National League of Cities recognizes the history of racism in our country and how it has led to many present-day disparities in education and job attainment, housing, and healthcare, as well as disproportionate incarceration rates for Black people in cities, towns, and villages across our country; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that I, Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Mayor of the City of Alameda, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2021, as

Juneteenth Day

In the City of Alameda and recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States, and support the continued nationwide celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand and acknowledge the experiences that have shaped the United States, and recognize that the observance of the end of slavery is a crucial part of the history and heritage of the United States. I encourage residents to join the City in commemorating Juneteenth at the June 19th 7:00 pm screening of "Words That Made the Difference: BROWN vs the BOARD OF EDUCATION," a Zoom production written and directed by Dr. Cindy Acker, Ed.D., award-winning educator, playwright and Alameda resident.



Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Mayor

