

RESOLUTION NUMBER 20
FLOOR SUBSTITUTE
ESTABLISHING JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY AS A CITY HOLIDAY

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen recognizes June 19 annually as Juneteenth Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest celebration in America growing out of the experiences of African-Americans and is a celebration of the ending of chattel slavery in America after the Union forces won the Civil War and Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865 to Union General Ulysses S. Grant; and

WHEREAS, African Americans in St. Louis founded one of this nation's largest freedom/abolitionist organizations in the country which supplied over 47, 000 Black women and men, already trained in military tactics, to the Union effort to win their freedom; and

WHEREAS, Black communities throughout the United States found out about freedom during various days in 1865 with some of the most notable celebrations taking place June 19, 1865 when the announcement of the ending of slavery reached Texas thus creating the name "Juneteenth African Freedom Day Celebration."; and

WHEREAS, though there were numerous "Freedom Day Celebrations" recorded throughout St. Louis during the mid and late 1860s with the largest and most organized being the "Freemen's Fair" held during the week of June 22, 1868 at the Philharmonic Hall at Fourth and Washington Streets in downtown St. Louis where it is reported "that huge crowds attended to listen to music, visit informative exhibits, acknowledge Black achievers, bought paintings of famous abolitionist, attend lectures, heard speeches, danced and help raise money to build schools in various Black communities; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of Juneteenth has continued in St. Louis with groups and individuals sponsoring "Freedom Day" activities with Progressive Emporium and Education Center being the oldest and longest running, continuous institution sponsoring events since the late 1980s; Fountain Park Neighborhood Association in the Fountain Park Community; Sabayet Center in the Ville and Ms. Coffee Wright organizing parades and a fair in Beckett Park over the years; and

WHEREAS, federal, state and city holidays serve as the ultimate reflection of the sacrifices of workers, soldiers and patriotic Americans who shed blood for democracy and gave of themselves for this country; and

WHEREAS, no group is more deserving of this honor than the generations of African Americans who were key to building the United States and our beloved City; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen recognizes Juneteenth as an opportunity for the City to educate City employees and our residents about the African American heritage and honor their lives, sacrifices and contributions that were given to help build the American fabric.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis in accordance with Section 7(b)(3) of Article XVIII of the City Charter, we request the Director of Personnel to do the following to make Juneteenth a recognized holiday for the City of St. Louis and a paid holiday for the employees of the City:

1. Include a plan to adopt Juneteenth, June 19, as an official holiday of City government for the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 within the draft compensation ordinance submitted to the Civil Service Commission.
2. Submit an amendment to the current compensation ordinance to include June 19, 2021 as an official holiday of City government for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021

We further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced this 19th day of June, 2020

The Honorable Lewis E. Reed, President St. Louis City Board of Aldermen

The Honorable Sharon Tyus, 1st Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Lisa Middlebrook, 2nd Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Brandon Bosley, 3rd Ward Alderman

The Honorable Tammika Hubbard, 5th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Christine Ingrassia, 6th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable John Coatar, 7th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Annie Rice, 8th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Dan Guenther, 9th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Joseph Vollmer, 10th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Sarah Martin, 11th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Beth Murphy, 13th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Carol Howard, 14th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Megan Green, 15th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Thomas Oldenburg, 16th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Joseph Roddy, 17th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Jesse Todd, 18th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Marlene Davis, 19th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Cara Spencer, 20th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable John Muhammad, 21st Ward Alderman

The Honorable Jeffrey Boyd, 22nd Ward Alderman

The Honorable Joseph Vaccaro, 23rd Ward Alderman

The Honorable Bret Narayan, 24th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Shane Cohn, 25th Ward Alderman

The Honorable Shameem Clark Hubbard, 26th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Pamela Boyd, 27th Ward Alderwoman

The Honorable Heather Navarro, 28th Ward Alderwoman

Adopted 19th day of June as attested by

Terry Kennedy
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen